



# 5 Questions with Keith Nedell



*Keith has been integral to driving Vixxo's growth strategy since he joined the company 10 years ago. He developed the company's strategic plan, created a team to introduce new products to the market, and established a strategic business transformation team for leading major company initiatives. Today, he serves as our Chief Supply Chain & Analytics Officer, where he manages the exemplary service provider network that supports our clients every day.*

## **1) The Vixxo business model brings together a large network of service providers to deliver positive outcomes to customers. How is this network competitively distinguished in the market?**

Our service providers are the face of Vixxo. They are the first to be on-site when our clients need service, and they really provide that personal touch. Consequently, we've cultivated a unique relationship with them. To us, our service providers are not just a vendor – they are truly an extension of our brand. Because of this unique relationship, we are selective with whom we partner.

I think what makes this group distinct, aside from their experience and expertise, is their commitment to their communities. Because they live, work and shop in the areas they serve, they are dedicated and take greater pride in how they support others in the community. This dynamic creates a more vested and accountable business relationship.

## **2) How does Vixxo maintain such high quality of expertise and service across its provider network?**

It all starts with the quality of people that we partner with and ensuring their happiness with the work. To that effort, the number one thing we aim to do with all providers is to maintain a continuous work stream. If you talk to any service technician, you'll realize that this business has a lot of ebbs and flows. So it's important to make sure there is a steady pipeline of work for them.

The other piece is making sure that once their jobs are complete, they receive payments on time, and that communication is open and transparent. We understand the hardships that can happen when checks don't arrive as expected. So making sure communication is clear on all aspects surrounding payment is imperative.

We also have a robust on-boarding process. Our team of professionals works closely with our new service providers from beginning to end to familiarize them with our processes so they have very clear expectations of how we work. We're always recruiting new skilled local providers to join our network, selecting only those who demonstrate strong expertise and the ability to collaborate closely with us. Our service provider network is the fuel that keeps our engine going.

The final element that brings everything together, is the unique way we align service providers to specific customer sites. When a work order comes in, we make sure to optimize that engagement and put the right service provider on the job. We are very methodical in aligning the right cost, service and skill level, even location, to optimize each work order. This commitment to detail and optimization comes from the experience of handling over 3 million work orders each year.

## **3) What are some of the most important trends impacting service providers, and how is Vixxo helping them manage these changes?**

The biggest issue unfolding in the industry is our aging workforce. The average age of electricians, for instance, is 55 years old. For plumbers, it's 52. Service providers struggle to attract and retain new talent, which means having to pay higher wages.

One way Vixxo helps is by providing strong training programs. We train our service providers on specific equipment, such as TurboChef ovens, to give them the knowledge they need today to excel at repair and maintenance, rather than expecting them to have an extensive trade school education or 30 years of career knowledge.

What's also interesting is the shift that requires more technological expertise rather than traditional equipment repair skills. As advancements are made in areas like IoT, analytics and smart buildings, those technologies are incorporated into facilities and equipment. Because of this, the new service provider workforce is going to need to acquire more highly technical skills. We expect this will make the trades more appealing to new workers.

#### **4) Speaking of advanced technology, how does Vixxo's analytics capabilities help service providers and, ultimately, the overall customer experience?**

Data is one of Vixxo's greatest competitive differentiators. We use analytics to help our service providers understand what parts they purchase most often so they can improve their procurement efficiency, for example. They can know which parts break most often and be better prepared with inventory on the trucks and the knowledge to make the necessary repairs. This high degree of preparedness, in turn, keeps the client happy because they don't have to wait for a part to come in.

With this data, we also can create a thematic view of service calls that we can share with manufacturers so that they can improve the reliability of their equipment. When equipment runs optimally, everyone saves money.

#### **5) How would your 9-year son describe what you do?**

Given the technical aspects and multi-layered nature of what we do, it is interesting to take a step back and get that simplified perspective that kids always offer. For the longest time, because of Vixxo's close relationship with many of our clients, my son was convinced that I worked for one of the larger convenience store chains we support. Now that he's matured to the ripe old age of nine, he's figured out that Vixxo is my actual employer.

However, when we talk about what I do on a day-to-day basis, he really strikes the heart of it. He told me recently that I “help find people that can fix problems” for my customers. What a great way to explain it! At the end of the day, take out all the complexities of my job and that is exactly what I do.