Main Street AI Stories

Every Truck in Sight

How an HVAC Business Used AI to Get More Out of Every Truck



John H. Hodsdon

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John H. Hodsdon, Agentic Solutions

A fictional tale of a realistic use case. Tanya Brooks, Darnell Brooks, Brooks Heating & Air, Rosa Medina, Kevin Pham, Jalen Woods, Bo Harrell, Mr. Gutierrez, Mrs. Abernathy and Linda Pierce are invented, and any resemblance to real people or businesses is coincidental. All dollar figures, counts and results are illustrative. Nothing here is legal, financial or licensing advice.

CHAPTER 1

The First 100-Degree Week

The thermometer on the bank sign on Valley Mills Drive said 101 at 9:40 in the morning, and Tanya Brooks knew exactly what kind of day it was going to be.

By the time she got to the office, Rosa Medina had two phones going and a third lighting up. Rosa had dispatched for Brooks Heating & Air for six years. She kept the schedule in the dispatch software, a paper notepad, and her head, and on a normal day the three agreed. This was not a normal day.

"Kevin's double-booked at ten," Rosa said, with her hand over one phone. "Jalen's at the parts house. Mr. Gutierrez called twice about his tune-up, and I've got a lady on Lake Shore with a baby and no air."

Tanya ran a seven-truck residential heating and cooling business in Waco. Her brother Darnell ran the field side. Between them they had twenty-six years in the trade, a few thousand customers, and about four hundred people on a prepaid maintenance plan. Those plan customers paid every year for two tune-ups and a promise: we take care of you first.

That week, the promise broke. Mr. Gutierrez's tune-up had been booked for three weeks. On Tuesday it got bumped for an emergency. On Wednesday it got bumped again. On Thursday he called and said, politely, that he'd paid for a plan so this wouldn't happen.

He was right. Tanya refunded his plan and apologized. It felt terrible.

That night, after the last truck came in at 9:15, she sat at her kitchen table with a glass of tea and a laptop. She had used an AI chat assistant for months, mostly to write customer emails and once to explain a tax form. She typed the way she'd explain it to a friend.

> I own a residential HVAC business in Waco. 7 trucks, 7 techs, my brother runs the field, 1 dispatcher. First heat wave of the summer. Phones won't stop, techs are double booked, and we're bumping prepaid maintenance customers for emergencies. We're working 12 hour days and still behind. I don't know if I need more techs or better software. Where do I start?

The reply did not start with software.

> Before deciding on more people or new tools, it helps to see where your trucks' time actually goes. In a heat wave, the limit is usually truck hours on real work. Some of the day goes to repairs and installs. Some goes to driving, waiting on parts, callbacks, and jobs that got moved around. If you can pull a week of records, I can help sort them. Useful ones: the dispatch schedule, each tech's job times, the call log, and any parts runs. Please remove customer names, phone numbers and addresses first.

Tanya already knew that last part. Her insurance agent had warned her about it at a renewal meeting: don't put customer information into tools that haven't been approved for it. A chat assistant on her laptop was not approved for anything. She'd use job numbers, times, job types and zip codes. Nothing else.

The next morning she asked Rosa for the week's records.

"All of them?" Rosa said.

"The schedule, the time stamps from the techs' phones, the call log. Whatever we've got."

Rosa looked at her for a long second, the way she did when somebody finally asked a good question. “It’s going to be ugly.”

It was ugly. The dispatch software could export each job with a start time, a finish time and a type. The techs were supposed to tap “on the way,” “arrived” and “complete” in the app on their phones. About half the time, they did. Rosa’s notepad filled in a lot of the rest. Tanya spent Saturday morning cleaning it up into one long list. Truck number, job number, zip code, type of job, time arrived, time finished.

> Here’s one week of jobs for 7 trucks, customer info removed. Job number, truck, zip code, job type (repair, tune-up, install, callback), time arrived, time finished. Some times are missing. Help me see where truck time is going.

> Here’s a first look. These are estimates, since about 30% of the times were missing and I filled gaps from the schedule. Total truck hours: about 420 across 7 trucks over 6 days. On site doing work: about 220 hours (52%). Driving between jobs: about 115 hours (27%). Parts runs and waiting on parts: about 50 hours (12%). Other or unknown: about 35 hours (8%). Completed calls per truck per day: about 3.4. A few patterns stand out. Trucks often cross town more than once a day. On Tuesday, truck 4 went from 76712 to 76705 and back to 76712. Parts runs cluster in the early afternoon. Tune-ups were rescheduled 41 times this week. This is a hypothesis to check, not a conclusion: the biggest loss may not be the number of techs but how much of each truck’s day goes to driving and waiting.

Tanya read it twice. Twenty-seven percent driving. She had always assumed her trucks were busy fixing air conditioners. Over a quarter of the day, they were busy driving to fix air conditioners.

She showed it to Darnell on Monday at 6:30, in the lot, before the trucks rolled.

He read it standing up. “That sounds about right. Maybe worse. Half those parts runs are because nobody knew what part they’d need till they got there.”

“And the crossing town?”

“That’s because Rosa’s putting out fires. A call comes in from Hewitt, the closest truck is in China Spring, she sends him.” He handed the paper back. “What’s she supposed to do, let the baby lady sit?”

Tanya didn’t have an answer. The numbers said where the hours were going. They didn’t say why, or what to do about it.

Was the problem her trucks, her people, or the way the day got put together?

CHAPTER 2

Seven Trucks, One Notepad

Tanya started with the things she could fix without buying anything.

The first was the tune-ups. Every spring and every fall, Brooks Heating & Air promised its plan customers a check-up. Somehow, over the years, a lot of those check-ups had drifted into June and July. Customers asked for them when it got hot. Rosa booked them. Then the emergencies came and the tune-ups got bumped.

> About 400 customers have a maintenance plan with 2 tune-ups a year. A lot of them end up booked in June and July, which is our busiest emergency season. What are some ways to handle this?

> A common approach is to set maintenance windows outside peak season. For example, cooling tune-ups March through mid-May and heating tune-ups September through November. Plan customers get a reminder and a booking window. If a plan customer has a problem in summer, they still get priority for repairs. Many businesses also offer a small benefit for booking early, like a priority time slot.

That was simple enough to be obvious, and it was exactly what they hadn't done. Tanya decided that starting with the fall, tune-ups would be booked in two seasons only. Plan customers who called in July with a working system would get a polite spring appointment. Plan customers with a broken system would go to the front of the line.

Then the harder one. The emergency rule.

Rosa had been making the call herself for six years. Who goes first when three people have no air? She was good at it. But she was making the call alone, all day, with phones ringing, and she was tired.

> Help me write a simple rule for which no-cooling calls go first during a heat wave. Our dispatcher makes this call all day. It needs to fit on an index card.

The AI drafted a short list.

> 1. Maintenance plan customers with no cooling.
> 2. Any customer with no cooling and a vulnerable person in the home (infant, elderly, medical condition).
> 3. All other no-cooling calls, in the order received.
> 4. Partial cooling or noise complaints, next available.

Tanya liked it. It was short, it put the plan customers first, and it matched the promise they'd made. She printed it and handed it to Rosa.

Rosa read it once and put it face down on her desk.

"No," she said.

"What's wrong with it?"

"Number one and number two are upside down." Rosa tapped the card. "Mrs. Abernathy on Austin Avenue is eighty-eight. She's not on a plan. She lives alone, and when it's a hundred and four, her house is a hundred and ten by three o'clock. A plan customer who's forty and healthy can go to his brother's house for the afternoon. She can't. Health and safety first. Then the plan. Then everybody else."

Tanya didn't argue. Rosa was right, and the AI had missed it because it had sorted by what the business had promised, not by who could get hurt.

> My dispatcher corrected the rule. Health and safety come first, regardless of plan. A non-plan customer who's elderly or has an infant or a medical need goes ahead of a healthy plan customer. Then plan customers. Then others. Rewrite it that way.

> You're right, and that's an important correction. Revised: 1. No cooling and someone at risk in the home (infant, elderly, medical need), any customer. 2. No cooling, maintenance plan customer. 3. No cooling, all other customers, in order received. 4. Partial cooling or noise, next available. The dispatcher can override this order for any safety reason.

The last line was Rosa's idea. She added it in pen.

The third fix was the waiting customers. On a hot day, people waiting for a tech call the office over and over. Every call takes Rosa off the board for three or four minutes. Twenty of those, and that's an hour gone.

> Draft a short text our dispatcher can send to customers waiting for a tech on a busy day. Friendly, honest about the wait, no promises we can't keep. She will review each one and add the time window herself.

> "Hi, this is Rosa at Brooks Heating & Air. We have you on today's schedule, and a tech should arrive between [time window]. It's a very busy day, so we'll text you when he's on the way. If anything changes on your end, just reply here."

Rosa changed "he" to "your tech," because Brooks had a woman tech starting in August. She added a line telling people to close the blinds on the sunny side of the house and run fans while they waited, because it helped. She sent the texts herself, one by one, and only to customers

she'd already spoken to. Call-backs from waiting customers dropped by about half that week. Rosa counted.

All three fixes helped. By Friday, Tanya could feel the difference in the office. But on Friday afternoon, something happened that showed her the real problem.

At 2:10, a call came in from Woodway. A capacitor, probably. Twenty-minute fix. Rosa looked at her screen, looked at her notepad, and called Jalen. Jalen was on a job in Robinson. She called Kevin. Kevin didn't answer. She called Bo, who said he was finishing up in Woodway and could take it. But he wasn't finishing up. He was on his way to the parts house, because the job he was "finishing up" needed a part he didn't have.

Rosa put down the phone and said, to nobody in particular, "I don't know where my trucks are."

Tanya heard it, and it landed.

Rosa didn't have one place where she could see all seven trucks at once. She had the dispatch software, which showed what was booked. She had the techs' phones, which showed what they'd tapped, when they remembered. And she had her notepad, which showed what she'd heard. None of them showed what was actually happening right now.

That night Tanya typed:

> My dispatcher said today, "I don't know where my trucks are." We have dispatch software, but it shows what's booked, not what's happening. I think we need one screen that shows all 7 trucks: who's in it, what job they're on, what's next, and whether they're on the way, on site, waiting on parts, or done. Is that a real thing I could build, and how small could I keep it?

> Yes, that's a reasonable thing to build, and it can be small. Here's a draft scope. **What it does:** Shows all 7 trucks on one screen. For each truck: tech name, current job (job number and area), next job, and status.

> Status is one of four: on the way, on site, waiting on parts, done. **Who uses it:** Techs tap their status on their phones. The dispatcher sees the whole board and assigns the next job. The owner can view it. **What it doesn't do:** No billing, no customer records, no maps or GPS tracking in version one. Your dispatch software stays the place where jobs are booked. **What stays with a person:** Which job goes to which truck. Any change to a customer's appointment. Any safety call. **How you'll know it works:** Completed calls per truck per day, driving time between jobs, time waiting on parts, and how often the dispatcher has to call a tech to find out where they are.

Tanya printed it. It fit on one page. She took it to the office on Monday and put it in front of Rosa and Darnell.

"No GPS?" Darnell said. "I thought the point was to see where they are."

"The point is to see what they're doing," Rosa said. "I know where Kevin is. I don't know if he's done."

Darnell thought about that. "Okay. But who builds it?"

Tanya had no idea.

CHAPTER 3

The Truck Board

Tanya called Linda Pierce on a Tuesday night.

Linda had run a pest control company in Temple for nineteen years, with eleven trucks at its peak. Tanya knew her from a small business group that met for breakfast once a month. Over the past year, Linda had become the person everybody in the group asked about AI, mostly because she'd quit complaining about her routing software and built a simple replacement.

Tanya read her the scope.

"That's a good scope," Linda said. "It's small. Keep it small."

"I don't write code."

"Neither do I. The AI writes it. You decide what goes on it and what doesn't. And you test it on a real day before you trust it." She paused. "Can I tell you something? What you just read me is the same thing I built for pest control. It's the same thing a plumber would want, or an electrician, or a restoration company, or a lawn crew. Anybody who sends trucks out to houses has this problem. The dispatcher can't see the trucks."

That made Tanya feel better and worse at once. Better because it was a known problem. Worse because she'd lived with it for years without naming it.

Linda suggested she start the way Linda had: with a supervised build plan, where the AI did the setup work on its own computer while Tanya watched and approved each step. Tanya signed up for Grok Bot

Pro at $20 a month. The hosting and database were free at her size, and she expected to pay a little more once the board was in daily use. Her real cost would be time.

She started on Saturday morning.

> I want to build a simple web app called the Truck Board for my HVAC business. Here's the one page scope. Seven trucks. Techs use phones, the dispatcher uses a desktop. It needs a login so only my people can see it. Keep it as simple as possible. Walk me through each step and wait for my OK before you set anything up.

The AI laid out a plan in plain words. A place for the app to run, so it works when Tanya's laptop is closed. A small database to hold trucks, techs, jobs and status changes. A login for each person. A dispatcher screen showing seven boxes in a grid. A phone screen for each tech showing their current job, their next job, and four big buttons.

Tanya made her first decision before anything got built.

> No customer names or addresses on the board. Job number, the zip code, and the type of job. Rosa already has the customer details in our dispatch software. The board only needs to show what each truck is doing.

> That's a good choice. It keeps the board simple and keeps customer information in the system that's already set up for it. The board will show job number, zip code and job type only.

The first version took most of Saturday. By 4 p.m., she had a screen with seven boxes. Truck 1 through Truck 7, each with a tech's name, a job number, a zip code, and a colored status. Gray for on the way. Blue for on site. Orange for waiting on parts. Green for done.

She opened the phone screen on her own phone and pressed "On site." Truck 1's box turned blue on her laptop. She laughed out loud in her empty kitchen.

Then she tried it with Darnell, and it fell apart.

The buttons were too small. Darnell's thumbs were not small. He hit "Done" when he meant "On site" twice in a row. There was no way to undo it. And when he logged in, the phone screen showed him all seven trucks, which was just clutter.

> Problems from testing with my brother. 1) Buttons too small for work gloves and big thumbs. Make them huge, full width, one per row. 2) Need an undo for the last tap, for 30 seconds. 3) Techs should only see their own truck, not the whole board. 4) Add a confirmation on "Done" so they don't hit it by accident.

The AI made the changes and listed what it had changed. Tanya checked each one herself. Darnell tested again. "Better," he said. "I can work with that."

She noticed one thing on her own. The AI had added a "notes" box on every job, so techs could type anything they wanted. That sounded useful. It was also exactly the kind of place where a tech would type "Mrs. Johnson at 412 Elm, gate code 1234." She took it out.

> Remove the free text notes box for now. I don't want customer details ending up on the board. If a tech needs to tell the dispatcher something, they can call or text her.

On Sunday, she added the one thing Rosa had asked for. When a truck went orange, waiting on parts, the board would ask which part, from a short list: capacitor, contactor, fan motor, refrigerant, other. That way Rosa could see at a glance that three trucks were waiting on the same thing.

The first real week was rough.

On Monday, Bo forgot to tap anything until noon. His box sat gray all morning, and Rosa called him four times. On Tuesday, the app logged Jalen out in the middle of a job, and he couldn't remember his password. On Wednesday, it ran slow for about an hour in the afternoon, when all seven techs were tapping at once, and Kevin said a word in the lot that Tanya pretended not to hear.

Tanya fixed what she could each night, one problem at a time. She had the AI make the login last a full work week on the phone. She asked it why the board had been slow, and it explained that the screen was asking the database for everything every few seconds. It changed the board to update only when something changed. She tested each fix on her own phone before telling the techs.

The part she couldn't fix with the app was habit. So she and Darnell set one rule in the lot on Thursday morning. Tap when you leave. Tap when you get there. Tap when you're done. If your box goes stale for more than an hour, Rosa calls you. Nobody gets in trouble for forgetting. Everybody gets a phone call.

By Friday, the board was mostly right. Rosa had it up on a second monitor next to the dispatch software. When the 2:10 call came in that afternoon from Woodway, she looked at one screen, saw that Kevin was green in 76712, two miles away, and sent him.

"That," she said, "took ten seconds."

Tanya wrote down what she had set up. Where the board lived, how to log in, what it cost, and how to restore a backup. Then she actually restored one, because Linda had told her a backup you've never tested isn't a backup. It worked. She put the page in the file cabinet next to the business insurance policy.

The board had been up for a week. Rosa liked it. The techs mostly put up with it. But a board that everybody likes is not the same as a board that's doing anything.

What would the numbers say after a month?

CHAPTER 4

What the Board Showed

Four weeks later, on a Sunday afternoon in August, Tanya sat at the kitchen table with the same kind of records she'd pulled in June. Same seven trucks. Same customer details removed. This time, the board had its own record of every tap.

Before she looked at anything, she'd written down the four measures from the scope. She didn't want to pick the good ones after the fact.

> Here's one week of data from June (before) and one week from late August (after the board), customer info removed. Job number, truck, zip code, job type, times, and for August the status taps from the board. Compare the two weeks on these measures: completed calls per truck per day, driving time, waiting on parts time, and how often the dispatcher called a tech to find out status. Also tell me what you can't be sure of.

> Here's the comparison. All figures are estimates from your records.
>
> | Measure | June week | August week |
> |---|---|---|
> | Completed calls per truck per day | 3.4 | 4.3 |
> | Driving, share of truck time | 27% | 19% |
> | Parts runs and waiting on parts | 12% | 6% |

Measure	June week	August week
Dispatcher status calls per day	about 35	about 9
Average truck day	about 11.5 hours	about 11 hours

What I can't be sure of: the weather was similar but not identical. August had fewer installs, which may make the day easier to plan. The June times had more gaps, so the June numbers are less precise. Some of the change may come from the tune-up rule and the waiting-customer texts, not just the board.

Tanya looked at the first line for a long time. Roughly one more completed call per truck per day, without longer hours. Across seven trucks, that was about seven more customers helped a day in the hottest part of the year. She wrote "illustrative, one week" next to it, because she knew one good week wasn't proof of anything.

The more interesting part was why.

The board itself hadn't made anybody faster. What it did was let Rosa and Darnell see two things they'd never been able to see before.

The first was trucks crossing town. When Rosa had all seven boxes in front of her, with zip codes, she could see in real time when she was about to send a truck from China Spring to Hewitt for a job that someone in Hewitt would be free for in forty minutes. In the first week she did it out of habit three or four times a day. By the third week she was sorting the day by area. North trucks, south trucks, a west truck, and one floater for the calls that didn't fit. She'd hold a non-urgent call for forty minutes if it meant the right truck could take it.

> My dispatcher started grouping jobs by area. North, south, west, plus one floater. Here's her zone list by zip code. Can you check it against the last two weeks of calls and tell me if any zone is overloaded?

> Based on the last two weeks, the south zone (76706, 76711, 76704) had about 30% more calls than the north zone. You might move one zip code, or let the floater favor the south in the afternoon.

Rosa looked at it and moved 76704 to the floater. That was her call. The AI had only counted.

The second thing was the orange boxes. In the first two weeks, the board showed that capacitors and contactors were most of the parts trucks waited on. They were cheap, common parts that every truck should have carried and often didn't. Darnell had always known that, in a general way. Now he had a count. Twenty-two orange taps for capacitors in two weeks.

He did something he'd been meaning to do for three summers. He set a standard stock list for every truck, and he and Kevin restocked all seven trucks every Monday morning before 7. For the bigger parts that a tech might need for a known job, like a fan motor, Rosa started flagging the job the day before so the part was staged at the office for pickup.

The orange boxes didn't go away. But by the end of August, most of them were for parts nobody could have predicted.

Tanya made a few small changes to the board along the way. She added a simple count at the top of Rosa's screen: calls completed today, by truck. She took out a "running late" status the AI had suggested in week two, because the techs used it instead of "on the way" and it told Rosa nothing new. And she added a weekly report she could print. Each truck's completed calls, driving time and parts waits. No customer information, just numbers.

> Every Friday, give me a one page summary of the board data for the week: completed calls by truck, average driving time between jobs, parts waits by part type. Flag anything that changed by more than 20% from the

> week before. Don't guess at reasons. Just show the numbers and I'll ask the team.

She read it every Friday with Darnell and Rosa. Some weeks the numbers were boring. Those were good weeks.

Then, in the second week of September, the board showed something none of them wanted to see.

It wasn't the trucks. The trucks were moving. The parts were on board. Rosa's day had calmed down. But one box sat gray on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and it wasn't because a tech forgot to tap.

Truck 7 had no tech. Bo had given notice at the end of August. He'd taken a job with a commercial company in Temple that paid more and didn't run in attics. Tanya had posted the job three weeks earlier. She'd gotten two applications, and neither one could braze.

She looked at the board, six boxes moving and one standing still, and knew the next thing holding the business back was not a screen.

CHAPTER 5

The Next Thing

In late September, Tanya took the weekly report and the job posting to breakfast with Linda.

"The board works," Tanya said. "Rosa says it's the best thing we've done in five years. But I've got a truck sitting in the lot and nobody to put in it."

Linda read the report. "So the trucks aren't your limit anymore."

"No. People are. Trained people."

"That's what happens," Linda said. "You fix the thing that's holding you back, and you find out what was behind it. If you'd hired a tech in June, he'd have spent a quarter of his day driving across town. Now when you find one, he's going to get a full day."

Tanya had thought about that, too. The board hadn't solved her hiring problem. But it had changed the math on it. A new tech now meant about four completed calls a day instead of three and a half. That made it easier to justify paying a little more, or training someone from scratch.

That night she started the next cycle the same way she'd started the first.

> The truck board helped. Our new limit is trained techs. We have one empty truck and the job posting isn't working. I don't want to jump to a fix. Help me look at this the same way: what do I already have, what's

> getting in the way, and what's cheap to try first before I spend real money.

> Here are some questions to start with: 1. Where did your current techs come from? Trade school, other companies, trained in-house? 2. How long does it take a new tech to run a truck alone? 3. Who does the training now, and how much of their time does it take? 4. Is there work a less experienced person could do, like tune-ups or ride-alongs, while they learn? Once you have those answers, we can sort options into cheap and quick, small cost, and bigger cost, like we did before.

Tanya knew some of the answers. Three of her techs had come from the trade school at the community college. Darnell did almost all the training, on top of running the field. It took most new hires a full year to run a truck alone.

She had a feeling Darnell was going to turn out to be part of this one, the way Rosa's notepad had been part of the last one. She didn't type that. That was a conversation for the lot at 6:30, not for a chat window.

The board stayed on Rosa's second monitor. On Monday morning, Darnell restocked six trucks instead of seven. Then he stood in front of the board and looked at the gray box for Truck 7.

"I'll call the college," he said.

Tanya didn't promise herself the business would double, or that the next fix would work as well as the first one. She'd seen owners chase one good season into a bad loan. What she had now was smaller and more useful. A way to look at her own business, find the thing everything waits on, try something cheap, and know within a few weeks whether it helped.

And when somebody at the breakfast group asked her what she'd built, she gave the same answer Linda had given her.

"A board that shows every truck. That's all it is. If you send trucks to houses, you probably need one too."

APPENDIX A

The Prompts Tanya Used

These are short on purpose. Adjust them to your business. Remove customer names, phone numbers, addresses and anything else private before pasting records into a tool your business hasn't approved for customer data.

1. Starting point

> I own a [type of] business. [Size, staff.] We're [the problem in plain words]. I don't know if I need [the fixes you're considering]. Where do I start?

2. Seeing where truck time goes

> Here's one week of jobs for [number] trucks, customer info removed. Job number, truck, zip code, job type, time arrived, time finished. Some times are missing. Help me see where truck time is going. Give me a hypothesis, not a conclusion.

3. A simple rule

> Help me write a simple rule for [decision your team makes all day]. It needs to fit on an index card.

4. Correcting it with field reality

> [Person who does the work] corrected the rule. [What they said.] Rewrite it that way.

5. A message a person sends

> Draft a short text [person] can send to [customers] when [situation]. Friendly, honest, no promises we can't keep. She will review each one before it goes out.

6. Turning a problem into a scope

> [Person] said "[the problem in their words]." I think we need [the idea]. Is that a real thing I could build, and how small could I keep it? Give me a one page scope: what it does, who uses it, what it doesn't do, what stays with a person, and how I'll know it works.

7. Starting a supervised build

> I want to build a simple web app called [name] for my business. Here's the one page scope. It needs a login so only my people can see it. Keep it as simple as possible. Walk me through each step and wait for my OK before you set anything up.

8. Fixing what testing found

> Problems from testing with [person]: 1) … 2) … 3) … Fix these and list exactly what you changed.

9. Measuring

> Here's one week of data from before and one week from after, customer info removed. Compare on these measures: [your 3 or 4 measures]. Also tell me what you can't be sure of.

10. A weekly summary

> Every Friday, give me a one page summary of [data] for the week. Flag anything that changed by more than 20%. Don't guess at reasons. Just show the numbers and I'll ask the team.

11. Finding the next one

> [The first fix] helped. Our new limit is [new problem]. Help me look at this the same way: what do I already have, what's getting in the way, and what's cheap to try first.

APPENDIX B

Where Does Truck Time Go? Worksheet

Use a pencil. Fill it in from one real week of records, not from memory.

1. Your one main measure for this cycle. Completed calls per truck per day, revenue per truck, or owner hours. Pick one.

_____

2. One week of truck time. Add up the hours for all trucks.

Where the time went	Hours	Share of total
On site doing work		
Driving between jobs		
Parts runs or waiting on parts		
Callbacks or rework		
Other or unknown		

3. Your hypothesis. "It looks like _____ may be limiting _____, because _____."

_____

4. Who checked it against field reality? Name, and what they corrected.

_____

5. Cheap fixes first. Rules, schedules, or templates that cost little or nothing.

_____

6. Can your dispatcher see every truck at once? If not, what would one screen need to show?

_____

7. What stays with a person? Which job goes to which truck, safety calls, anything unusual.

_____

8. How you'll know it worked. Up to four measures, written down before you start.

Measure	Before	Check date	After

9. Where did it move? After the trial, what's holding you back now?

_____

Your Next Step

If this story sounded like your business, start the way Tanya did: look at where your trucks' time really goes, try the cheap fixes first, and keep anything you build small.

The free course *Your First AI Build, Scope First* walks you through picking that first piece and building it safely.

agenticsolutions.biz/course/first-build

For one practical idea a week on AI for business owners, get the *Main Street AI Brief*.

agenticsolutions.biz/brief

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