



AN INDUSTRY REPORT FOR HOME SERVICE LEADERS

THE 2027 HOME SERVICE LEADER'S REPORT

What 2026 actually did to HVAC, plumbing, electrical, roofing, landscaping, pest, cleaning and restoration — what 2027 is set up to do, and the ten things to focus on.

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WHY WE WROTE THIS

Every number in this report is a people number wearing a financial costume.

Life Pulse works with organizations on one problem: the gap between what a team is capable of and what it actually produces. We do that through coaching, keynotes, live sessions and training built on a simple premise — **people are not the problem. People have problems.** When a second truck goes back to the same address, when a dispatcher stops answering the phone the way you trained her to, when a three-year technician takes the call from the company that just got bought, the cause is almost never capability. It is misalignment between what the person is aiming at and what the work is asking of them.

2026 handed home service a market that punishes misalignment faster than any year in a decade. Growth came from price, not volume. The technician bench got younger and thinner. Private capital kept buying the company down the street. In that environment, the businesses that win are not the ones with the best lead source. They are the ones whose people stay, perform and improve while everyone else churns.

Fulfillment is the metric. Success is the byproduct.

That is not a soft statement. In a market where replacing one technician can cost half to twice their salary, retention is the margin strategy, and optimal performance is the growth strategy.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

Pages 3–8

What happened in 2026 and what the forecasters expect for 2027 — demand, labor pool, consolidation, cost, margin. Every figure is sourced on page 16.

Pages 9–14

Why retention and optimal performance are the two levers that actually move 2027, and the ten things to focus on, with the first move for each.

A NOTE ON THE NUMBERS

Nothing here is estimated by us unless it is labeled **derived**. Where sources disagree — and on the size of this industry they disagree enormously — we show the range rather than pick the flattering number. Figures that come from small samples or secondary write-ups are labeled **directional**.

THE ONE-PAGE READ

2026 grew on price, not volume. 2027 is a margin year you have to staff.

+0.5%

projected year-over-year growth in owner improvement and repair spending by Q2 2027, on a \$519B base — below inflation¹

31.5%

of home service technicians are in their first year on the job; 73% have five years or less⁵

25%

of total service cost industry-wide is consumed by failed visits — 44% at bottom performers, 14% at top⁶

SIX THINGS THAT ARE TRUE GOING INTO 2027

- **Demand is flat, not falling.** Improvement and repair spending decelerates to +0.5% by Q2 2027 on a \$519B base.¹ Segment growth in 2026 was HVAC +0.7%, plumbing +0.5%, roofing +0.3%, pest +0.1%, landscaping +0.9%, janitorial +1.7–1.8%, restoration +2.4% — and electricians –1.1%.²
- **2026's growth came from pricing, by the industry's own account.** Every major segment returned to revenue growth by June 2026 — green +7.5%, construction trades +9.1% year over year — driven “primarily by pricing work more effectively” across a 100,000-business panel.⁴
- **Your customer is staying put and spending anyway.** 72% of homeowners plan to stay in their current home, 79% plan to repair or replace at least one home system, 69% live in homes 20+ years old — but 77% are delaying or scaling back projects on cost.¹⁷
- **The workforce is the constraint and it is young.** 241,842 new technicians are needed per year against 101,743 annual program completions; HVAC fills 64 of every 100 positions it needs.¹¹
- **Consolidation is quiet, not loud.** Landscaping revenue rose 0.9% in 2026 while business counts fell at a –2.0% annual rate over five years.² Private equity took 39 of 77 HVAC transactions through early June 2026, versus roughly 8% of deals in 2023.¹⁴
- **The recoverable money is inside your own trucks.** First-time fix runs 77% industry-wide, 88% at the top and 60% at the bottom; closing that gap is worth up to 26% of service cost.⁶

THE LEADERSHIP TRANSLATION

You cannot price your way through a second flat year, and you cannot hire your way out of a pipeline that graduates 42 technicians for every 100 needed. In 2027 the only two variables fully inside your control are **who stays** and **how well the people who stay perform**. Everything in this report points at those two.

2026 IN NUMBERS

The year the ticket grew and the truck count didn't.

National averages describe almost no one in this industry. Here is the spread home service operators actually lived in.

MEASURE	2026 READING	WHAT IT MEANS FOR AN OPERATOR
HVAC contractors ²	\$159.4B (+0.7%)	120,461 businesses, up 1.7% — more competitors, same pie.
Plumbers ²	\$208.1B (+0.5%)	129,352 businesses, up 1.2%.
Electricians ²	\$370.9B (−1.1%)	The only major trade shrinking in 2026; data centers carry the growth.
Roofing contractors ²	\$92.5B (+0.3%)	~80% of activity is re-roof and renovation, not new build.
Landscaping services ²	\$176.7B (+0.9%)	7.9% average profit margin; 556,238 businesses.
Pest control ²	\$29.9B (+0.1%)	Three firms already take 27.8% of revenue.
Janitorial services ²	\$112.4B (+1.7–1.8%)	82.3% commercial; labor costs are hard to pass through.
Damage restoration ²	\$7.7B (+2.4%)	No U.S. hurricane landfall in 2025 cut catastrophe assignments.
Improvement & repair spending ¹	\$519B (+0.5% by Q2 2027)	Third straight quarter of deceleration — below inflation.
Residential construction spending ²¹	−1.3% in July	Repair demand is decoupled from new-build. Directional.
Specialty-trade hourly earnings ¹²	\$39.92 (May)	Up from \$38.10 a year earlier — about +4.8%.
Union first-year settlements ¹³	+4.9%	Following three years at 4.5–4.7%.
Nonlabor remodeling input costs ²¹	+6.6% in Q2	Re-accelerated from +3.9% in Q1. <i>Directional.</i>
Operator sentiment for 2026 ⁴	75% expected growth	Far more bullish than the two authoritative demand series.

READ THIS TABLE TWICE

Almost every line is a divergence, not a trend: near-zero segment growth beside record hourly wages, a captive customer base beside 77% of homeowners delaying work, confident operators beside decelerating demand. Divergence is what makes 2027 a leadership problem rather than a forecasting problem.

FORCE ONE · THE DEMAND

A captive customer with a smaller wallet and an older house.

The headline demand number for 2027 is boring: +0.5%.¹ Underneath it sits the most durable structural tailwind this industry has had in thirty years — a housing stock that keeps aging while the people inside it stop moving.

THE STRUCTURAL FACT	READING	WHY IT MATTERS IN 2027
Median age of U.S. housing stock ²⁰	44 years	28 years in 1993. Systems fail on a schedule.
Owner-occupied homes built 1980 or earlier ²⁰	47%	<i>Directional</i> — secondary analysis of Census data.
Homeowners planning to stay put ¹⁷	72%	Spend shifts from moving to maintaining.
Planning to repair or replace a home system ¹⁷	79%	96% plan to spend on home projects at all.
Delaying or scaling back on cost ¹⁷	77%	Demand is deferred, not destroyed.
Cost of unaddressed housing-quality issues ²⁰	\$198.4B	\$74.6B of it sits with lower-income households.
Existing-home sales forecast for 2026 ²⁴	+4%	Cut from +14% in November 2025; rates 6.5–6.7%.
Installed residential HVAC base ¹⁶	~130M systems	July 2026 a/c and heat pump shipments +20.1% year over year.

WHAT THIS DOES TO AN OPERATOR'S 2027

The upside

Non-discretionary work is the floor under your business. Homeowners spent more on repair services (36%) and maintenance (28%) in the past year than they spent less (21% and 16%).¹⁷ The \$500 mark is the DIY-to-pro line — above it, 57% call an expert.¹⁷

The catch

Price was the 2026 growth engine: 91% of high-confidence businesses raised prices and nearly 90% close more than half their quotes — but only 12% of cleaning and 16% of lawn care businesses saw comparable job-size increases.⁴ A second straight year of price-led growth meets a customer already delaying work.

THE 2027 DEMAND QUESTION

Market share in 2027 will move through **who answers, who fixes it the first time and who the homeowner trusts with the second job** — not through who advertises hardest. The demand is already in the houses on your existing routes.

FORCE TWO · THE PEOPLE

The bench is not thin. It is new.

241,842

new technicians needed per year against 101,743 annual program completions¹¹

64

positions HVAC actually fills for every 100 it needs¹¹

13.2%

of home service technicians have more than a decade of experience⁵

FOUR FORCES ON THE LABOR POOL

- **Experience, not headcount, is the shortage.** 73% of technicians have five years of experience or less and 31.5% are in their first year — a pattern that held across pest control, lawn care and HVAC.⁵ Retention programs designed for ten-year veterans are aimed at 13.2% of your workforce.
- **Turnover varies nine points by trade.** Electrical runs 21%, plumbing 18%, HVAC 16%, garage door 12%, with average tenure of 3.2 to 3.96 years.⁷ A multi-trade company that budgets one retention number budgets the wrong one for at least two divisions.
- **The pipeline is improving and it is not enough.** Trade program enrollment hit 334,600 in spring 2026, up 45.8% since 2021, and registered construction apprenticeship programs grew 28% in two years to 642,000 active apprentices.²² But only 11% of Gen Z see a trade or apprenticeship as their most likely path, and the headline enrollment-boom percentages are a demographic artifact of a near-zero base.²²
- **You are bidding for people against work you do not do.** Commercial and data center projects are pulling the same electricians and HVAC technicians: 217 firms in the 2026 AGC/NCCER survey said data center projects increased competition for skilled workers.²¹ Immigrant workers are 26.3% of the construction workforce and enforcement is reducing participation.²¹

WHAT PEOPLE NOW COST

BENCHMARK	READING	NOTE
Specialty trade contractor average hourly earnings ¹²	\$39.92	
HVACR mechanics and installers, median pay ¹²	\$59,810	BLS series and Occupational Outlook Handbook; union settlement data from the Construction Labor Research Council; median pay from a national salary-budget survey. ^{12,13}
Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters, median pay ¹²	\$62,970	
Median skilled-trades pay vs. full-time median ¹³	\$57,000 vs. \$62,608	

Trades salary budgets moved 3.8% against 3.5% all-industry, while union first-year settlements averaged 4.9%.¹³ **Pay is no longer a differentiator — everybody raised it**, and the median trades wage still sits below the full-time median. What you can still differentiate on is the thing 17% of technicians name as their top motivator: career growth.⁵

FORCE THREE · THE MONEY

Consolidation is buying your competitor and your costs are still rising.

The distinguishing feature of this cycle is that the pressure is not coming from a recession. It is coming from a better-capitalized buyer on one side and an input-cost curve on the other.

THE SQUEEZE, IN SEQUENCE

#	PRESSURE	2026 EVIDENCE
1	Volume stops paying	Improvement and repair growth decelerates to +0.5% by Q2 2027; segment growth for 2026 ran between –1.1% and +2.4%. ^{1,2}
2	Inputs re-accelerate	Nonlabor remodeling input costs +6.6% year over year in Q2 2026, up from +3.9% in Q1 (<i>directional</i>). ²¹ Manufacturers said in September that stronger demand has not removed pricing pressure. ¹⁶
3	Labor cost floor rises	Specialty-trade hourly earnings \$39.92, up about 4.8%; union first-year settlements 4.9%. ^{12,13}
4	Failed visits eat the job	25% of total service cost industry-wide; 44% at bottom performers versus 14% at top. ⁶
5	Callbacks hide in the P&L	Typical residential service runs 5–8% callbacks, with warranty and rework together commonly 3–8% of revenue — invisible in standard reporting (<i>directional</i>). ²³
6	Private capital raises the price of people	39 of 77 HVAC transactions through early June 2026 were private-equity backed, against roughly 8% of deals in 2023; add-ons made up 41.3% of HVAC deal activity (<i>secondary tracker data</i>). ¹⁴
7	The owner bench ages out	In remodeling, 47% of owners have no exit strategy, 65% hope to retire within five years and nearly 80% are 60–70+. ²²

WHAT THE ROLL-UP ACTUALLY CHANGES

The largest HVAC player still holds under 2% market share (*directional, secondary tracker*),¹⁴ so this is not a market-share fight yet. It is a **labor and expectation** fight: platform buyers pay for density, bundle adjacent trades onto one customer relationship, and hire from you while they do it.¹⁴ Valuations run roughly 3x–10x EBITDA by vertical and scale, with HVAC at the premium (*directional*).¹⁴

This is why the 2027 conversation cannot stop at lead generation. Every dollar in that sequence is a dollar you keep by **not losing the person and not going back twice**.

THE OUTLOOK

What to expect in 2027.

The demand forecasters, the labor forecasters and the operators' own survey data point to the same shape: a low-growth, price-sensitive year in which capacity and quality decide who gains share.

\$519B

owner improvement and repair spending through mid-2027, growing just +0.5% year over year¹

+11%

projected HVAC technician employment growth 2025–2035 against +3% for all occupations (*directional*)¹²

15%

of commercial service firms using AI report significant impact with clear ROI, against 59% reporting some positive impact⁷

FIVE ASSUMPTIONS WORTH PLANNING AGAINST

- **Growth stays below inflation.** +0.5% improvement and repair growth by Q2 2027 on a \$519B base, a third consecutive quarter of deceleration.¹ An independent remodeling forecast puts 2027 growth at +0.6% (*directional*).²³
- **Wage growth stays near 4–5%.** Specialty-trade earnings rose about 4.8% and union first-year settlements 4.9%, with both union and merit-shop increases averaging above 4%.^{12,13}
- **Equipment prices keep moving.** The Section 232 metal tariff on HVAC content sits at a reduced 15% only through 31 December 2027 — a known step-up risk at the start of 2028 (*secondary*).¹⁵ Manufacturers have signaled further out-of-cycle increases.¹⁶
- **Two regulatory clocks strike inside the year.** Exams based on the current Section 608 question bank can only be administered through 1 January 2027, and 2027 GWP limits arrive for supermarket racks, data center cooling (700 GWP) and food processing equipment.¹⁵
- **AI stops being a pilot.** 52% of owners already use it day to day — quoting 54%, invoicing 52%, business writing 51% — and 88% of high-confidence businesses use it against 27% of low-confidence peers.⁴ 2027 is the year the ROI gap either closes or discredits the category.⁷

WHAT WOULD CHANGE THE PICTURE

Upside

Faster rate relief and a real move in housing turnover would lift both project size and system replacement. Note what that does to you: an upside surprise in this industry is a *staffing emergency*, because the technician pipeline fills 42 of every 100 seats it needs.¹¹

Downside

A cost shock into a customer base where 77% are already delaying work.¹⁷ Insurance retrenchment is already a demand variable for restoration and roofing, and a season with no U.S. hurricane landfall cut restoration assignments outright.²

THE PLANNING CONCLUSION

Both the upside and the downside case end in the same instruction: **make your existing workforce more stable and more productive.** In the upside you cannot hire fast enough; in the downside you cannot afford waste.

LEVER ONE

Why retention is the whole game in 2027.

In a market that fills 64 of every 100 technician positions it needs,¹¹ every person who walks out of your company walks into a competitor's. Retention is not an HR metric in 2027. It is a capacity metric, a margin metric and a customer-experience metric.

WHERE HOME SERVICE ACTUALLY LOSES PEOPLE

LEAK	SCALE	WHAT THE DATA SAYS
Year one, not year five	31.5%	of technicians are in their first year, and 73% have five years or less. Only 13.2% have more than a decade. ⁵
Turnover by trade	12–21%	Electrical 21%, plumbing 18%, HVAC 16%, garage door 12%, on average tenure of 3.2–3.96 years. ⁷
Career path, not pay	~1 in 5	departures are for career reasons — the leading category for more than a decade. People want clarity on development pathways, and manager-related exits remain highly predictable. ¹⁹
The motivator you control	17%	of technicians name career growth as their single top motivator — matching the number-one exit driver exactly. ^{5,19}
Burnout in the frontline	>2 in 3	frontline employees reported burnout, and 27% would quit over lack of flexibility alone. Nearly half say their organization runs two cultures — one for frontline workers, one for everyone else. ¹⁰

THE RETENTION MATH

DERIVED: WHAT ONE LOST TECHNICIAN COSTS

Gallup puts the cost of replacing an employee at **half to twice annual salary**, and calls that conservative.⁸ Applied to the BLS median pay of an HVACR mechanic, \$59,810, one departure costs roughly **\$29,900 to \$119,600**.¹² For a plumber at \$62,970 median, **\$31,500 to \$125,900**. A 20-technician HVAC company running the trade's 16% turnover loses 3.2 people a year⁷ — **\$96,000 to \$383,000** a year. (Derived by Life Pulse from those sourced inputs; not a survey figure.)

Cross-check. An independent 2026 survey puts the average total cost of one employee departure at **\$45,236**, up from \$36,723 a year earlier, with 50% of hiring managers expecting turnover to rise (*directional — secondary survey*).¹⁹ That sits inside the derived range above.

Capacity side. Every departure moves a route to someone with less experience in a workforce where 73% already have five years or less.⁵ That shows up as a failed visit, and failed visits are 25% of total service cost.⁶

Leadership side. Top-quartile engagement business units run **51% lower turnover** than bottom-quartile units.⁸ Retention is not a program you buy. It is an output of how people are led.

THE LIFE PULSE READ

Note what the leading reason for leaving is: **career reasons — clarity on where this goes**. That is not a pay problem. That is an alignment problem, and it is fixable in a 45-minute conversation by the person who runs the schedule.

LEVER TWO

Why optimal performance is the other half.

Keeping people is worth little if the people you keep are going back to the same address twice. The performance evidence in home service is unusually concrete — and unusually ignored.

77%

industry first-time-fix rate — 88% at top performers, 60% at the bottom⁶

70%

of the variance in team engagement is accounted for by the manager⁹

+23%

profitability in top-quartile engagement business units versus bottom quartile⁸

PERFORMANCE SHOWS UP IN FOUR PLACES YOU ALREADY MEASURE

WHERE	THE EVIDENCE
First-time fix	The industry benchmark is 77%, top performers 88%, bottom performers 60% — a 28-point gap. Failed visits are 25% of total service cost industry-wide: 44% at bottom performers against 14% at the top. Closing the gap implies up to a 26% reduction in service cost , measured across 161 organizations and roughly 30 million service events. ⁶
Utilization	The target band is 75–85% billable , with pacesetters near 90% (<i>directional</i>). ²³ The measured reality: 70.3% of technicians already complete 10+ visits per day, 90% spend 60 minutes or less on site, 65.4% drive under an hour a day and 80.9% run reservice below 5%. ⁵ The remaining gains are in routing and scheduling — and above 90% you are buying them with burnout.
Engagement	Top-quartile versus bottom-quartile business units show median differences of +23% profitability, +18% sales productivity, +10% customer loyalty, –51% turnover, –63% safety incidents and –78% absenteeism — across 183,806 business units and 3.35 million employees. ⁸
Human capacity	U.S. and Canada engagement sits at 31%, the highest region in the world, and half of employees there report significant daily stress — the highest rate worldwide. Global engagement fell to 20%, its lowest since 2020, driven by declining <i>manager</i> engagement. ^{8,9} More than two-thirds of frontline employees reported burnout. ¹⁰

People are not the problem. People have problems.

Every figure on this page is the visible edge of an invisible condition: a workforce carrying more than it can hold, led by managers who are themselves the least engaged they have been in a decade.^{8,9} You do not fix that with a pay raise or a new dispatch tool. You fix it by realigning what people are aiming at with what the work requires — and then holding the rhythm.

THE LIST

Ten things to focus on in 2027.

Ordered by how much of the outcome each one controls. The first two are money. The next five are people and capacity. The last three are the system you run them with.

01 Price with discipline, because volume will not save 2027.

2027 REALITY Improvement and repair growth decelerates to +0.5% by Q2 2027 on a \$519B base,¹ and 2026 segment growth ran from electricians at -1.1% to restoration at +2.4%.² The industry's own read of a 100,000-business panel is that 2026 growth came "primarily from pricing work more effectively."⁴

THE MOVE Reprice by job type against fully burdened cost, not against the competitor down the road. Put a floor under your smallest job. Decide in advance which two job categories you will walk away from rather than discount — and tell your CSRs, because they are the ones who will be asked.

02 Make first-time fix your profit program.

2027 REALITY First-time fix is 77% industry-wide, 88% at the top and 60% at the bottom. Failed visits are **25% of total service cost** — 44% at bottom performers — and closing the gap is worth up to **26% of service cost**.⁶ Typical residential callbacks of 5–8% put warranty and rework at 3–8% of revenue (*directional*).²³

THE MOVE Measure first-time fix by technician and by job type this quarter, not by company average. Every second visit gets a two-minute root-cause note: parts, diagnosis, or dispatch. Then fix the top cause — it is almost never the technician's hands.

03 Build year-one retention, not general retention.

2027 REALITY 31.5% of technicians are in their first year and 73% have five years or less.⁵ Turnover runs 12–21% by trade.⁷ One replacement costs half to twice salary — **\$29,900–\$119,600** for a technician at BLS median pay (*derived*).^{8,12}

THE MOVE A written first-year plan for every hire: a named mentor, ride-alongs, and check-ins at day 3, 14, 30, 90 and 180. Measure first-year survival **by supervisor** — it will not be evenly distributed — and by division, because a 21% electrical division and a 12% garage-door division are not the same problem.

04 Develop your managers before you develop anything else.

2027 REALITY Managers account for at least **70% of the variance** in team engagement, and managers trained in coaching and people development see up to 18% higher team engagement and a 20–28% lift in other manager metrics.⁹ Engagement's top quartile is worth +23% profit and –51% turnover.⁸

THE MOVE Pick your three most important people-leaders — usually a service manager, an install manager and whoever owns dispatch — and train them in how to lead people, not just schedule them. Most were promoted for being the best technician and have never been taught the other job.

05 Engineer capacity to the 75–85% band, not to the ceiling.

2027 REALITY 70.3% of technicians already do 10+ visits a day, 90% are on site 60 minutes or less and 65.4% drive under an hour.⁵ The target utilization band is 75–85% (*directional*);²³ above 90% you are trading attrition for revenue in a workforce where more than two-thirds of frontline employees report burnout.¹⁰

THE MOVE Attack drive time and dispatch quality before you attack pace. Publish the utilization band openly so a full board stops being a badge of honor. Track reservice rate next to utilization — if one rises with the other, you found your ceiling.

06 Own a hiring pipeline instead of renting one.

2027 REALITY 241,842 new technicians are needed per year against 101,743 completions, and HVAC fills 64 of every 100 positions.¹¹ Apprenticeship capacity is growing — 642,000 active construction apprentices, programs up 28% in two years, trade enrollment up 45.8% since 2021 — but only 11% of Gen Z name a trade as their most likely path (*directional*).²²

THE MOVE Name one school, one program or one apprenticeship you will be the preferred employer of, and show up there four times in 2027 — not once. Convert your best technicians into the trainers. The pipeline you build is the only one your competitor cannot outbid you for.

07 Set wage strategy against a 4%-plus market, deliberately.

2027 REALITY Specialty-trade hourly earnings reached \$39.92, up about 4.8%, and union first-year settlements averaged 4.9%,^{12,13} while trades salary budgets moved 3.8% and median trades pay of \$57,000 still trails the \$62,608 full-time median.¹³ Commercial and data center work is outbidding residential service for the same people.²¹

THE MOVE Decide your position against market and say it out loud. Then spend the rest on the thing pay cannot buy: 17% of technicians name career growth as their top motivator,⁵ and career reasons are the leading cause of departures.¹⁹ Publish the ladder — levels, criteria, pay bands, timeline.

08 Run two or three AI use cases deeply, and measure them.

2027 REALITY 52% of owners use AI day to day — quoting 54%, invoicing 52%, writing 51% — and 88% of high-confidence businesses use it against 27% of low-confidence peers.⁴ In commercial service, 62% have piloted or deployed AI but only **15% report significant impact with clear ROI.**⁷ Among surveyed operators, the largest and most profitable run the *fewest* use cases, around two (*directional, n=32*).²³

THE MOVE Pick two. Measure one number each: hours returned, or quotes out the door within the hour. Be careful pointing AI at the phone before it is proven — 41% of operator AI users aim it at call answering (*directional*),²³ the highest-stakes customer touchpoint you own.

09 Staff the regulatory clocks now, not in December.

2027 REALITY Exams based on the current EPA Section 608 question bank can only be administered **through 1 January 2027**, and already-certified technicians do not retest.¹⁵ 2027 GWP limits arrive for supermarket racks, data center cooling (700 GWP) and food processing equipment, with VRF installation windows closing 1 January 2027 and 2028.¹⁵ The reduced 15% Section 232 metal tariff on HVAC content runs only through 31 December 2027 (*secondary*).¹⁵

THE MOVE Put the three dates on one page with a named owner each. Get uncertified helpers tested before the question bank changes, replace training materials, and build the 2028 tariff step-up into how you quote long-lead equipment in the back half of 2027.

10 Own the demand you can actually reach: speed, reviews and the phone.

2027 REALITY Over 70% of customers expect a same-day response and more than half want one within the hour.⁴ 49% start at Google, 51% will not consider a provider under four stars, 74% have paid more because of better reviews and 33% rank response time first in an emergency.¹⁸ 37% still prefer to call for high-stakes work and 26% called because the answer was not online (*small sample*).¹⁸

THE MOVE Measure speed-to-first-human-response as a scorecard line. Ask for the review at the truck, not by email that evening. Put the three answers people call about — pricing approach, availability, warranty — on the page they land on.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE

Do **#3 and #4 together**. Year one is where the people go, the manager is who they go because of, and neither costs capital. Everything else in this list gets easier once your people stop leaving and your trucks stop going back twice.

MAKE IT OPERATIONAL

The 2027 leader's scorecard.

Twelve numbers. Reviewed monthly by the leadership team, not quarterly by a committee. If a line has no owner, it has no chance.

METRIC	WHY IT IS ON THE LIST	OWNER
01 First-year retention, by supervisor	31.5% are in year one ⁵	
02 Voluntary turnover, split by division/trade	12–21% by trade ⁷	
03 First-time fix rate, by technician and job type	28-point top-to-bottom gap ⁶	
04 Reservice / callback rate and its cost	25% of service cost ⁶	
05 Billable utilization against the 75–85% band	Burnout above it ²³	
06 Drive time per technician per day	65.4% already under 1 hr ⁵	
07 Speed to first human response, by hour of day	>50% want it inside an hour ⁴	
08 Review volume and rating by technician	51% skip sub-4-star ¹⁸	
09 Average ticket and realized price vs. book	Growth came from price ⁴	
10 Open roles × days open × daily margin impact	64 filled per 100 needed ¹¹	
11 Manager leadership training hours	70% of engagement variance ⁹	
12 One-on-ones held vs. scheduled	The only leading indicator of all of the above	

FIRST 90 DAYS OF 2027

Weeks 1–4

Baseline all twelve metrics, even where the data is ugly. Name the people you cannot afford to lose. Put the three 2027 regulatory dates on one page with an owner.

Weeks 5–8

Stand up the first-year onboarding plan. Start manager leadership training. Publish the career ladder with levels, criteria and pay bands.

Weeks 9–12

Run the first full monthly scorecard review with owners in the room. Hold the career-path conversations. Start the root-cause note on every second visit.

THE RHYTHM IS THE STRATEGY

Baselines decay. Anything on this page reviewed once and filed will be back to 2026 performance by June.

ABOUT LIFE PULSE

What we do, and where we fit in a home service business.

Life Pulse helps individuals and organizations leverage alignment—increasing performance, results and profit at scale without sacrificing success or fulfillment.

Founded in 2017 and based in St. Louis, Life Pulse works with leaders and teams across the trades, professional services, healthcare and enterprise organizations. The work is built on one methodology: define your own definition of success, discover your actual position against it, and decide to realign — exposing the gap, bridging it and sustaining the bridge. Four vital signs of fulfillment — internal, physical, relational, professional — make it measurable. The system has been used inside organizations including Google, X and the U.S. Air Force, and Matt Granados' work on it produced multiple #1 international best sellers, *Motivate the Unmotivated* and *The Intentional Week*.

WHERE LEADERS TYPICALLY START

ENGAGEMENT	WHAT IT IS
Precision Pulse Session	A customized live 30- or 60-minute session for a leadership team, board or forum. Leadership picks the issue, every participant submits their role, context and biggest roadblock beforehand, and the session works the actual root causes. Not a canned keynote.
Cohort programs	Two programs, each run in separate Executive and Manager-Leader rooms. The Unbreakable Workshop builds individual capacity — Foundation, Power and Glue. Motivation Management is about managing the people around you and the people problems on the team — which, in a service business, is the service manager's whole job. Monthly live sessions plus digital training between them.
Coaching and community	Optimal Performance Coaching, the LP Planner system, and ongoing private group access for teams in a program.
REALIGN	A two-day leadership intensive in St. Louis. Leaders leave with a customized 90-day plan. Next edition: November 4–5, 2026. realignstl.com
Keynotes and virtual training	For associations, chapters, franchise conferences and company-wide meetings.

Nobody arrives unaligned. Everyone is aligned to something.

Which is why the work is always **re**alignment — taking a team that is already pointed somewhere and pointing it, deliberately, at the thing that actually matters in 2027.

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SOURCES

Where every number came from.

All figures published between January and September 2026 unless noted. Items marked *directional* come from secondary write-ups, small samples or proprietary trackers.

- 1 Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, *Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity*, July 23, 2026 and May 5, 2026 releases.
- 2 IBISWorld U.S. industry reports, 2026 editions: HVAC Contractors (Jan.), Plumbers (Jul.), Electricians (Aug.), Roofing Contractors (Mar.), Landscaping Services (May), Pest Control (Aug.), Janitorial Services (Jul.), Damage Restoration Services (Aug.).
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- 4 Jobber, *2026 Home Service Trends Report* (1,050 U.S. owners, ±3 pts at 90% CI) and *Home Service Economic Report: Q2 2026* (100,000+ businesses), Aug. 20, 2026.
- 5 Applause, *2026 State of Home Services Benchmark Report* (18,000+ performance data points across 3,000 companies; 555 in-field technicians surveyed).
- 6 Aquant, *2026 Field Service KPI Benchmark Report*, Feb. 19, 2026 (161 organizations, ~30M service events, \$8.3B service costs).
- 7 ServiceTitan, technician tenure and turnover by trade (aggregated platform records, trailing 12 months); *2026 Commercial State of the Trades*, Sept. 24, 2026 (1,000+ contractors); *2026 State of AI in the Trades*.
- 8 Gallup, Q12 Meta-Analysis, 11th edition (183,806 business units, 3,354,784 employees, 90 countries), and *State of the Global Workplace 2026*, April 2026. Replacement cost of one-half to two times salary is Gallup's.
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- 16 AHRI U.S. heating and cooling equipment shipment releases, July and August 2026; ACHR News shipment and pricing coverage, Jan. 5, Sept. 14 and Sept. 18, 2026.
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- 19 Work Institute, *2026 Retention Report* (120,000+ exit interviews); Express Employment / Harris Poll turnover-cost survey reported April 23, 2026 (secondary — directional); SHRM *2026 Recruiting Benchmarking* (4,600+ organizations).
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- 24 National Association of REALTORS®, existing-home sales forecast revision, June 16, 2026 (revising the Nov. 14, 2025 forecast).

METHOD NOTE

The dollar cost of replacing a technician is explicitly **derived** by Life Pulse from two sourced inputs — Gallup's half-to-twice-salary replacement range and BLS median pay — and is labeled as such wherever it appears. No client data, proprietary benchmarks or unattributed statistics appear in this report.

The market will decide how much work exists in 2027. You decide who is in the truck when it comes.

If you want this applied to your organization — your turnover, your managers, your scorecard — that is the conversation we have every week with leaders in the trades.

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