



HOW COVID-19 IS IMPACTING **THE HVAC INDUSTRY**

Find out how the coronavirus outbreak has affected the HVAC industry and how various HVAC businesses are responding to the unexpected changes.



IN A CRISIS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ARISE FOR HVAC BUSINESSES



The outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) is continuing to have a significant impact around the world, fundamentally shifting the way we carry out our daily lives.

With social distancing being one of the only ways to slow the spread of the disease, many HVAC businesses are being forced to either temporarily shut down, lay off employees or pivot to operating remotely.

On the other hand the categorization of HVAC as an essential business has also created some unique opportunities, with some businesses experiencing an influx of work and others being presented with new recruiting and training options.

The reality is, the HVAC industry is experiencing a variety of both challenges and opportunities — which is resulting in the emergence of new trends throughout the industry.

HOW HAVE HVAC BUSINESSES BEEN IMPACTED BY COVID-19?



Some are Experiencing Major Challenges

Layoffs have been unavoidable

In a recent survey conducted by Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration (ACHR) Magazine that measured the [effect of COVID-19 on the industry](#), over 50% of respondents selected either “business is slowing down” or “business has dropped off significantly”.

With more customers trying to avoid the risk of exposing themselves to someone that may be carrying the disease, many HVAC businesses have seen a significant decrease in business. As a result, they’re having to resort to laying off their employees to keep their heads above water.

SOME ARE EXPERIENCING MAJOR CHALLENGES

Technicians are being sent home

While some HVAC businesses have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 and are forced to lay off their employees, others have only seen a slow down in business. For these businesses, they are temporarily sending their technicians home until things pick back up again.

SOME ARE USING REMOTE TECHNOLOGY TO INNOVATE

But all is not lost. Innovative solutions are also being born out of this crisis as some businesses have been implementing measures designed to help their customers while remaining socially distant.

Some teams, including companies like, [N.E.T.R. Inc. Heating and Air](#), are offering free virtual maintenance calls, in which homeowners and landlords are able to use Skype or FaceTime to discuss their problems face-to-face with trained technicians who may be able to guide customers through small repairs.

In the event that a virtual call is not sufficient, techs get an idea of the work needed ahead of time so they can limit their in-person visits.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN, SOME HVAC BUSINESSES ARE SEEING MORE BUSINESS

On the Residential Side

Due to the shelter-in-place guidelines, HVAC techs are seeing a lot more service calls, largely due to over-worked systems, running their compressors and other components, eight more hours a day than normal.

In addition, the outbreak has got people calling into question the quality of the air they breathe at home, leading to an increase in interest for new air filters and UV air purifying products.

Further, in Southern parts of the country, temperatures are continuing to rise as we reach the summer months. Customers don't seem to be putting off AC repairs, and this is also contributing to an increased workload for residential HVAC firms.

On the Commercial Side

Some commercial HVAC businesses have seen an uptick in service calls coming from "essential" buildings, such as healthcare facilities and grocery stores.

In addition, some stable businesses are actually taking advantage of downtime by reaching out to commercial HVAC teams to service their HVAC units while their buildings are not occupied.

FOR EXAMPLE

A forced closure creates a rare opportunity for a popular restaurant to inspect and repair a commercial-grade freezer that may have been put on the backburner during normal business operations.



WHAT ARE HVAC BUSINESSES DOING TO ADJUST?



Whether HVAC businesses have been positively or negatively affected by COVID-19, team leaders have been seeking ways to remain successful and productive.

While some businesses, like DualTemp, are taking a look at their backlogs to see what they can push up the pipeline, others are utilizing this lull in the schedule by focusing on upskilling their techs at home.

THEY'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ONLINE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

If your techs are spending less time in the field due to decreased HVAC maintenance and repair opportunities, then now is the perfect time to focus on training.



During uncertain times, training that can be carried out anytime and anywhere becomes more valuable. Technicians can continue advancing their skills from the safety of their own homes. Because of COVID-19, Training Coordinator at UA Local 137, Andy Fuchs, has transitioned their training to be completely online with Interplay Learning's [SkillMill™ Learning Platform](#).

Fuchs takes advantage of the SkillMill™ HVAC assessments to get an idea of a tech's knowledge. He then shares results and points to the competencies they need to focus on. This essentially creates a well-rounded training program without the need to go anywhere.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE HVAC TRAINING?

A robust at-home training program provides many benefits to both technicians and management.

1. **They get the opportunity to advance their skills from the safety of their own home.**
2. **They remain motivated and dedicated to improving skills, so they are ready to come back to work.**
3. **With techs being more productive, management can justify avoiding layoffs.**

These benefits are reflected in the surge of customers Interplay Learning has seen in the last couple weeks as their ease of deployment for an instantaneous training program is a huge benefit.

Since being forced to rollout online HVAC training due to COVID-19, Fuchs says moving forward he's going to incorporate more online training into his curriculum.





THEY'RE ALSO ATTRACTING NEW TALENT



13%

Job growth in
the next 10 years

With the HVAC industry anticipating a [projected job growth of 13%](#) in the next 10 years, highly- skilled, educated HVAC techs have been in high demand.

This is why more financially secure companies have been using this time to attract new talent to their team.

With so many layoffs happening, the skilled labor market is undergoing somewhat of a reset at the present moment. As an example, tens of thousands of layoffs have occurred in the Oil and Gas industry, causing a flood of new talent to rush into the labor pool. In this event lies a major opportunity for reskilling and cross training already skilled professionals. For those who can manage the opportunity, this is an opening to launch new careers in HVAC, while effectively helping to close the skills gap.

HOW ARE THEY ATTRACTING NEW TALENT?

With online learning platforms, like [SkillMill™](#).

1. New hires no longer have to wait for face-to-face training.
2. Businesses are able to get a head-start on onboarding new techs since they can begin assessing and training while techs are forced to stay at home.

KEEP YOUR TECHNICIANS BUSY AT HOME WITH ONLINE HVAC TRAINING



Interplay Learning's SkillMill™ Learning Platform is the only one that can truly facilitate thorough, varied and effective HVAC training in a remote working environment.

Despite the uncertainty that we're all experiencing, many businesses within the HVAC industry are still growing and thriving. By turning their focus to upskilling employees, team leaders have been able to educate new technicians and prepare existing ones to return to the field when the time arises.

With SkillMill™, technicians can complete courses, watch videos and test their HVAC knowledge all from their own homes.

Team leaders can even facilitate communication, and friendly competition, between technicians while social distancing through the use of points scoring and leaderboards.



**IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL CLIMATE,
NOT EVERY HVAC BUSINESS IS
FINANCIALLY ABLE TO INVEST IN
TRAINING FOR THEIR TEAM.
WE WANT TO HELP AND HAVE
OPTIONS AVAILABLE.**

We fully believe that supporting the HVAC industry in any way we can is the most important action we can take during these challenging times.



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