

A close-up photograph of a network switch or patch panel. Numerous blue Ethernet cables are plugged into the ports, with some red cables also visible. The ports are numbered, and the overall scene is brightly lit, emphasizing the textures of the cables and the metallic surfaces of the switch.

SUCCESS STORY

Charles Knight:

FROM

Military Service

TO

IT Field Service



FIELD NATION

fieldnation.com



Background

Charles served as a mechanic in the U.S. Army both stateside and in Iraq. In 1999, he retired from the military and began his civilian career working in the trucking industry. He initially served as a quality assurance inspector, and was rapidly promoted to a warranty manager position that serviced multiple dealerships.

During this time, Charles dabbled in technology, having self-taught himself how to build and fix PCs a decade earlier. He launched a tech company in 2001 in his spare time, but this venture was largely ignored as his warranty work was too lucrative to leave. Charles lost his job in the recession of 2008.

Building Skills with Education and Experience

Charles decided to pursue his love of networking and IT, earning an associate's degree in networking from the University of Phoenix. He re-launched his tech company and started to seek out contractor jobs where he could use his skills.

One of his first projects was a 15-month job upgrading network systems at McDonald's restaurants across the US. He served as the lead technician at 450 sites, and was later promoted to a regional leadership role overseeing multiple sites. During this time, Charles developed an intimate understanding of point-of-sale (POS) terminals. As the POS machines operated much like a PC, he adopted this new skill easily.

Standing Out for Superior Service

Upon completion of his first long-term IT project, Charles used these new skills and his degree to take on small jobs that often led to larger jobs. Soon, he was afforded the luxury of being choosy about the clients and jobs as he was a sought-after contractor.

“My motto has always been to do it right, not do it over,” said Charles. “As my reputation and skills grew, I could select jobs that kept me closer to home, paid well, and often taught me new skills that could advance me even further.”

Today, Charles continues to take on new challenges. He is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in cyber security from the University of Phoenix, as well as earning Cisco and Microsoft networking certifications to make him stand out.

Finding a New Path: The Gig Economy

Charles enjoys the flexibility to work when and where he’d like, and the option to take a day off to go fishing if he wants to. He uses two field service marketplaces to identify and apply for jobs that interest him and pay well.

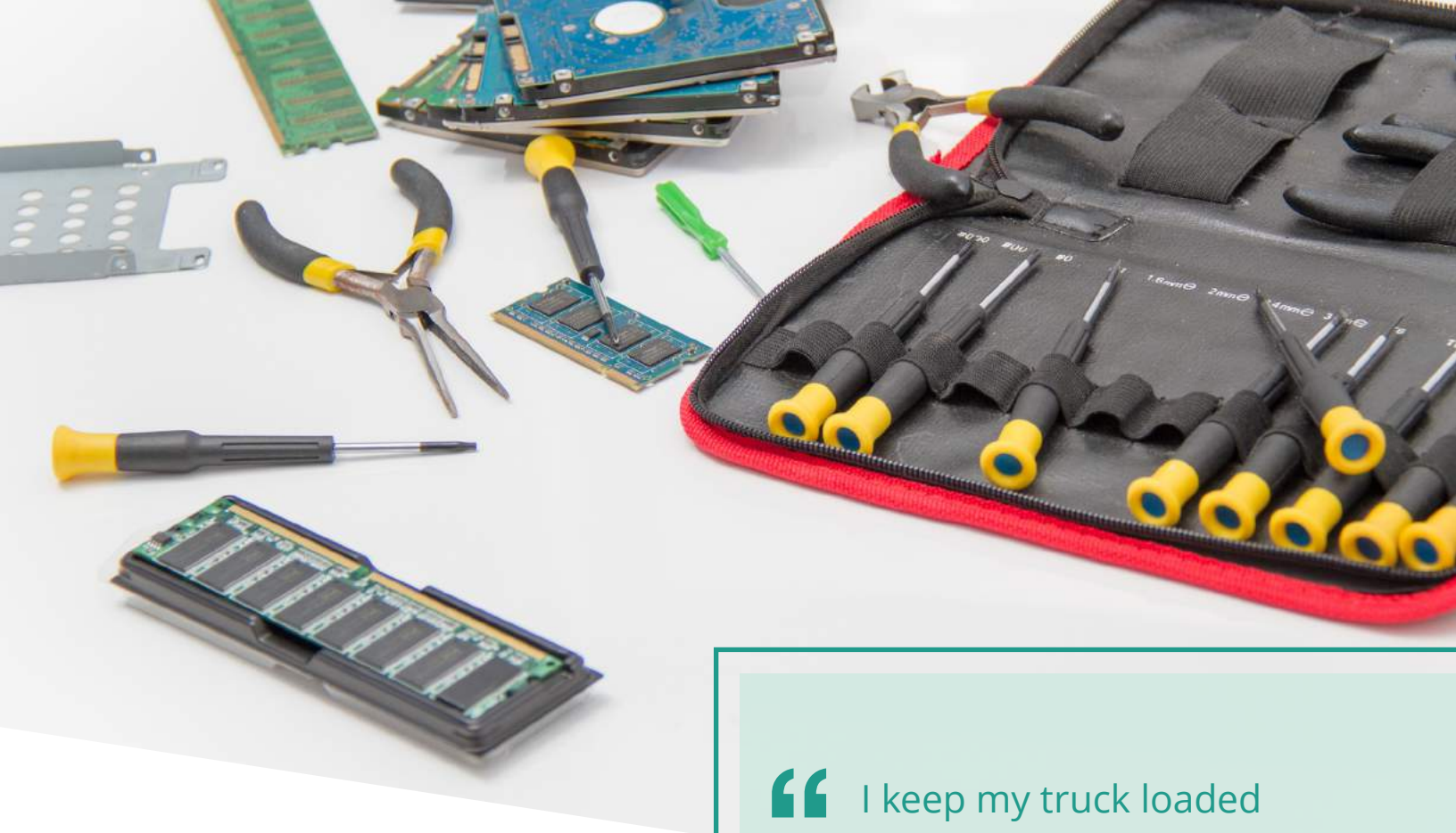
A professional racquetball player, Charles is a fierce competitor in tournaments across the US. Wherever tournaments take place, he uses Field Nation to see if there are jobs nearby.

“With the additional skills that I’ve mastered over time, I can relocate or find jobs in the same vicinity as my tournaments to make these trips more affordable,” said Charles.

In 2018, Charles had a hip replacement and rotator cuff surgery. During his recovery he was able to secure on-demand jobs that fit his capabilities. He searched platforms and applied for smaller jobs that wouldn’t tire him or require overhead work. This flexibility

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allowed him to get back to work earlier and exercise the muscles he needed to on the job.

Charles added, "As my wife and I look ahead to retiring, I see myself continuing to apply and go on jobs that interest me. I can easily scale back on my work with the platforms and retire as much as wish."

Advice to New On-Demand Professionals

Online marketplaces have worked well for Charles and his family, giving him flexibility and variety in his work.

When looking back at his early days as a contractor, he recalled the importance of creating a budget to track and monitor out-of-pockets fees, such as fuel and equipment rentals. This knowledge helped him to make better job choices before applying.

“ I keep my truck loaded with my equipment, because you never know everything you’ll need until you reach the site. It’s best to be over-prepared.”

“My best investment was s a big tool bag,” claims Charles. “It holds my cabling tools, light sticks, and much more. Along with my four-foot folding ladder, it’s a necessity at every job. I keep my truck loaded with my equipment, because you never know everything you’ll need until you reach the site. It’s best to be over-prepared.”

Choosing the Right Platforms

Charles will readily admit that understanding the nuances of each marketplace is critical. He has been a long-time member of Field Nation, having completed more than 591 jobs completed and securing a 100% assignments fulfilled rating.

“The platforms vary on fees, how rapidly you are paid, and the type of work posted to the site,” explains Charles. “It’s important to understand how quickly you’ll be paid for a job -- it’s often negotiable – and if their fee is applied to labor or also to parts you bill a customer.”

All of these variables impact your earnings, and Charles has developed a set of criteria to evaluate a job’s profitability. He then looks at the type of job to find ones he’ll enjoy or learn something new. If it’s a match, employers are fortunate when he applies, as his stellar reviews speak to his skills and professionalism.

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Charles Knight

Service Provider | Field Nation user since September 2016

BY THE NUMBERS

590 Jobs

Completed on Field Nation

98% Average

Rating in all four areas:

- Timeliness
- Followed Instructions
- Deliverable Accuracy
- Assignments Fulfilled

Saved in **79**

Preferred Groups

5 Star  **441**

Performance Rating

Total Ratings

Worked with **125**

Different Clients



About Field Nation

Field Nation connects businesses with service providers and partners with them to complete projects. Field Nation combines marketplace coverage with project management tools to deliver on-site expertise anytime, anywhere. Whether companies of 1 or 1,000 need to manage internal staff projects, contingent workforce tasks, or source local service providers for immediate needs, Field Nation is the number one choice to get work done.

**Source.
Manage.
Engage.**