

# Dashboards Field Teams Actually Use

*Less is more: building something people open twice a week, not once a year*

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## Why most dashboards go unused

Most dashboards fail not because the data is wrong, but because they answer nobody's question. They are built to show everything, so they help with nothing. A dashboard earns its place only when a real person opens it to make a real decision.

## Start with the decision it supports

Before building anything, name the decisions the dashboard is for: which sites to visit, where a budget is slipping, whether a target is on track. Design around those. If a chart does not help someone decide something, it does not belong on the screen.

## The one-screen rule

If it does not fit on one screen without scrolling, it is two dashboards, or it is one dashboard trying to do too much. Pick the three or four things that matter most and let the rest live in a report people pull when they need it.

## Show change, not just totals

A big number is a trophy, not a decision. "340 households" tells you nothing; "340, down from 520 last month" tells you to ask why. Favour trends, comparisons against plan, and flags for what is off track.

## Design for low bandwidth and small screens

Field teams often work on phones and weak connections. A dashboard that takes a minute to load will not be opened. Keep it light, keep it fast, and make sure the most important number is readable at a glance on a small screen.

## Keep it current, or kill it

A dashboard showing last quarter's data quietly teaches people not to trust it. If the data cannot be kept fresh, a simple monthly summary is more honest and more useful than a live-looking dashboard that is actually stale.

## Remember

The goal is not an impressive dashboard. It is a decision made a little faster, by someone who trusts what they are looking at. Build the smallest thing that does that, and add only when someone actually asks.

*Need a dashboard your team will actually use? Connect with Impact Node.*

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