

The End of Routine Site Visits

How leading operators are moving to exception-based asset management.



A TrackSyte® white paper on exception-based asset monitoring

Working Out What an Unnecessary Site Visit Really Costs

Most teams know roughly what an engineer costs per hour, but few have a firm figure for the cost of a site visit once travel, vehicles, out-of-hours rates and lost productive work are included. This guide sets out a simple method, shows a worked example with illustrative figures, and explains how to turn a per-visit cost into an annual one.

What goes into the cost of a site visit

A visit costs more than the time spent on site. For remote assets such as towers, generators and pumps, travel often takes longer than the job itself. Build the figure from these elements:

- Labour: the engineer's loaded hourly cost, including employer's National Insurance, pension and overheads, not just the wage.
- Travel time: hours spent driving to and from site, charged at the same loaded rate.
- Mileage: fuel or charging cost per mile, or your standard mileage rate.
- Vehicle: a share of lease or depreciation, insurance, servicing and tyres.
- Dispatch and admin: time spent by the hire desk or planner arranging the visit and closing the job.
- Out-of-hours rates: overtime or call-out uplifts for evening, weekend and night visits.
- Missed productive work: the planned job the engineer did not do because they were travelling elsewhere.
- Carbon: the emissions from the journey, which many organisations now report.

A worked example

The figures below are illustrative assumptions for a typical remote-site visit, not data about any organisation. Replace each line with your own numbers.

Cost element	Illustrative assumption	Cost
Engineer time on site	1.5 hours at £32 per hour loaded	£48.00
Travel time	2.5 hours at £32 per hour loaded	£80.00
Mileage	90 miles at 45p per mile	£40.50
Vehicle share	Lease, insurance and servicing per visit	£15.00

Cost element	Illustrative assumption	Cost
Dispatch and admin	0.5 hours at £28 per hour	£14.00
Total per visit	Standard working hours	£197.50

Out-of-hours visits and missed work

Out-of-hours call-outs change the picture quickly. In the example above, if engineer and travel time were paid at time and a half, the labour element would rise from £128 to £192, taking the visit to £261.50. Many remote-site faults, such as a CCTV tower going dark or a pump alarm, happen overnight or at weekends.

Missed productive work is harder to price but matters just as much. Every hour spent on an unnecessary journey is an hour not spent on planned maintenance, installations or revenue-earning jobs. One practical way to express it is in engineer capacity: how many engineers' worth of time is spent each year on visits that did not need to happen.

Scaling up to an annual figure

The TrackSyte site visit calculator uses a straightforward method. It multiplies the number of engineers by visits per engineer per week and by 46 working weeks a year to give annual visits. It then multiplies annual visits by the average cost per visit to give the annual site visit cost.

Continuing the illustrative example: four engineers each making five visits a week gives 230 visits per engineer a year and 920 visits in total. At £197.50 per visit, that is £181,700 a year spent on site visits.

Now suppose, again as an illustrative assumption, that a quarter of those visits turn out to be unnecessary: the fault could have been diagnosed remotely, cleared by a reset, or bundled into a planned visit. That is 230 visits and £45,425 a year. It is also exactly one engineer's annual visit workload, which is the capacity that could go back into planned work.

Step	Calculation	Illustrative result
Visits per engineer per year	5 visits × 46 weeks	230
Annual visits	4 engineers × 230	920
Annual site visit cost	920 × £197.50	£181,700
Unnecessary visits (assumed quarter)	920 × 0.25	230

Step	Calculation	Illustrative result
Cost of unnecessary visits	$230 \times £197.50$	£45,425
Engineer capacity used	$230 \div 230 \text{ visits per engineer}$	1 engineer

Counting the carbon

In the example, 230 unnecessary visits at 90 miles each is 20,700 miles of driving. To convert that into emissions, multiply the mileage by the current UK government greenhouse gas conversion factor for your vehicle type and fuel. This gives a figure you can use in sustainability reporting and in the business case for reducing visits.

Reducing unnecessary visits

The visits that are easiest to avoid are the ones where the engineer arrives to find nothing wrong, or a problem that could have been handled differently. Common examples are a communications drop mistaken for a power failure, a battery that only needed a fuel cell or generator to top it up, or a routine check on an asset that was working normally.

Remote visibility of power, batteries, connectivity, tilt and location lets the hire desk check before sending anyone. TrackSyte provides this in the TrackSyte Portal, with alerts that separate critical faults from routine warnings. The calculator then applies its stated modelling assumptions to estimate potential savings, including downtime and battery wear, and projects them over five years.

[Site visit calculator](#)

[Commercial impact](#)