



[Is Your CMMS Or EAM Software Really Allowing You To Manage?](#)

Whether your maintenance management software program is categorized as a CMMS (Computerized Maintenance Management System) or as an EAM (Enterprise Asset Management System), the operative word is always "management."

Ideally, a maintenance management system is set up to record client/customer work requests and convert them into formal work orders used to communicate work instruction and report back relevant findings about work performed on any specific asset under the charge of the maintenance department. The work-order form is used as an instrument from which work-related data is collected and captured in the system that is in turn converted at a later date, through the reporting side of the system, into information used to make relevant management decisions about the state of assets and maintenance operations.

Unfortunately, the reality is that many corporations only utilize the work-order side of the system due to an ineffective setup implementation and experience great difficulty when trying to mine the data and tap into the power of the system's reporting capability—*the true "management" side of the program*. The eventual result of a poor implementation is sheer frustration and lack of confidence with the software and a mistaken belief that only a new software tool will resolve the issues. As an asset-management consultant, I find this to be a familiar scenario with new clients. Seeking ways to improve their maintenance methods and approach, they are frustrated by the fact that their budgets typically don't allow them to replace software they've already paid for. Is it any wonder? These days, the purchase price of a new, non-configured, CMMS/EAM system can run well into six figures!

A simple, yet virtually overlooked, innovative approach to resolving a perceived poor maintenance management system is to re-implement the original software as if it were a brand-new system!

Successful re-implementation

FYI: Virtually any CMMS/EAM software can be re-implemented, set up and “tuned” to track and deliver on most management requirements at a fraction of the purchase cost of a new software package. Any improvement funds are best spent on developing a sound implementation and maintenance operating strategy built around the existing CMMS/EAM reporting system.

A variety of reasons can be cited for the lack of reporting capability of an existing CMMS or EAM system, and unless these are addressed, any new implementation or re-implementation will yield no better results than the original software—*much in the same way a driver with bad habits does not become a better driver merely by purchasing a new car!*

The following seven steps address those reasons and act as a guideline to implementing a maintenance management system designed to fit your organization’s immediate and future needs:

#1: Perform a Maintenance Operations Effective Review (MOER)...

Conducted by an internal audit team or a third-party maintenance consultant, a MOER identifies (in a tangible way) the current and future required state of maintenance. Findings typically include strengths that can be built on and improvement opportunities to close the gap analysis. Recommendations include the strategy, work-flow business processes, management action plan for rolling out the program, goals and expectations and relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to identify levels of service, including Asset Availability; MTTR (Mean Time to Repair) or Maintainability); MTBF (Mean Time Before Failure) or Reliability; etc., and the report requirements to deliver on goals, expectations and KPIs.

#2: Upgrade CMMS/EAM software to latest version...

This step requires working with an IT or technical services department to arrange an update to the latest version of the software. If you purchased a software maintenance agreement, the upgrade will be free. If your operating system or hardware requires an update to manage the latest version, or if you do not have a maintenance agreement, a cost/benefit analysis will need to take place. If an upgrade is not feasible due to cost or because the software is no longer supported, re-implement the current version of software.

#3: Determine setup parameters...

The software setup must reflect how you will manage your department moving forward and what you track and report on as defined by the MOER goals, expectations and performance measures. The key to extracting information from data is not only collecting and inputting sound

Don't Procrastinate...Innovate!

Written by Ken Bannister, Contributing Editor
Friday, 18 January 2013 15:21

data in a consistent manner, but in how the data is sorted and packaged. First, we must identify all standard searchable fields, along with any User Definable Fields (UDFs), and generate appropriate code sets. Customization is likely not an option with an existing system. Standard code-set examples include Work Order Type (Investigative, PM, PdM, Breakdown, Corrective, etc.), Asset/Equipment Type (Compressors, HVAC, Conveyors, etc.), Work Category (Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Machining, etc.), Tradesperson (Mechanic, Millwright, Electrician, etc.), Priority (Emergency, Critical, Routine), Work Order Status (Awaiting Planning, In Planning, Planned Complete, Scheduled, etc.). These codes determine what type of work is being performed, by whom and on what, as the work moves through the maintenance department.

The software may offer searchable Failure codes that include Symptom, Cause and Effect. These call for much thought and training to leverage effectively. If unsure, the most effective method is to just use the Cause code for identifying maintenance-related failures and non-maintenance-related failures to determine the difference between what maintenance manages (all failures), versus what it controls (Maintenance-Related Failures). Another useful search parameter would be Internal versus Contracted work to determine the type and percentage of work performed by in-house personnel.

#4: Populate the database...

If your original ("legacy") CMMS/EAM system was unsound or incomplete, only the asset register should be transferred (after being checked for accuracy and naming conventions). If an inventory was in use, it also should be checked prior to transfer and updated after a physical inventory count. If no inventory is used, only labor costs can be tracked until the inventory is set up off-line and incorporated (when completed) into the database at a later date.

Codes reviewed in step three are entered in the system. PM job tasks are reviewed for validity and effectiveness and entered into the re-implemented system as per the rollout schedule set up in step one.

#5: Redesign work-order layout...□

The work-order layout should communicate instruction and ask for the data you need to collect for reporting purposes.

#6: Learn how to use the Query and Report writer...

Many programs will allow ad hoc queries that allow the user to "slice and dice" the data many different ways and transfer the information into a spreadsheet for reporting purposes. Some

Don't Procrastinate...Innovate!

Written by Ken Bannister, Contributing Editor
Friday, 18 January 2013 15:21

systems may require IT to develop formal reports through computer code. Understand what you can do to extract data and report it out in a timely manner as easily as possible.

#7: Roll out the program. . .

A second innovative aspect of this approach is using your existing software to build a low-risk foundational maintenance management structure that can be tested and benefitted from immediately, then easily transposed—*in a virtually seamless manner*—to any future maintenance software purchase.

Good Luck! **MT**

kbannister@engtechindustries.com