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Directory of EAM/CMMS software for maintenance and reliability organizations.

Enterprise asset management (EAM) and computerized maintenance management systems (CMMS) are essential to most maintenance and reliability strategies irrespective of plant size. The software must manage and optimize reliability and performance of plant physical assets and maintenance operations, support a company's business process, and be tied in to business drivers. It must support a company's overall asset management strategy.

Buying decisions begin with an analysis of how a maintenance organization operates today and what its strategy is for the future. These systems can help organizations implement their strategy to decrease downtime and increase the utilization of their resources, and can be viewed as a communication tool to help make better decisions. Software can help companies improve their business but no program will do everything the way users want it to, so compromises will need to be made.

Maintenance information systems run on multi-platforms using mainframe, client/server, thin client, or browser-based applications. Smaller, stand-alone systems run on PCs or local area networks. Because some powerful packages can run on a single PC or networked PCs without a midrange server, the dividing line between small and large systems has blurred. Therefore, we are including all software packages in one directory.

Many companies offer programs specifically built to be accessed across the Internet. These web-architected programs enable rapid deployment across a number of sites using a Web browser and established wide and local area networks. Multi-site organizations can benefit from a centralized data repository which allows for normalization and standardization across plants. Another variation of this method lets users access the program through the Internet but the data resides in their own plants

Using these approaches, maintenance personnel can access information and work orders in a number of ways—dedicated terminals and PCs, or mobile Palm-type personal digital assistants (PDAs) and handheld computers running Windows CE. Other wireless and radio frequency devices to access information are also at hand. Developments including e-commerce, supply chain integration, the Internet, and wireless technologies that first were implemented in larger plants also are benefiting smaller and midsize plants.

Some companies offer an application service provider (ASP) option to their programs. Users pay a monthly per-seat fee to access the software through an Internet-enabled workstation. The ASP stores the program and the data on its server. Users always have access to the most current version of the program. This delivery method eliminates the need for on-site hardware infrastructure, system administration, and associated costs at the user's end and lets companies concentrate on operating their plants rather than their computer systems.

To meet the needs of the increasing number of companies that recognize the benefits of electronic transactions, some software suppliers provide web-enabled systems that support e-procurement within their own program or allow users to integrate their EAM or CMMS system with other vendor software. Another growing area is connectivity with programs having the ability to integrate with other plant ERP business applications, production automation systems, and other software in the plant.

Information in the listings includes the company contact information, software titiles, and general information about the application's architecture, operating system, and underlying database.

The database manager is a significant contributor to the performance of an EAM/CMMS. It handles procedures that otherwise would have to be written into the application software, adding to its complexity. Many EAM/CMMS programs are written to run with a variety of databases. Other programs are written for a single database, which allows them to make better use of the features and development tools provided by the database. ODBC indicates compliance with Open Database Connectivity, an SQL-based interface from Microsoft designed for consistent access to a variety of databases.

Information for the directory was directly provided by suppliers who are actively promoting their products. **MT**

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