Written by MT Staff
Tuesday, 01 March 2005 00:00

From time to time I get questions about pump reliability, pump replacement, and other issues surrounding pump maintenance. I turn to my usual and trusted resources for answers; however, I recently discovered some great Web sites related to pumps.

Start your online journey at the Hydraulic Institute's www.pumps.org. This site offers a comprehensive, searchable database of pump suppliers, handy pump definitions, a huge library of pump drawings, pump news, and a pump message board. The Pump-Zone offers a message board, directory, and job listings as well.

The Department of Energy's Office of Industrial Technologies offers Pumping System Assessment Tool (PSAT) software as a free download at http://public.ornl.gov/psat/ . The primary purpose of this software is to help end users and others identify pumping system energy efficiency improvement opportunities.

PSAT requires three fundamental field-measured parameters: flow rate, head, and motor power (or current). Using this data, along with some general design and nameplate information such as pump style (selected from a list), motor size (hp), rated speed, and fluid density, generally achievable pump and motor efficiencies and optimal power requirements are estimated. More general information is available from the DOE OIT Best Practices Web site

Ross Mackay, long-time pump expert, offers a pump-related article of the month with an emphasis on reliability at www.rossmackay.com/articles.php . He also offers an e-mail newsletter sign up and schedule of public training courses in addition to self-directed video-based courses.

Try www.pumplearning.org if you want to take a series of e-learning courses on pumps ranging from $99-$239. This site is maintained by the Hydraulic Institute.

Visit Texas A & M Turbo Lab for information about the Pump Symposium, the biggest pump event held each year in March.

Last but not least, if you want to learn more about the pump world from across the pond, visit EuroPump

I want answers—not more questions

Have you ever noticed that when you ask a question at a search engine such as Google, MSN, or Yahoo! you end up with hundreds of links but no real answers? You still have to click each link and read the information on the Web page to see if your answer is there. Many times you have to search dozens of Web sites to find the information you were seeking.

According to Answers.com , "Search engines are terrific when you've got a complex request; if you are trying to recall, say, the name of a Victorian Scottish woolen bonnet, there's probably a page out there that you can dig up. But if you need to know what pie in the sky means, when Benjamin Franklin was born, or whether Aeschylating is a cromulent word, a search engine isn't your best bet." You can download the answer tool to type specific questions and get specific answers, not a simple collection of links. Of course, Answers.com does not have all the answers, but it has a great start. Oh, I almost forgot, a Glengarry is the word for a Victorian Scottish woolen bonnet. You also can try Ask Jeeves .

About.com takes a different approach and offers an information portal managed by human editors who have some knowledge of the subject area they manage. They call this network the Human Internet and most of the categories they manage are pretty good sources of links and direct information.

Alas, there is always Google (see " Reader Letter Regarding Google ") when all else fails and you have time to search several Web sites to find the answers you are looking for.

Terrence O'Hanlon, CMRP, is the publisher of Reliabilityweb.com . He is the director of strategic alliances for the Society for Maintenance & Reliability Professionals (SMRP). He is also the event manager for
CMMS-2005, The Computerized Maintenance Management Summit
on July 26-29, 2005 in Indianapolis, IN, at www.maintenanceconference.com

Internet Tip: More on spam

I feel like I have finally made some progress on the spam war by using a combination of Cloud

mark Safety Bar
, an online spam and fraud prevention service, and
Norton AntiSpam
from an antivirus software maker.

I am not sure why Cloudmark and Anti-Spam both miss some spam but the combination seems to be about 99 percent effective for me. It rarely snatches e-mail I want to get as spam so I do not need to check the spam folder as much as I did when I first began using this type of software. If you have an effective spam solution, please e-mail me at tohanlon@reliabilityweb.com

Reader Letter Regarding Google

I received a letter from friend, associate, and fellow Web enthusiast, Don Fitchett , who let me know that my previous comments about Google returning paid inclusion search results were not entirely correct.

Don pointed to several examples that returned highly relevant search results. The problem usually occurs when the search term is very broad such as “CMMS” as opposed to “CMMS Selection.” Don is right. Google does a good job returning both paid and indexed search results and it clearly marks paid or sponsored links on the right side of the page. Thanks, Don.