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Despite growing acceptance, SAP's Plant Maintenance (PM) function remains misunderstood and under-used. Here's how to change that.

SAP® R/3 (real-time data processing, 3-tier), or ECC (Enterprise Central Component), is an Enterprise Resource Planning tool that provides facilities an integrated solution for managing business operations and customer relations. The SAP PM (Plant Maintenance) module is a subset of SAP EAM (Enterprise Asset Management). SAP PM contains the key Maintenance Planning and Scheduling functionalities to support successful asset or equipment maintenance. The ultimate challenge for a maintenance department is how to optimize and integrate SAP PM/EAM system functionality for the planning and scheduling of repairs, inspections and STO (shutdown, turnaround, outage) activities that support effective asset management.

When an industrial organization runs SAP, it typically includes the SAP EAM program, which encompasses the SAP PM module that supports Maintenance and Reliability. Based on this arrangement, users typically expect that they will be able to effectively manage maintenance planning and scheduling to track and analyze "repairs and inspections."

Management, for its part, usually will be expecting something else: It desires powerful reporting that can help to control and possibly reduce the

amount of reactive
work, while at the same time maximize proactive work.
Despite such high expectations, however, most SAP implementations never reach their hoped-for business objectives. Consequently, SAP users are often unhappy—
to the point that many consider their
implementations to be failures.
Common complaints involve the
improper setup of SAP functions,
which can lead to system misuse;
under-utilization of the system due to its complexity; and the belief that the system can't support the organization's needs.

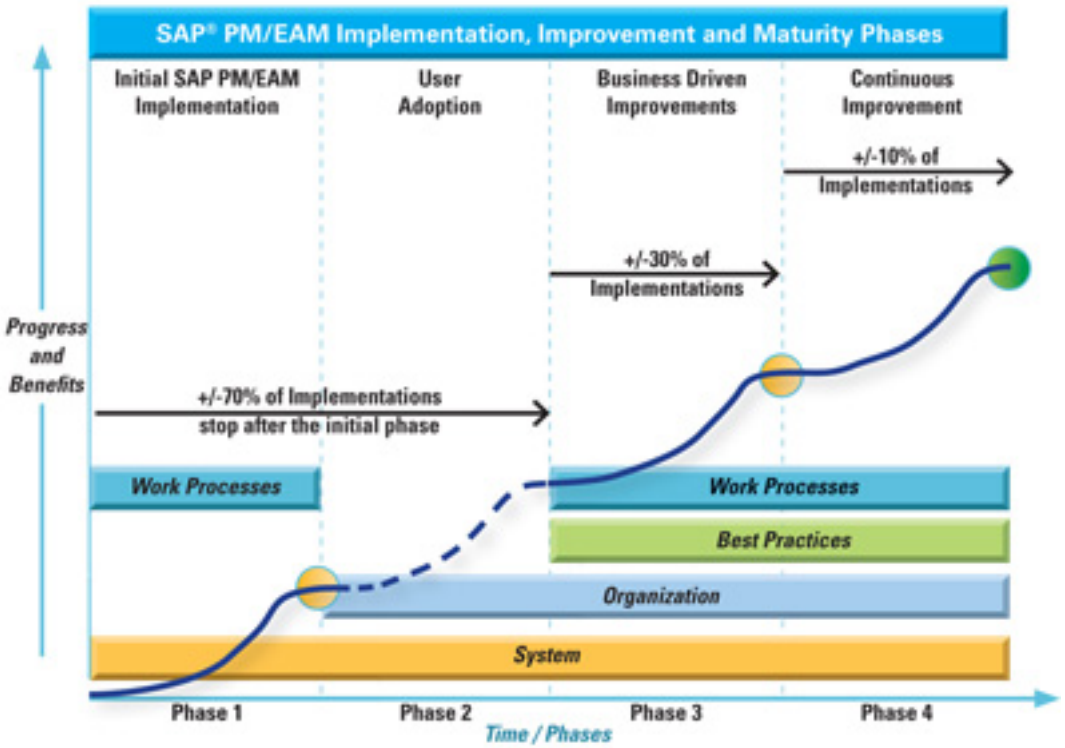

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Fig. 1. Manufacturing and maintenance organizations typically go through multiple phases of implementing, improving and maturing their SAP PM/EAM functionality before they reach acceptable or advanced business benefits. Typically, the initial core functionality that's implemented does not give the expected maintenance and reliability

benefits because of the focus on the *'system'* implementation. With every implementation comes increased workloads and steep learning curves due to SAP's extensive functionality. This challenge, along with high cost and other distracting priorities, means about 70% of organizations implement SAP's core functionality only, roll it out, then leave the users to their own devices. Around 30% are unhappy with the limited ROI they realized, and start post-go-live improvement efforts to capture additional benefits. About 10% of all implementations mature to the point where full benefits are realized.

Is it the system or the people?

The many years I've spent implementing and optimizing SAP PM for organizations around the globe have led me to conclude that perceived implementation failures and successes need to be carefully evaluated. It's important to understand the exact circumstances and criteria used to make such evaluations. For example, is it possible that many successful implementations of SAP PM/EAM were once "failures" to some extent? Figure 1 offers an explanation. (*Note: Table I supports Fig. 1 with additional details on the four typical implementation and improvement phases.*)

Initial Implementation & Rollout:	Learning To Use The System:	Business Driven Improvements:	Continuous Improvement To Reach Superior Outcome:
•Implementation Of Core SAP PM/EAM Functionality •Limited Use Of Best Practices •Typically IT And Corporate Driven **Initial Outcome:** •Reduced Number Of CMMS Related Systems •Globalized PM/EAM System •Integrated Accounting & Financial Reporting •Improved System Integration •Limited Departmental/Business Process Integration	•End User Community Learns Basics Of SAP PM/EAM •SAP PM/EAM Utilization Between 10 And 20% •Benefits Realized By Maintenance & Reliability Are Limited •Business Process Requirements And Objectives Are Sill Not Met	•Business Processes Based On Better/Best Practices And Industry Standards •Improved Departmental/Business Process Integration •System Integration & Data Quality Improvement •Advanced Functionality In SAP PM/EAM •Advanced User Capabilities •SAP PM/EAM Utilization Improves To Above 60% •KPIs And Advanced Reporting/Trending In Place And Used Regularly •Frequent Assessments To Drive Improvement	•Refined Business Processes •Focused Assessments To Drive Superior Results •Better Or Best-in-industry/Class Practices In Use •Reached Business Objectives •Optimized SAP PM/EAM •Superior User Capabilities •SAP PM/EAM Utilization Above 80%

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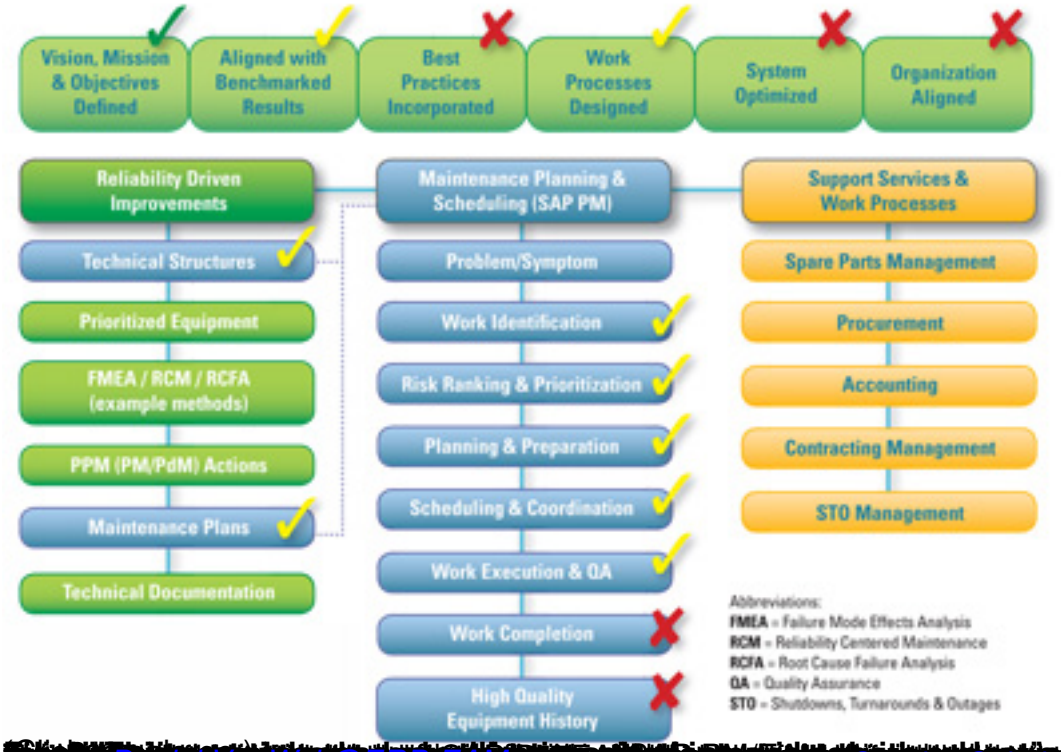

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Tips For Configuring And Using Your SAP PM/EAM

Most SAP PM/EAM systems are configured with a main focus on only a few key transactions. The remainder of the system is normally set up incorrectly or is overlooked, making it difficult for users to navigate the system and use it efficiently. To successfully configure and use your SAP PM/EAM, consider the following:

- *Hide unused transactional screens and fields.*
- *Set up standard "selection variants" for all list reports.*
- *Set up standard "layouts" for all list reports.*
- *Activate and configure advanced transactional functions to extend current work-process capability.*
- *Use the Information System reports in SAP ("standard analysis" of statistics)*
- *Develop and maximize your users' navigational capabilities.*
- *Establish custom reports to allow advanced management and trending capabilities for enhanced visibility and control of the organization.*

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