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Thursday, 01 May 2003 13:15

Today, most maintenance organizations lack entrepreneurship. What do I mean by this bold statement? Looking at the rate at which organizations adopt new technology, we see a wave-like pattern of personalities:

1. Leaders: a few innovators and visionaries who are early adopters
2. Followers: a considerable number of pragmatists who are the majority adopters
3. Laggards: a number of conservatives who are late adopters
4. Unbelievers: a few skeptics who may never adopt the technology.

Why does this delay in the adoption of technology occur? We certainly cannot blame it on a lack of technology or information available to us. The Internet, along with other technologic advances, have allowed for information to be far more readily available than it has ever been before. In order to cope with this overload of information we often tune it out, but at what cost?

If we turn our focus to business, in order to be successful, we do not have the luxury of ignoring the masses of business information and data that we produce, disseminate, and receive. Instead, we must learn not only how to deal with this information, but also how to manage it, and how to use it effectively to try to gain the upper hand on the competition.

Vision, goals, and success occur by leveraging and applying technological advancements. It is not the availability of advancements holding companies back, but rather the leadership necessary to implement and apply the advancements available to us. There needs to be an individual, a leader, an entrepreneur in the organization who stands up and says, “We need to take advantage of this innovative solution because it will allow us to be successful and gain the upper hand.”

Companies have recognized equipment reliability as a strategic component in their plans for future success, a way to gain a competitive advantage. Maintenance goals are now aligned with company goals to achieve higher returns on asset investments, to increase output and revenue, and to ensure safety and environmental integrity.

Now more than ever, with shrinking budgets and fewer resources, maintenance requires innovative solutions to maximize equipment reliability while optimizing cost efficiencies. Will it take the lead and adopt these innovative solutions? Let’s look at an example.

To improve reliability, most companies are using, or have experience with, various forms of information systems. All systems can create lots of data, but where does this data come from?

- 15 percent is from predictive technology
- 10 percent is numeric condition process data
- 75 percent is from qualitative descriptive inspections which are mostly recorded on paper check sheets that end up as clipboards hanging on walls. Others are filed away never to be looked at again.

All this data is critical and therefore collected, but it resides in different locations and databases, creating many islands of data. How do you manage it?

If you want to be a leader and recognize that equipment reliability is a strategic component to success within the solution, then you need to ensure that the reliability software you are planning to use does the following:

- Presents results visually through flashing alarms and trending graphs, identifying potential failures and recommending corrective actions—before the equipment fails.
- Uses single or multiple data points to analyze the data, applying defined rules and calculations to get a true picture of equipment health.
- Performs the calculations and conducts the analysis automatically.
- Collects equipment condition data from controls, sensors, data historians, predictive maintenance technologies, and visual inspections.
- Solves the problem of islands of data by directly linking condition information to CMMS and plant information management systems.

Reliability software is able to correlate the islands of data into one information system and turn it into actionable knowledge that feeds your CMMS the right work at the right time to optimize asset performance and extend asset life.

Like other innovations and advancements that will support companies in their quest for success and leadership, it will take an entrepreneur within the organization to stand up, be the leader, and make it happen. Might this person be you? **MT**

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