Viewpoint: Taking Aim On Your Business - MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY

Written by Maurice Wilkins, VP Consulting, ARC Advisory Group
Sunday, 01 October 2006 19:54

I still find it truly amazing that aircraft high above   the ground or racecars hurtling around a racetrack   can have their engines monitored, diagnosed,   tuned and possibly repaired from a remote   location- *often many thousands of miles away*.   Although this technology has been available for   several years, the same is also happening more   often now with process equipment.Many types of   equipment are monitored and controlled directly   using wired or bus-based intelligent sensors   and controllers, or indirectly by wireless devices.   In addition, it is becoming more commonplace   to operate sites or units within a site remotely- *especially "skid-mounted" units*

.

But, how does a site start on the journey to   using some of these leading-edge technologies?   How does a company know whether it will benefit   them or not? Does this level of remote interaction   with process equipment require a new and   different level of maintenance technician -or can   your existing technicians bridge the gap? How   would you know? How would you learn?

One way of getting started is to compare your   current metrics and practices with companies and   sites at the leading edge-using benchmarking.

Benchmarking can be done on an ad-hoc basis   between two or more companies, by using a consulting   company or by joining a consortium, similar   to the one started by ARC Advisory Group.   In this type of consortium, companies and sites   from a number of different industries share metric   data to see how they compare against each   other. Example metrics include:

- Number of Process Control Personnel per I/O
- Number of Field Instrumentation Personnel per I/O
- Maintenance Efficiency
- Key Control Loop Performance
- Instrument & Analyzer MTBF
- Instrument & Analyzer MTTR
- Number of Bad Instrument Measurements
- Number of Bus-based Devices
- Use of Asset Management Applications
- Hours of Maintenance Training
- Type of Maintenance Training

Viewpoint: Taking Aim On Your Business - MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY

Written by Maurice Wilkins, VP Consulting, ARC Advisory Group
Sunday, 01 October 2006 19:54

Metrics-based benchmarking, along with associated   best practices, allows these companies to   focus in on important issues-to really "take aim"   on their business. Showing where the gaps are and   how significant they are allows a site to focus in on   the important ones and also to see where metrics   interact. So, for instance, having a low number of   technicians per I/O may be a good thing, if the   training and support regimen on the site is at or   above best-in-class. Otherwise, it could be just a   cost-saving measure that will eventually become a major issue.

The ARC Benchmarking Consortium recently   released its Benchmarking Report comparing data   from 51 different plants. Staffing levels are just   one of the metrics these manufacturing companies   are using to compare themselves to others,   both cross-company and cross-industry. Each   metric is composed of several measures approved   by the consortium as being valuable, with clearly   defined calculation methods in order to remain consistently measured from plant to plant.

By using benchmarking to take aim on their   businesses, consortium members are also focusing   on areas of most concern.Moving to the next   step, these companies can now put improvement   plans into place and adopt best practices that will   enable them to move closer to best-in-class. **MT**

About ARC: Founded in 1986, ARC Advisory   Group is a thought leader in manufacturing and   supply chain solutions. E-mail: info@arcweb.com ;   Internet: www.arcweb.com .