

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CMMS



Experience shows there are three key groups that must 'buy-in' on the initial selection of a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) and then the ongoing use of the system. Common to each of these groups is an understanding of their culture and the environment in which the system will be used. This is critical to CMMS success.

1) Maintenance

Technicians must see the CMMS as a tool that will help them do a better job, be more efficient and improve work processes. It can't be viewed as a system management is using to 'watch them' or give the perception that someone is always peering over their shoulder.

Because technicians will use the CMMS daily, they will grow to depend on it. Early acceptance is important and buy-in during the initial evaluations is critical. Their CMMS will become an integral tool that they learn to rely on and trust in for helping them do their jobs to their best abilities as maintenance professionals every day.

2) Equipment Users

Production and engineering personnel must see the value CMMS delivers for prompt and effective maintenance. These are the resources responsible for producing product and generating output; therefore, their lines must be operating at their highest levels as much as possible. Preventive maintenance must be coordinated with production and unplanned maintenance must be performed quickly so as not to impact production.

Personnel at the equipment level will be able to recognize the value of a CMMS and understand that proactive maintenance on critical equipment is essential. Having the right CMMS tool that enables maintenance pros to do this work is key.

3) Management

People in management roles should view the CMMS as a means of obtaining 'metrics' regarding maintenance deployment and equipment performance. Through reporting on work performed, planned and in process, management can improve their decision-making process. Having updated information on equipment maintenance history and relative maintenance cost enables management to control resources and costs more effectively. The right CMMS must be able to provide the data management needs for this process.

Bringing these groups together during the selection and implementation planning stages will set the tone for ongoing CMMS success. Such a process will also encourage user input to help determine the type system that is the best fit for the company. This should take into account the size of the organization that will be using the CMMS, functionality required, facility type, budget and return on investment. These components will influence how an organization will achieve the desired results from a CMMS.

IMPLEMENTATION

Software will not "implement itself." Unfortunately, many companies aren't deriving much benefit from their CMMS because the system has been poorly implemented. By taking a systematic approach to the CMMS implementation, organizations will be on a better path for success.

Database building must be planned and checked for effectiveness at predetermined steps. It is essential to have one person actively involved and in charge to ensure proper implementation. Many implementations fail because the database hasn't been built systematically; several people have entered their own data without

direction as to what is needed or expected, resulting in a system that can only be 'used' by the implementer. Proper implementation consists of building the database to match the environment (data formats, how data is recorded, manipulated and managed) and developing a systematic use of the CMMS that is consistent on a daily basis.

Training on how to use the CMMS is often a key component of implementation and provides a disciplined approach to best system usage. It also provides a means for educating multiple users across different disciplines on how to use the system for each of their areas.

CONCLUSION

Software alone won't improve how an organization handles maintenance. System users must understand how the CMMS works and how it can be trusted as a tool to improve work processes and effectiveness. Maintenance, equipment users and management all should view a CMMS as a means for controlling costs and increasing capacity. Having this mind-set is a huge step toward getting the most from a system. <<

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