

Manage Better With An FM system

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Your Most Important Tool

Information is the most powerful tool you can have. An FM System gives you data to analyze, turn into information and make decisions that reduce costs, improve services and manage suppliers better.

It's a key tool for professional Facility Managers. According to IFMA, a Computer Aided Facility Management or Computer Aided Maintenance Management System is used by a total of 69% of FM departments.

FM systems give you visibility into your operations. Without it, you are working blind and relying on inaccurate or misleading information and wasting time trying to manually collect information to make decisions, including capital planning, maintenance activities, supplier assessments, staffing, process changes and customer service improvements.

The Business Case for an FM System

Focus on each one of the functions your system will do for you and identify specific and relevant information you will get and what you can do with with the information that reduces risk or saves costs.

Here are some simple examples of benefits:

- ★ It reduces risk by providing evidence that you are compliant with legal and legislative requirements. It is defensible in the case of a lawsuit or audit by the authorities.
- ★ It reduces your efforts to get information while providing senior management with the facts and figures they need to manage overall resources.
- ★ It tracks repair activity, trends and costs to enable better capital replacement decisions as well as decisions about maintenance practices that save costs.
- ★ It enables you to effectively monitor in-house and subcontracted services for maintenance and work order calls.
- ★ It tracks work orders by type and department. You can pinpoint departments who are accessing costly services more than others and take action to reduce.
- ★ It provides up-to-date inventory of space, vacancy and under-utilized space to help you manage down the total requirements. It giving you visibility into an expensive commodity – real-estate.
- ★ It reduces time and resource costs for reconfigurations and moves because you have accurate, relevant information.
- ★ It reports department space use and resources to put pressure on reduction or justify tighter standards.
- ★ It manages lease terms and landlord charges to validate your charges.

6 Implementation Steps for Success

Its not just about the software. While the software is a valuable tool, you need to put everything else in place - often beyond what the software vendor or consultant will do - to make sure the tool is implemented and used effectively.

You want it to deliver the benefits you expect instead of leaving you with an investment you can't use. The biggest risk is during the implementation phase. Here is a 6 step process that will improve your results:

- 1 Get Help with strategy, change management and selection** - Don't underestimate the effort it takes to implement an FM system. Don't use a consultant connected with software vendors to make the software decision. Use them (or the vendor directly) to implement only after the selection is made.
- 2 Understand your business requirements first** - Decide on your objectives and requirements before you buy, including your processes and what you will do with the information you get from it. Strategically plan for more than just a software implementation. If you understand what you really need, you'll be able to decide on a system instead of worrying about the software features first.
- 3 Look for a system that fits your needs** - Don't do it the other way around. If you customize anything try customizing your processes first before customizing the software.
- 4 Implement it right** - Involve your staff and get their input, change your processes to match the new tool, populate it with accurate data from the start, train everyone well. Implement one part of the system and when successful, implement the rest, building on success.
- 5 Follow-up and Audit** - After implementation, listen to your staff and verify it's working. Make changes and adjustments if required and re-train as needed. After 6 months or so, conduct an audit of the system, processes and data to make sure it's working as you planned.
- 6 Use the information from the system** - Demonstrate the system's value and make decisions. If you don't use what you put into the system, people will stop using it and you will be back where you started.



This management tool is provided by Strategic Advisor, an FM consulting firm specializing in the Facility and Building Management Industry.

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What are the Benefits of an FM System?

- ★ Reduce Risk by demonstrating legislative compliance.
- ★ Information for better maintenance and capital decisions.
- ★ Accurate space inventory to reduce requirements.
- ★ Track in-house and subcontractor resources for efficiency.

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