SET UP A PREVENTIVE
MAINTENANCE PROGRAM
IN SIX SIMPLE STEPS

hippo CMMS

Having a PM (preventative maintenance) program in place not only ensures that all equipment is functioning optimally, it contributes to your company's efficiency, productivity and profitability. On the opposite end of that spectrum, unanticipated production machinery breakdowns lead to reactive repairs, along with unplanned production and employee downtime — all of which is inefficient and costly. In many cases, regular equipment checks are replaced with the laundry list of real-time issues that most businesses face. When future-proofing tasks are overlooked for too long, they often end up becoming new real-time challenges. This is where a sound preventative maintenance program comes into play.

Thankfully, a CMMS (computerized maintenance management system) offers preventative maintenance solutions as one of its key attributes. Highly functional CMMS software provides a bird's-eye overview of your company's facilities, while streamlining the entire maintenance process with useful tools like email integration, set reminders, up-to-date equipment information and auto-assigned tasks — all of which can be deployed and monitored on a range of common devices. Getting the most out of CMMS software starts with a solid preventative maintenance program. Here's how you can build one in six steps:

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Step 1: Create a Preventative Maintenance Plan

Before any preventative maintenance procedures are put into place, it's important to ask key questions. "Who will be involved?" Depending on your company's size, this may include maintenance managers, maintenance techs and even people from the accounting or finance departments. "How do you get the staff invested?" This can be achieved through transparency — clearly explaining the benefits of a preventative maintenance program, involving staff in the planning process and letting them know their input is valuable to the project's success. "What are the goals?" Making a list of desired outcomes — like reducing reactive maintenance costs by X%, or decreasing equipment downtime by X% — should also be factored into your preventative maintenance plan.

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# Step 2: Establish a Facility and Equipment Inventory

Going through a facility and creating a relevant equipment inventory may seem time-consuming, but it's essential to your preventative maintenance program. The more information, the more effective it will be and the more empowered each end-user will be. Basic information includes equipment ID, location, make/model and serial/identification numbers, along with more granular elements like operating manuals, associated parts, purchase and warranty details, manufacturer and supplier information, equipment life expectancy and more. A complete facility and equipment audit will help fuel an effective program and effective CMMS software implementation when it comes to preventative maintenance checks on key operational equipment.

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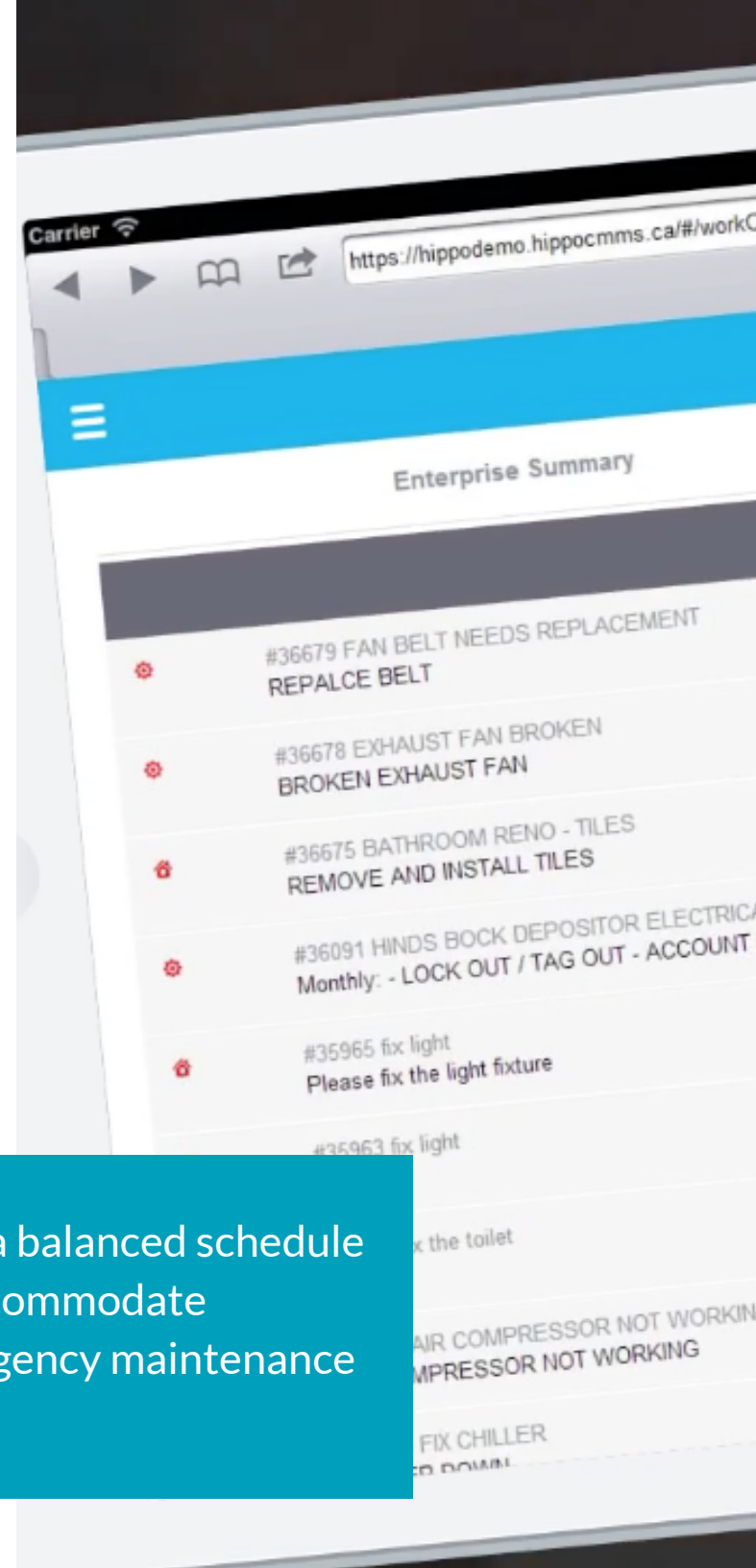# Step 3: Build Preventative Maintenance Procedures

Once an equipment inventory is in place, determining what the required maintenance tasks are and how often they need to happen are important for proper CMMS adoption. Estimating the timeline for each task and considering your primary run-time hours will provide the framework for preventative maintenance scheduling scenarios. The equipment manufacturer should also be referred to as a key resource when it comes to recommended maintenance schedules. O&M (operation and maintenance) manuals and websites can also help inform the scheduling process, as will a list of tools, staff resources and SOPs (standard operating procedures) when considering time estimates for your preventative maintenance program. Even if you already have PM information in place, reviewing it to ensure it's up-to-date is always a good idea.
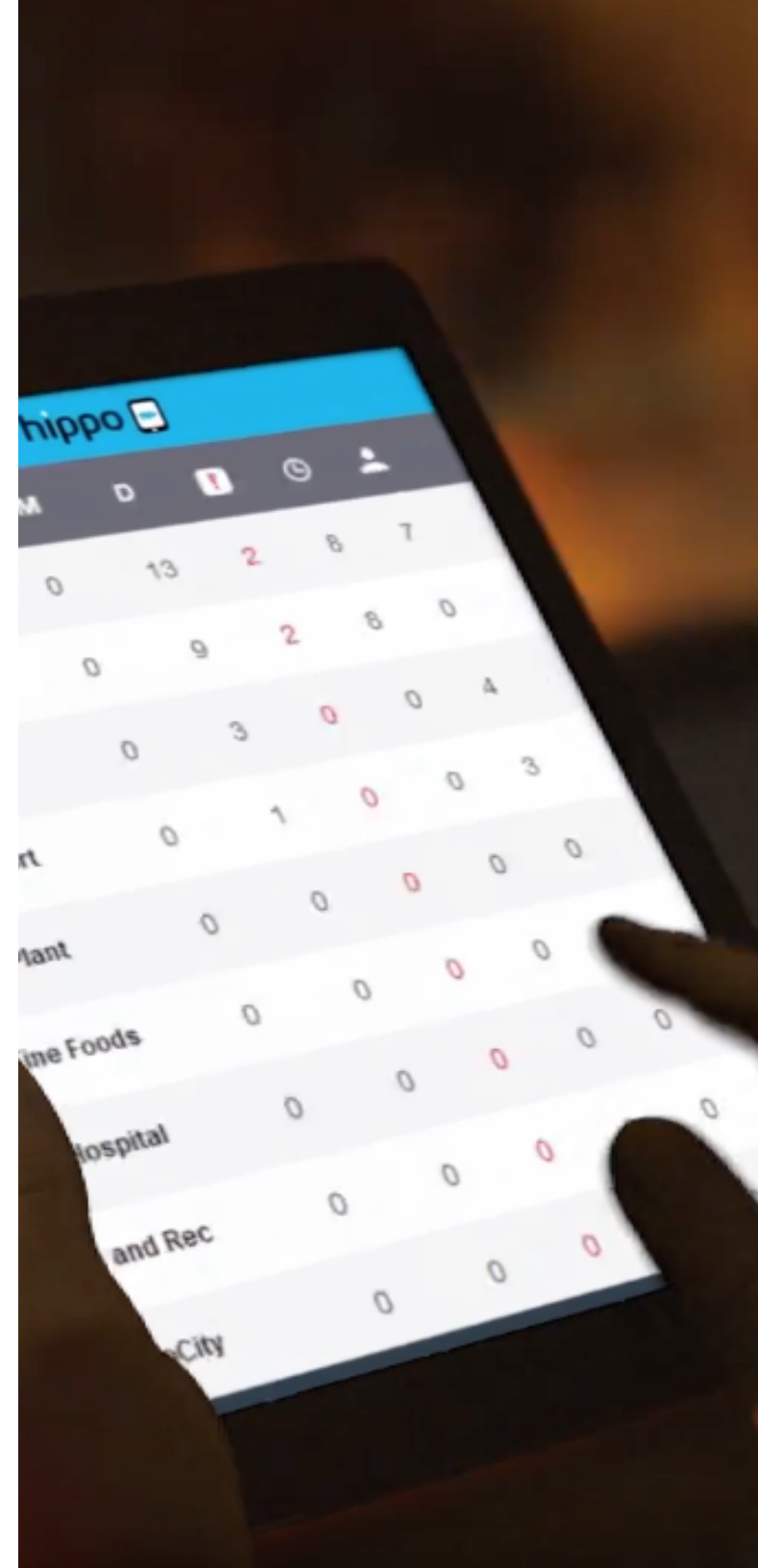
Step 4: Create Preventative Maintenance Schedules

Given the range of resources needed for regularly occurring preventative maintenance, effective scheduling means efficient operations for your company. Start with a list of maintenance items ranked from highest to lowest. Top-priority items should include tasks with longer intervals (annually, semi-annually, quarterly), which generally require more resources and may need to happen at specific times (plant shutdown, the beginning of heating/cooling season, etc.). Items that are more frequent, require less time and have shorter intervals (weekly, monthly, etc.) should be next on the list, followed by low priority tasks. For the sake of productivity, scheduling should build on this criteria — using lower priority preventative maintenance tasks to fill the gaps between the higher priority items that take longer to complete. Prioritizing tasks and creating a balanced schedule will also allow you to better accommodate unforeseen corrective or emergency maintenance that happens in real time.

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Step 5: Train Your Maintenance Team

The best way to complement all the work you're putting into a preventative maintenance program is full-circle implementation. However, this is easier said than done — failed implementation rates start at 40% and are as high as 80%. This is due to thinking an investment in CMMS software alone will streamline your PM initiatives (which is true when all the steps in this article are carefully considered). A CMMS is most effective with a preventative maintenance plan that involves initial consultation, evaluation and input from your maintenance staff. They will be your core CMMS software end-users, so properly training them is an essential part of your PM plan and CMMS coexisting seamlessly. Not everyone is tech-savvy, either. So getting your staff to embrace change and become comfortable using the technology should also be factored into consultation and training. In the end, you won't see the highest ROI (return on investment) without ensuring that staff buys into a preventative maintenance plan, then adopts and uses the CMMS software to its full potential.

Step 6: Analyze – Adjust – Improve

Because your business and equipment assets are dynamic, there's a continuing need to analyze the results of a preventive maintenance program — adjusting and improving it as necessary. A healthy program identifies equipment that requires more time and money than others, leading to procedural and scheduling adjustments. So it's not a bad idea to review the preventative maintenance plan you've built, making changes every couple of years. And if it ever seems too daunting a task, you're not alone. Businesses commonly seek the assistance of consultants or CMMS experts to help assess and fine-tune their PM programs.

There's no doubt that developing and implementing a preventative maintenance program will take time, energy and resources. But once it's in place, the long term benefits of a CMMS-supported PM program far outweigh the costs of reactive maintenance and the disruption that comes with it. Ultimately, a system to monitor your assets and create an effective preventative maintenance schedule will set a new standard of efficiency and savings for your company. Who doesn't like that?

To Find the Right CMMS For Your Business, You Have to Ask Questions

If you are still trying to keep track of your maintenance needs with a spreadsheet, it's time to look into an upgrade. The U.S. Department of Energy reports that, on average, companies reported a 20% decrease in equipment downtime once maintenance management system software was implemented. Yet, even with the potential for large cost savings, finding a CMMS that fits your business can be daunting.

At Hippo CMMS, we aim to simplify the extensive research process by making information about our software accessible and transparent. Check out our Pricing FAQ and Software & Support FAQ to start your journey toward finding a CMMS that fits your business. For an even more in-depth guide, download our free CMMS e-book. We also offer live demos and a 30-day free trial. Take the first step toward revolutionizing your maintenance department by contacting us today.

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