



Dear CMMS Guy - Spreadsheet Monster

Dear CMMS Guy,

My Computerized Maintenance Management System appears to have limited capabilities so we utilize spreadsheets to overcome these shortcomings. While initially this worked well, we have created a spreadsheet monster that now demands daily feedings.

Fighting Monsters in Frisco

Dear Fighting Monsters,

How ironic you should ask about such an issue. Just last week I dealt with the very same thing (go figure). Their identified short coming was developing maintenance schedules. It appears in previous years the system scheduling capabilities were evaluated and deemed too difficult and therefore unusable by an individual that had moved on. As a left behind legacy a massive spreadsheet that would, dare I say, populate itself if you told it to by using the correct language was available. The unfortunate part was nobody spoke the language to populate it.

After an extensive amount of time and energy trying to “tweak the sheet” was expended, total failure was declared and the focus shifted to the purchase of a new system that had this “magical spreadsheet” capability. The realism of the amount of time and money required to identify and implement a new system was determined to be an impractical solution.

Options of purchasing a “bolt-on” scheduling tool were explored as well as a detailed review of the current system scheduling capabilities. Upon review of the options it was determined that the current system did in fact have the “magical spreadsheet” capabilities they we just never utilized. So the moral of the story...

Never let one individual determine what’s useable or unusable within a system. Multiple roles are/where affect by the decision to build a “magical spreadsheet” however they were never involved in the evaluation of the output of the current system capabilities. A CMMS is a tool utilized by many stakeholders so get them involved in evaluations and system decisions.

Not sure where or how to get started? We can help. People and Processes more than a name it’s about the people and giving them sound processes.