Choosing a CMMS: A short guide

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3 things to consider when shopping for CMMS and EAM software:

01 **Business size**

02 **Usability, training, and price**

03 **Modernity**

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How do you choose a CMMS?

Say you're buying a new truck. Do you rush in and just buy the first model you see?

Maybe you do. But chances are, the cost involved makes you think twice about shelling out on any old pickup. You probably take things like price, make, and horsepower into account first.

Like a truck, there's no one size fits all maintenance and asset management solution. There are big factors—things like business size, usability, and features—that should impact what kind of software you buy, and from what company.

In a nutshell, this e-book is not about the benefits of a CMMS, why you need one, or what it can do for your business. For those nitty gritty details, check out our other publications.

This e-book is about what you should keep in mind to find the specific software that's right for your business.

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01

Business size

Are you a tier 1, 2, or 3 company? Knowing where you fall in the market is important for understanding what software you need. If you're a small company (tier 3) looking for work order software, you don't necessarily want to buy something that comes packed with thousands of features. On the other hand, if you're a growing company, you don't want to invest in software that you'll outgrow in a year.

Here's a basic breakdown of the types of businesses in the enterprise asset and field service management market:

- Tier 1 corporations often use on-premises EAM software, which combines both maintenance management and asset lifecycle management features. Software addressing this $775m global market is the most complex, often with well over 2,000 features.
- Tier 2 businesses sit in the middle. They tend to need less functionality than what's found in EAM solutions, but more than a basic CMMS.
- Tier 3 is the small businesses segment, which is served by over 1,000 CMMS vendors. Because of the large number of vendors, feature sets tend to range widely from simple work order systems to more robust preventive maintenance software.

02

Usability, training and price

Usability

Remember our truck analogy? You can buy the perfect truck, but if you don't know how to drive it, then it's useless. The same goes for software—you might find a product that's perfect for your business size, but if your maintenance staff can't use it, it's a waste of money. It's very important to consider how easy software is to use, configure, and implement before you invest.

Training and support

Adopting new software is not always going to be smooth sailing, so make sure your provider offers training to help you get set up, as well as good post-implementation support.

Resources like help centres, and on-premises training can be life savers as you learn and start using a new software.

Price

When calculating price, you need to consider cost over the lifetime of the software, which includes:

- The cost of the software or the monthly/annual subscription
- The cost of importing data into the system and integrating it with other business systems
- The cost of upgrades
- The cost of training and support

03

Modernity

There are a few high-level capabilities that differentiate modern software from some of its legacy counterparts. You'll want to keep these in mind when looking for software that's flexible and adaptable.

Cloud-based

Cloud computing has been a game changer, bringing sophisticated software previously only available to large companies to small and mid-sized businesses at reasonable prices.

Benefits of cloud-based software

- Instantly accessible: Simply sign up, open your browser, log in, and start using your web-based software.
- Fewer upfront costs: With no upfront investment in licenses or hardware, the cloud eliminates upfront costs.
- Automatically updated: Don't worry about manually updating software. With cloud-based products, updates are easy, automatic, and free.
- Available anytime, anywhere: If you've got an internet connection, then you've got access to your software.
- Environmentally friendly: With cloud maintenance software there's no need for hardware or servers that put extra strain on the grid (and our environment).

03

Mobile

More than 71% of people aged 18-54 in developed countries own a mobile device, and businesses are starting to see the value of all this hardware. Many are developing policies that let employees work from their personal device, which lets employees work from anywhere with an internet connection, and cuts down on hardware costs for the company.

The best way to take full advantage of mobile devices is with an app. In a maintenance context, mobile apps let technicians submit work orders on the fly and enable productivity tools like QR code readers that can quickly scan assets and access to their entire maintenance history.

Know the difference: native vs non-native mobile apps

- **Non-native apps:**

  Most older CMMS software was not designed for mobile technology, and companies rely on workarounds to deliver mobile solutions. This typically involves allowing limited access to their software's functionality through a smartphone's web browser.

- **Native mobile apps:**

  These are the ones you download from Google Play or the App Store They let the CMMS access your device's features, leverage your smartphone's camera, microphone, GPS, accelerometer, compass, etc.

03

API

An application programming interface (API) extends the power of your CMMS and lets it talk to other computers, applications, smart devices, sensors, and equipment.

APIs can be pretty complex. So if you want to learn more about how they work on a techinical level, check out the explanation here.

How is this useful for maintenance?

APIs are the points of connection that let all the aspects of your business sync up.

Use an API to:

- Collect meter readings from equipment and transfer them to your CMMS, where they can trigger actions like emails, alarms or service requests.
- Send financial and purchasing data from your CMMS to an ERP system and then synchronize the two databases in real time.
- Pick and choose the best software from niche vendors in the financial, ERP, CRM, CMMS, and EAM space, and seamlessly integrate them.

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But wait, there's more...

Now that you can confidently find modern software that fits your business, check out our other publications aimed at helping you evaluate and invest in the right CMMS or EAM software:

Other resources:

> 11 reasons to invest in a CMMS

> Business case presentation

> The 4 big benefits of maintenance software

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