



ENTERPRISE ASSET MANAGEMENT

Key details and questions when choosing an EAM system

When it comes to an enterprise asset management (EAM) system, it's easy to think: "If it's not broke, don't fix it." But that could be a shortsighted attitude when it comes to making maintenance activities more strategic. With the right EAM system in place, organizations can not only keep assets operating within specifications and reduce energy usage, but vastly increase efficiency and identify problems before they shut down operations. In short, an EAM system can be used to optimize maintenance and turn it into a competitive advantage. To meet these goals, consider software that has built-in preventive features and alerts; provides checklists and easy-to-use daily scheduling capabilities; gives contractors access to the system through their own portal; can scale as users are added without causing a system crash; and provides native, platform-agnostic mobile capabilities.

But be careful. When considering new software, the details make the difference. In this case, consider multiple details, from change orders, to project-based systems, to development frameworks—and more. These items carry a high cost. Read on to discover the important questions to ask about an EAM system, to help ensure it delivers the kind of asset performance that makes a maintenance operation a strategic differentiator instead of a cost center—and that all of the costs are clear in advance.

What to consider when choosing an EAM system

Many of the existing solutions on the market are little more than frameworks that require costly and expensive customizations to create a complete EAM system. Customizing software complicates future upgrades and makes staying current on technology updates more expensive and less likely. If that doesn't sound appealing, it's time to consider what a purpose-built EAM system can deliver. Here are the five primary categories to consider when looking for an EAM system.

Cost

With EAM systems, there's more to consider than the initial buy-in. Consider what that buy-in provides. Is it just a basic framework that requires spending even more money on add-on modules and customizations to get the right functionality.

When thinking about cost, consider, too, how the EAM system will be deployed. Modern enterprise software has moved beyond on-premises-only deployment options to either cloud-based software as a service (SaaS) models or hybrid deployments. Make sure that whatever EAM software you choose offers a reasonably priced cloud option—with a reasonable number of licenses required—and that all the functionality is available through this deployment model. Cloud deployment ultimately saves money because you don't need to purchase and maintain the hardware required to run the EAM system, and you don't have to perform your own upgrades or system maintenance.

Flexibility and scalability

When it comes to deployment modes, the more flexibility, the better. Look for a system that can be deployed in the cloud, on-premises, or in a hybrid environment. Consider, too, what type of cloud deployment is available. A multi-tenant deployment model provides a shared, secure infrastructure that can scale up when you need more capacity, or scale down during off-peak times.

“Cloud deployment of Infor CloudSuite™ EAM delivers a predictable total cost of ownership and ensures that our data is secure in case of an emergency situation.”

Jon Walton
CIO, City and County of San Francisco

Plus, it's extremely competitive on pricing. However, you may prefer single-tenant hosting, where the software provider hosts your EAM system in your own secure environment.

Whichever option you choose, be sure the cloud platform offers a high uptime percentage, zero-downtime upgrades, and a solution and infrastructure that can grow along with your business. The highest-performing platforms will provide unparalleled protection and an extremely high uptime percentage in the range of 99.5%+ guaranteed server availability, 24/7/365.

Beyond how the system is deployed, consider how well it can handle your workload. A company may start out small, but it's not likely to stay that way. An EAM system needs to be able to grow along with your company and support as many concurrent users as you may need—without ever having to worry about it crashing.

Integration

An EAM system doesn't operate in its own corner of the world, disconnected from the rest of the enterprise. It should offer an integration platform that allows users to work within a common workflow and single interface. It should use multiple applications without having to shift gears, easily sharing key screens, data, and attachments. In addition, an EAM system should offer integrated functionality for other key business areas, like human resources and financials. With everything tied together and operating seamlessly, the right EAM system can help you improve visibility that is key for better decision-making, helping eliminate the inefficiencies, costly maintenance requirements, and missed opportunities that result from disconnected systems and information silos.

Mobility

An EAM system should enable workers to roam between connected and disconnected environments without having to worry about losing application performance. Consider software that enhances the communications link between the field and the office, so that managers and field service workers can assign, perform, and record activities and ad hoc work orders anytime, anywhere, and from any device. With the current speed of business, and the problems that could result from inaccuracy, workers can't wait until they come back in-house to update asset records. To keep assets running at peak efficiency, and avoid unplanned downtime, the EAM system should have full mobile capabilities, to keep critical maintenance and asset data complete and up-to-date at all times. Access to GIS, documents, videos, diagrams, images, and other information reduces trips back to the office and increases productivity.

Best-in-class capabilities

Strategic asset management starts with best-in-class capabilities. Looking beyond the basics, choose an EAM system with solid support for:

Reliability-centered maintenance—Planning and analysis capabilities help you better understand equipment reliability. By determining the reliability index for equipment or recording the results of a reliability-centered maintenance (RCM) study, it's easier to identify equipment risk in a concise and consistent manner. On the analysis side, the EAM system should automatically perform reliability calculations, making it much easier to determine reliability trends of equipment based on their work order history.

Energy optimization—Look for an EAM system that allows you to benchmark, monitor, and compare the energy performance of your assets, calculating the amount of energy consumed. The system should support green building standards like Energy Star, ASHRAE 90.1, and LEED. Plus, look for tools for monitoring performance on all forms of energy, including water, air, gas, electricity, and steam, and calculated CO2 emissions. With these capabilities, it's easier to establish and monitor a corporate energy strategy.

CERN: Managing more than one million assets with Infor CloudSuite EAM

The largest and most complex machine ever built by mankind is maintained with out-of-the-box asset management software with no modifications. CERN—the European Organization for Nuclear Research—does very complicated work in overseeing the Large Hadron Collider. It wants tools that are capable, not complex, and intuitive enough that anyone can use them without training.

While managing more than a million pieces of equipment with Infor CloudSuite EAM, CERN has reduced the amount of time needed to find and analyze data, and its outside maintenance contractors can now do the same amount of work with fewer people.

Checklist functionality—Supervisors and technicians need to be able to identify and track the maintenance steps to be implemented. Checklist functionality will let you break down a task plan into individual steps, identify which steps have been completed, and collect the required data. Checklists need to be available on mobile devices, too, so that field technicians have all the information they need when and where they need it. Surprisingly, this capability is missing from many of the EAM solutions on the market.

Scheduling—Look for full work management features, particularly daily scheduling, to schedule and execute projects, track resource status and expenditures, monitor work completion, and allocate human resources without having to customize the solution or purchase an additional module.

Contractor portal—Many companies rely on external contractors to carry out some key tasks, such as reading meters. A smart EAM system will offer a secure portal that contractors can use to input data and update records, but not have access to the full system or sensitive data.

Facilities management tools—Strong facilities management tools reduce costs, downtime, and risk, while increasing compliance, reliability, and customer satisfaction. They also offer the ability to incorporate CAD drawings as needed.

Analyst and industry recognition

Awards and accolades from people who know the maintenance industry help to assure organizations that they are making a well-informed choice. Look for recognition from respected analysts like Gartner and others, as well as coverage in industry publications and certification results from software evaluators. Online reviews and recommendations from peers are useful, too.

Does the EAM system give you everything you need?

Best-in-class asset management goes beyond work orders to help operations move along the maintenance maturity model, becoming predictive instead of reactive. It might be tempting to trust asset maintenance to the current system, because “it’s not broke.” But there’s a big difference between “not broke” and “at the top of the efficiency game.”

Here are some questions to ask your potential EAM software supplier to make sure the system can deliver:

Does the provider offer best-in-class EAM capabilities?

Any EAM system will offer the basics, like asset, work, materials, and service management functionality. But does the system offer advanced capabilities, like tools for energy optimization, reliability-centered maintenance, or scheduling? If these capabilities are available as add-on modules, consider what it will take to implement them—it could be a simple integration, or require a major project with lots of custom code and testing.

“Infor CloudSuite EAM is at the core of our strategy. We have reduced our parts expense on average by 3% to 4% each year since we started using EAM over 10 years ago.”

Todd Hawkins
SVP Maintenance, First Transit, Inc.

Is their EAM software available in the cloud? Through what platform?

It’d be surprising if the answer to this question was “no.” But it’s not enough for software to be available in the cloud; it needs to be hosted on the best possible platform, in the most flexible way. Ask how much downtime (both planned and unplanned) the cloud service provider (CSP) has experienced and compare this to other major public CSPs. Ask, too, how long they’ve been in the cloud; experience matters in terms of forging strong relationships and understanding best practices for engineering and deploying software that runs optimally in the cloud. Finally, ask how they’re keeping your data secure. The reason for all of these questions is to ensure that the EAM system is going to be secure. If the system is hacked, you could not only lose access to it but also lose years of maintenance data.

Do they offer a strong mobile version or support mobile usage?

Many users rarely work from their desks; they’re out in the field, where equipment is deployed. Having EAM software that lets them work from anywhere, at any time is no longer an “if”—it’s a “when.” Does your intended software offer a true mobile version that doesn’t require full connectivity to use it? Can the mobile solution run on any mobile platform or device, or is it limited by the OS provider? Users should get all the features they need in a mobile application that can adapt to their business processes, rather than the other way around.

Can their EAM software scale and is it flexible enough to meet changing needs?

Modern businesses are constantly evolving, and EAM software needs to keep up. Consider whether it's deployed in a single-tenant cloud with fixed resources, or a multi-tenant cloud that allows computing power and storage space. Consider how much of what you need is available in the core application, what you'll need to add through add-on modules, and what it will take to implement those modules to make them work the way your business does. The goal is to avoid having to reconfigure every piece of your solution just to add a new capability.

Is their EAM software supported through ongoing investments in development and support?

A system that's not being invested in is a system that's about to become obsolete. Make sure your proposed EAM vendor is still spending money to develop the software and add capabilities to take advantage of emerging technologies, like the Internet of Things (IoT)—but also adding functional features on a continuous basis that you care about, and that add value to your business. Similarly, make sure that vendor provides experienced support personnel who have years of experience with both the product and your industry, so they can help with problems.

The future of EAM

True enterprise asset management is about much more than maintenance. Advances in technology are reshaping the asset management discipline and the software that supports it.

The cloud allows organizations to securely forego expenditures on hardware and IT in favor of investment in their core lines of business. Analytics have become more sophisticated in order to provide the optimal data needed for critical daily decisions.

Ring Container reduces inventory by 25% with Infor CloudSuite EAM

How does standardization on one maintenance system of record make a difference to an enterprise?

Ring Container has consolidated 18 separate databases and expects to reduce inventory by 25%—by eliminating duplication and obsolete parts, and by having the visibility to share parts between plants.

And despite standardization, pacing can be individual. "With Infor CloudSuite EAM, we're finding that our plants can grow individually as they get ready," says Ring Container's EAM project manager. "We don't have to roll out the same functionality to everybody."

Artificial intelligence, IoT, and machine learning use advanced sensors and sensor fusion along with edge devices to provide more advanced monitoring and diagnostic capabilities. Drones perform inspections that are dull, dirty, or dangerous for humans to perform. In mixed reality (MR), [according to Forbes](#), "users can interact in real time with virtual objects that are placed within the real world. These virtual items will respond and react to users as if they were actual objects." Mobility overlays everything, making it not only possible but increasingly critical that field technicians can access work orders, instructions, warranties, diagrams, manufacturer's specifications, and more while onsite.

The end goal of all of this? Use every available and feasible method to increase reliability, uptime, and safety in the face of budgetary challenges—incidentally creating the asset management of the future in the process.

The benefits of strategic EAM

Choose your EAM system wisely, and you can turn your company's asset management program into a competitive advantage. The right EAM system can increase the reliability of your assets through predictive maintenance, ensure greater regulatory compliance, and more easily support sustainability initiatives—at a reasonable cost and with the flexibility and scalability to support your company now and well into the future.

Recognition for Infor CloudSuite EAM from analysts, software evaluators, and industry publications

- [Gartner's 2018 Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Asset Management](#)
- [IDC MarketScape Asset-intensive EAM 2019 Vendor Assessment](#)
- [Frost & Sullivan Customer Value Leadership Award](#)
- [Plant Engineering 2017 Product of the Year Winner](#)

ScotRail replaces SAP with Infor CloudSuite EAM in the cloud

Abellio ScotRail's diverse fleet of 292 diesel and electric vehicles across eight fleets represents an enormous challenge for the operator, since planned and corrective maintenance—including cleaning, fueling, repairs, and servicing—takes place across many sites. The company needed to get a system up and running in six months, and required a system capable of scaling to meet its unique business needs.

ScotRail chose Infor CloudSuite EAM to replace SAP's solution, and was not disappointed. The speed of the system's deployment was based on Infor's understanding of the transit industry and ScotRail's business processes, as well as Infor's robust cloud infrastructure. Mobile access via tablets helps support real-time asset management in the field, while integration of data across key systems bolstered visibility companywide. In addition, Infor CloudSuite EAM's intuitive interface made it easy for the staff to get up to speed quickly.

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