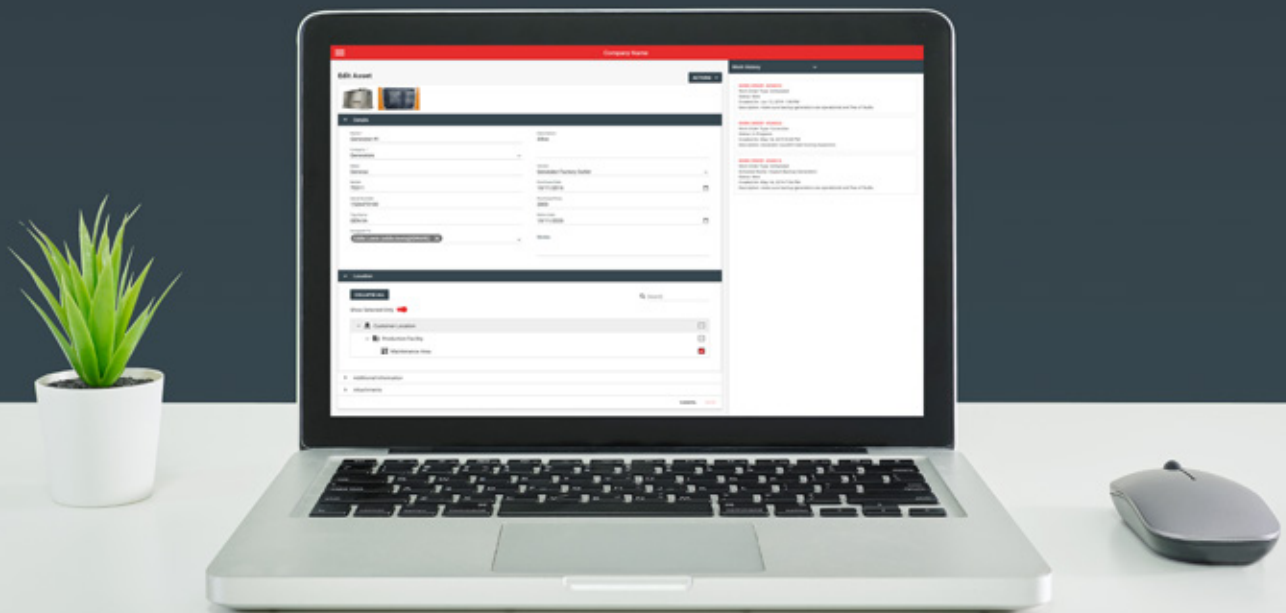# CMMS Buyer's Guide

7 Things You Need To Know Before Buying

FOCUSED *on* FACILITIES

Q WARE

150 State Street, Suite 120
Rochester, NY 14614

(888) 697-2811
info@qwarecmms.com

Learn more at
qwarecmms.com

So What Is CMMS Software?

CMMS software is dedicated to improving the flow of maintenance work, increasing responsiveness to work requests, and giving facilities professionals the data needed to make important decisions regarding physical assets. Organizations are realizing the value of CMMS software as they become more conscious about the value of their assets and the money they can save when assets are maintained effectively.

There are many CMMS applications in the market and it can be difficult to determine which will be the best for your organization. Whether you are using a paper based system, an in-house system, or looking to switch from an overly complex or expensive solution, there are some considerations that will help you narrow your search.

Before you begin reaching out to companies, answering the following seven questions will help you define your needs so you know what to look for.

1   What are your struggles?

The very first step to take when you're considering a new CMMS application is to clearly define what your struggles are. Understanding your pain points will help you decide what software features you will need to improve you operation. To do this, it's important to identify the stakeholders involved to get a holistic view of the problems that need to be addressed. It might seem tedious to go through this problem discovery process but it will ensure that everything is on the table when you begin your search for vendors.

This list doesn't cover all the reasons for adopting a CMMS application but you may identify with some of these issues. Once, problems are defined, it helps to rank them in order of importance. Ask yourself, "Which of these problems are absolutely necessary to address and which one's would provide the most good for my operation once solved." There isn't likely to be a single application that is able to address all of your concerns satisfactorily so in the case where you have to compare between a few different vendor options, it helps to be able to rank the applications based on your priorities.

Common Struggles

- Losing work requests

- Missing preventive maintenance tasks

- Lacking ability to effectively prioritize and assign work

- Poor accountability for completing work

- Lack of cost, quantity, and usage tracking for inventory

- Difficulty getting certifications and staying compliant with regulations

- Lacking documentation of work performed

- Poor performance tracking

- No access to asset information when working remotely

- Lack of asset/equipment information and resources

2 What features do you need?

Before you begin evaluating vendors, it's a good idea to research what the latest applications are able to provide. This will give you an idea of what features make the most sense for your unique operation. It also helps to consult with your team to see if they have any process improvement suggestions that CMMS software might be able to facilitate. The common features and their functionality include:

Work Order Management

Work orders and requests are submitted through online forms to be managed by your team. This feature consolidates tasks into one space that is easy to track.

Preventive Maintenance Management

Schedules or workflows can be created to trigger recurring inspections and maintenance tasks for your facility assets and equipment. Typically, work order are triggered by time-based rules, meter readings, or in some cases by sensing hardware and AI.

Inventory Management

Spares and other inventory items are used to complete maintenance tasks. This feature tracks the consumption of inventory items, their cost, and helps facilitate reording and auditing of inventory stores.

Asset Management

Asset data is uploaded into CMMS applications either from what you have on file or through data collection services that some vendors provide. The library of assets include demographic information, photos, and related documentation such as O&M manuals, parts lists, or warranties.

Reporting

Reporting features allow you to organize your CMMS data in meaningful ways. These features make trending possible and give you the insight you need to make better decisions. Most applications will allow custom reports to be created which can be saved and run anytime.

Mobile

Mobile accessibility is a necessary feature now a days when everyone is on the move and is accomplished in one of two ways. The first option is a responsive web app that is available from your phone's web browser and is able to configure itself automatically for small screens. The second is a native phone app you can download from an app store.

3

Web-based or on-premise software?

CMMS applications are available in two different delivery methods: web-based and on-premise. Web-based applications are stored in the cloud, accessed through web browsers, and sold as a subscription. On-premise applications are typically one-time purchases and are downloaded and installed on local computers or servers. This kind of software has by and large been replaced by web-based applications that are able to provide continuous upgrades. Additionally, installed applications typically have little to no support available after purchase and you're on your own to setup the application and train your team.

Web-based applications can be stored on servers owned by the software company, third party servers contracted by the company such as Amazon or Microsoft cloud services, or they can be locally hosted. Locally-hosted applications live on servers owned by the customer and the they're responsible for server security, uptime, and maintenance.

There are benefits to implementing either option but the availability of installed CMMS applications are becoming fewer in favor of web-based. Some companies also provide native mobile apps of their software which are capable of working offline.

Benefits Of Web-Based

- Accessible from anywhere you have access to internet and a web browser

- The cost is spread out over-time instead of spending large sums to purchase new versions

- Updates are automatic, continuous, and included with subscriptions

- If it's hosted by the company, there's no need to involve IT support or invest in additional hardware

- Support and training is better and is included in the cost of the software subscription
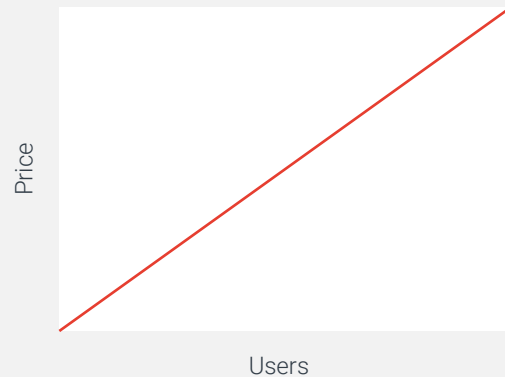
4   How many people need access?

The number one measure of cost for a web-based CMMS application is the number of users that will need access. Users are typically defined as people who need to manage assets, work orders, or system settings. Some applications will continue to cost more as additional users are added (Variable Pricing) while others will cap their cost across user ranges (Tiered Pricing). The main difference between these two pricing methods is that variable will forever get more costly as you add more users where tiered pricing applies a fixed price across a range of users. It's important to determine how many users you will have initially and how many users you intend to add later.
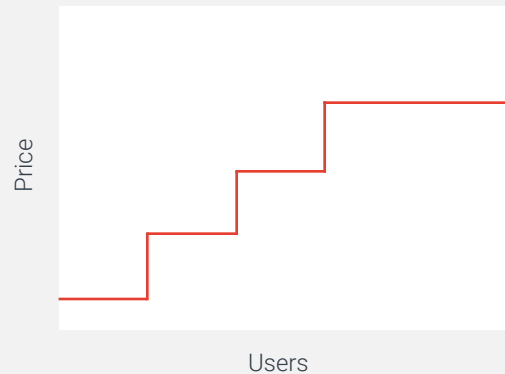
Another user base you need to consider are facility occupants that will need to submit requests to your team. As issues occur throughout your facilities, CMMS applications provide accounts for facility occupants to submit requests and check on the status of their requests. Some vendors add a cost for these types of users while others include them in the subscription.

As your user base grows, you can expect your subscription costs will increase but the amount of the increases could be vastly different between CMMS vendors.

Variable Pricing Model

Price

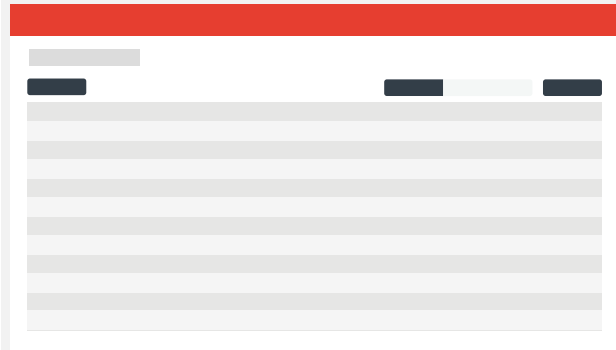Users

Tiered Pricing Model

Price

Users

5

How familiar is your team with using software?

Familiarity with software has a significant affect on successful CMMS adoption. If the software seems difficult to use and requires weeks or months of training, it becomes less likely that your team will buy in to it. Before looking at options, gauge the level of comfortability your teams has with using software and identify what the stumbling blocks are that would prevent them from getting on-board with a new CMMS.
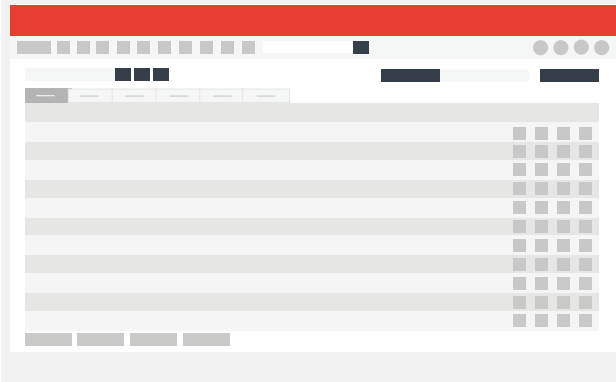
Some applications will be easier to pick up and use than others. It's important to line up your teams expectations with what vendors are able to provide as far as usability goes. Generally, the easier an application is the better all around it will be when you integrate it fully. It's also true that if an application looks easy to use, chances are it is. The goal is to keep your team focused on the work that matters and to not waste time trying to figure out complex software.

If you believe your team will need extra care to ensure a successful adoption, look for vendors who provide free support and training with a subscription. Anytime there are issues, they'll be there to help you work through them.

Simple CMMS

Complex CMMS

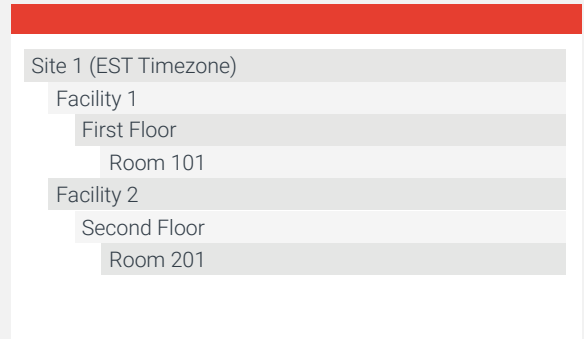**FACT:** Complex CMMS applications aren't always more capable but they are always harder to use!

6

How many facilities are you responsible for?

If you manage multiple facilities spread across different locations or even different timezones, it's important to find a CMMS application that can accommodate different situations. Here are a few that you should consider:
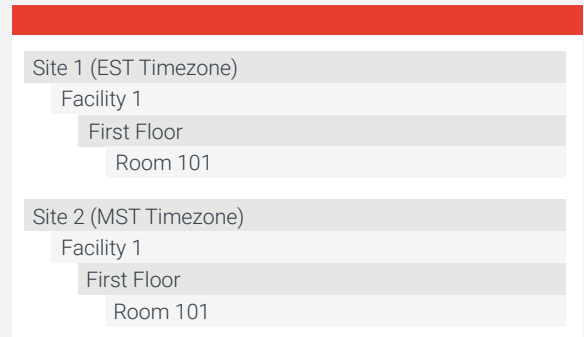
1. One Subscription/One Site/Multiple Facilities

CMMS vendors should be able to create all the unique facilities and locations for a site within a single instance of an application.

Site 1 (EST Timezone)
 Facility 1
  First Floor
   Room 101
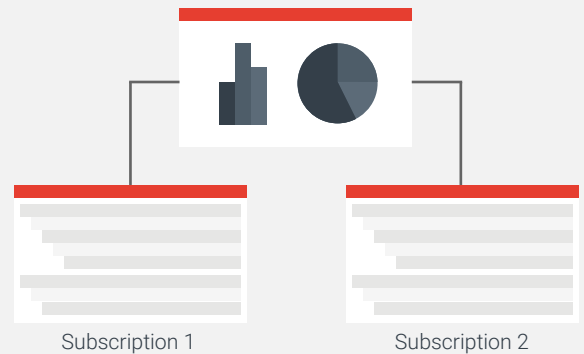 Facility 2
  Second Floor
   Room 201

2. One Subscription/Multiple Sites/Multiple Facilities

If you're interested in managing your facilities all in one instance of an application, CMMS vendors will need to accommodate locations that cross timezone, country, and state lines to manage all facilities within a single application. Customizations are shared across all sites.

Site 1 (EST Timezone)
 Facility 1
  First Floor
   Room 101

Site 2 (MST Timezone)
 Facility 1
  First Floor
   Room 101

3. Multiple Subscriptions/Multiple Sites/ Multiple Facilities

If you want to manage unique sites independently of each other, CMMS vendors should allow each site to have their own instance of the application for managing their facilities with an option to roll up site data to report against all sites. Each subscription has its own set of customizations

Subscription 1   Subscription 2

7

What are your expectations for implementation?

If you plan on purchasing a CMMS from a company that offers help with setup, try to get a feel for their setup process. All systems require some level of setup which includes the importing of data, creating and assigning user roles, and customizing parts of the application to tailor it to your unique operation.

Vendors should provide an option for you to setup yourself. If you choose this option, be aware of the time commitment needed to do it yourself and how that could affect the adoption of the software. The longer it takes to set up and the greater the effort, the more likely the implementation is to fail.

Another reason why CMMS adoption fails is because the vendor isn't committed to getting customers up and running quickly or tailoring the application to their needs. When you reach out to vendors, voice your expectations for when it should be completed and what you expect as a final deliverable. Communication is key here.

Training is another important aspect of implementation. Vendors should provide training sessions for your team to engage and get comfortable with the software. They should also provide knowledge base resources for you and your team to reference for continued

learning or to expand your use of available features. Typically, ongoing training is included in software subscriptions but some vendors may charge additional fees or offer separate support packages for training on top of the software subscription fee.

Some vendors provide additional services to help with asset data collection and setting up preventive maintenance schedules. Data collection services typically involve vendor representatives visiting on-site to take photos of assets and collect information such as makes, models, serial numbers, purchase prices, warranty expirations and virtually any other data point that is important to you. If you can afford the investment, these options will ensure you have a complete and populated system, ready to use on day one.

From-the-ground-up

At Q Ware, we think a "one size fits all" attitude towards CMMS design and implementation just doesn't work. Our solution starts with a facility teams unique needs and way of working and then it grows from there. We believe that this works well for our customers and empowers them to maintain excellence.

"We chose Q Ware because we needed a system to hold folks accountable. It worked! With Q Ware, multiple people have access to the same information. As info is updated (and projects worked-on) a stream of communications easily inform us all"

— **Rich H.,** Admin Analyst
Contra Costa County Animal Services Department

Maintain Excellence

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY.

Q WARE