Facilities Management
is moving forward
with **technology...**

FacilitiesDesk
Integrated Facilities Management Software!

Executive Summary

Facilities Management Software Systems used to function in separate technology silos. To meet the conventional IT infrastructures now vendors are adopting Web-based services, On-demand and other rapidly emerging technologies.

As Facility management systems congregate with traditional IT infrastructures, budding standards are facilitating data sharing between building systems as well as with other business applications, recuperating efficiency and real-time control over building operating costs. Concerns on information security, juvenile standards, the disinclination of vendors to give up proprietary technologies and ignorance among IT professionals of the convergence trend are all slowing the pace of this transformation, but its gaining momentum.

When combined with information from a Facilities Management System, space & property information from a mapping application such as AutoCAD provides an integrated view that allows enhanced analysis in various spatial contexts for professionals responsible for asset tracking, maintenance, space utilization and planning relocations.

Facilities managers are driving the change by challenging more-open systems. They're pushing Facility management software vendors to transform today's closed technologies into Web-enabled applications running over industry-standard IP networks. And the management of facility is likely to increasingly fall to IT.

Technologies like CAD, GIS etc are matured ones that have evolved in parallel for over 20 years. As the technology that solves the inefficiencies of working with GIS and CAD rapidly evolves, new opportunities emerge for facility and property managers:

* Expand visibility and oversight into all aspects of building operations and asset management

* Allocate space efficiently

* Prepare for emergency or preventive maintenance measures

* Forecast and budget for maintenance

* Manage & Track Assets

* Plan for relocations

Just there & be Prepared for more...

Facility Management folks are entering an era where practically everything is converging in their direction and IT immensely broadens their horizons. IT won't operate the Facility Management systems, but it will serve the facilities staff as a customer in much the same way it does accounting and other departments today.

Many large companies already have centralized Facility management system in place that monitors and controls the environment across their large buildings and campus facilities. These systems have begun to migrate to more open IT infrastructure in much the same way that telecom and networks have converged.

Next-generation facility infrastructures will be much more integrated than simply banking on automated facility management systems backed by IT network. The long-term vision is that you'll be able to control building operations based on preferences, criteria and business rules.

Open standards are just beginning to evolve and will likely breakdown the silos between facility operations scoping up to elevator control starting from physical security. And the data from those systems are likely to be shared with other business departments such as accounting. This will allow the making of smart buildings as system applications are developed that can benefit from newly converged data streams and real-time access to information.

Converged Technology

Standards will permit information to be shared between the two systems and business decisions can be made based on the merged data. But this emerging trend has fundamentally gone unseen by IT biggies got driven by the facilities side.

Standardization has its journey bottom up. The pieces of successful IT/Facility management system integration aren't all in place as yet. Right now, the hitch is due to lack of an industry wide language to program controls. Basic interfaces needs to be in place in order to have such control schemas to evolve. The needed is an abstraction layer so that programmers or common users don't have to learn control systems.

Vendors of Facility management application continue to move cautiously and cling to proprietary interfaces, but the industry will move on with or without them. For more than control companies it's the IT & software that will lead the way. Today's systems are just too proprietary to gain the economies of scale necessary to manage standards of facility management systems. But the emerging standards will make it possible to manage these systems within the IT management frameworks.

Technario in progress...

Facilities Managers can extend the benefit of today's CAFM systems including data sets that allow drill-down access to details from CAD drawings, historical information regarding maintenance or asset details, relocation plans, as well as existing infrastructure. The options are limited only by the availability, accuracy and access to data sources.

Computer-aided facilities management (CAFM) systems act as a vital repository of information for an organization's facilities and physical assets, ridding managers of the time-consuming and error-prone task of updating multiple spreadsheets. A CAFM system offers end users with a consistent way to view, track, and maintain most aspects of an organization's facilities and assets.

In addition, facilities managers benefit from the ability to create valuable reports which provide information critical to financial projections, and ultimately the bottom line, by gaining greater control over space allocation, asset management, and other areas of property management.
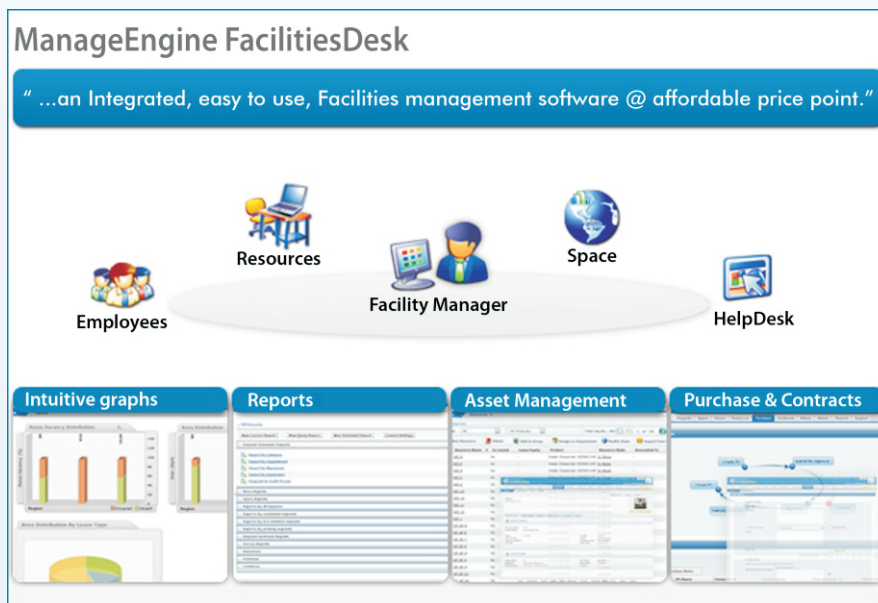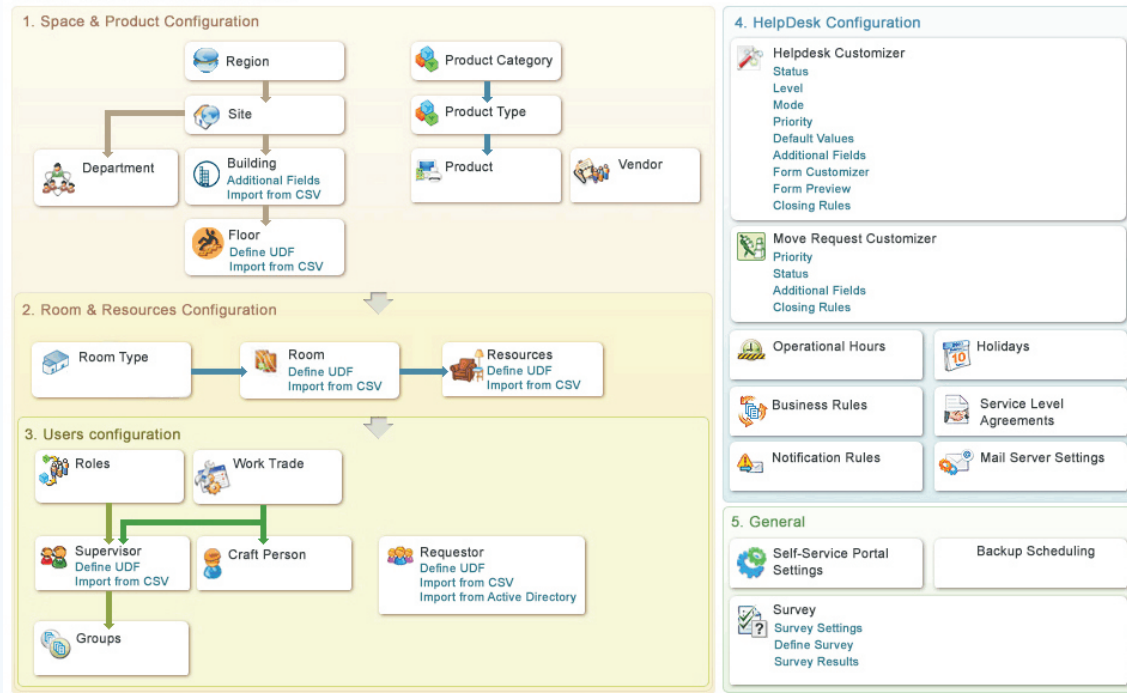

CAFM Software

Be Prepared...

If we want to achieve full value from one of the most important advances since the birth of facilities management, we need to understand what FM software can do for us and identify the right CAFM system for our needs.
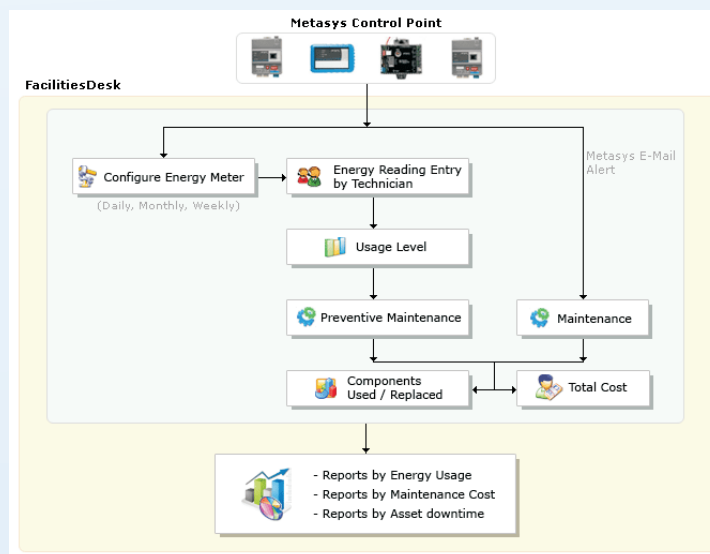
CAFM Architecture

Information is critical but you need to go the right way about using it!! Paper systems and spreadsheet management with volume and CAFM can lead to frustration whenever deployed in haste..

CAFM applications help plan, monitor and manage property, space and assets, streamline the management and planned maintenance of buildings and services, control resources and run a help desk to handle reactive maintenance.

Facility Management software users report cost and time savings and much tighter control on cost run. They say systems give more meaningful information for improved decision making, and all-important health and safety compliance. But CAFM can generate delays and frustrations because systems have been purchased with insufficient forethought.

CAFM System Architechture

Getting a handle on some of those forethoughts:

✓   **Assess your ROI**

The levels and verge at which adopting CAFM software becomes cost effective are different in each business scenario. So you will need to consider factors such as present and projected scale of business, workload volumes, efficiency and success altitude.
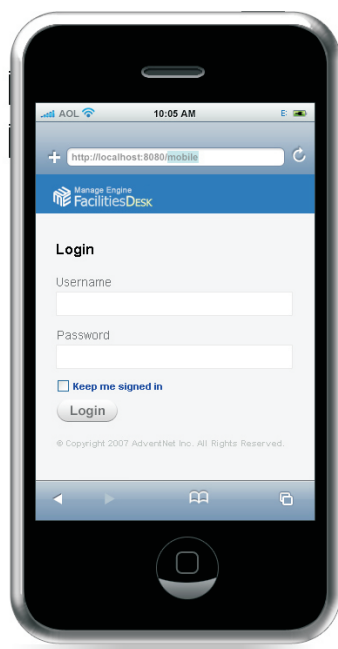
By now you'll be into the detail of what CAFM systems can offer and what you need. So you'll need to compare current functionality and cost with required functionality and its cost, weigh your budget up and decide whether the payback period seems acceptable.

Working practices may have to acclimatize, and you will certainly want to reassess reporting. IT issues need serious deliberation including user licenses, access levels, and web or remote access. Think too about whether the new system can offer the growth and scalability you'll require in the future.

Payment options include a one-off cost for a perpetual software license, possibly involving a leasing agreement, an annual software cost paid on a rolling basis, or outsourcing server hosting to a professional supplier.

When preparing the financial case, business look three or four years ahead, and don't compromise long-term profitability by cutting corners. Compare the total cost of ownership with the total expected fiscal savings, typically aiming for a two to three year return on investment.

PDA integration for iphone   ### Mobile Client integration for Blackberry

✓ **Request for Proposals**

Having decided on fiscal budget, if you choose to you can create a Request for Proposal. Choice should involve checking vendors' economic stability and experience with your market sector. Ask for a project plan demonstrating understanding of your needs and requirements.

Ownership of the source code is a plus, while full technical support, project management and post sales support are key. Check also roadmap plans, the mechanism for escalating issues, and the willingness to accept customization change requests to the software

✓ **Execution**

The implementation plan is crucial for timely delivery, so be clear about the phases you need to consider and the order in which the system must run. By comparing proposals with stated needs and determine which vendor/system is the most appropriate to your requirements. When placing the contract include timescale and KPIs and establish a project team. Import existing data into new software and run pre-installation and sanity checks. Next, check integrations with third party applications are working before testing, commissioning and signing off. Finally, ensure you train end users and technicians before going live.

Ensure hardware, data, staff and IT support are accessible on need basis, and take an active role in putting the system into operation, and you'll have done the best you can to ensure success for this exciting new CAFM.

✓ **Training**

Adequate time and resource for training is imperative for success. You'll want a training agenda and with clearly defined scope and training outcomes and free documentation, an in-house database on which users can practice. You might also consider first a 'train the trainer' programme.

Conclusion

Information is arguably the most valuable resource for facilities management departments, so it's essential to have a process that allows you to achieve full value from it and stir the organization on from weak paper prone process. In conclusion, some important points to consider: document the existing business processes; identify prospective improvements; chart the risk management processes; define the reporting requirements; decide upon levels of integration with other products; consider various payment/provision options; include all costs and savings in the financial proposal; scrutinize the potential vendor's overall package and experience; be aware of the future enhancements.

About ManageEngine FacilitiesDesk

FacilitiesDesk strives to be the world leader in Facilities, Asset and Maintenance Management. FacilitiesDesk serves diverse range of organizations, with a signicant number in elds of Banking/Finance/Insurance, Healthcare/Pharmaceuticals, Education, Hi-tech/IT/Manufacturing and Government/NGO's. A 30-day trial with full functionality is available for evaluation.

More about FacilitiesDesk on: http://www.facilitiesdesk.com

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