Selecting and implementing a CMMS:

The Bethanie Group shares their experience with using BEIMS to manage their facility and assets

The decision to implement a CMMS is an important one for any organisation. The Bethanie Group (formerly Churches of Christ Homes) is one of the largest aged care providers in Western Australia, operating 15 residential aged care facilities and retirement villages as well as day centres and numerous community programs.

Prior to implementing BEIMS, The Bethanie Group was using a job docket system that was linked to Oracle financials. However, the business had grown to a size where this system was no longer meeting their needs. From there, the group undertook to research and implement a system that would support their business goals and the unique challenges faced by an Aged Care provider.

Paul Myhill, Maintenance Manger for the Bethanie Group, agreed to share some of his experience surrounding the decision to implement a CMMS, the selection process, challenges faced and experience so far with using BEIMS to manage their facilities and assets.

Please describe the business challenges you were trying solve and the research and selection process that led to the implementation of BEIMS in December 2006.

We had an increase in facilities and equipment coming on stream which we needed to manage effectively. We needed the ability to manage multiple site management access as well as a better system for managing all of our resources, job requests and planned maintenance. We wanted a system where we could easily see outstanding and completed jobs, track their progress and obtain sophisticated reports quickly and easily. We also needed to know whether equipment was available when we needed it and whether it was in good working condition.

We researched the different software options thoroughly and put out a request for proposal to several suppliers with a detailed set of requirements. We then reviewed each proposal, had demonstrations of the software and obtained further information. The whole process from start to finish took about six months. We selected BEIMS as it provided the best system to manage both facilities and assets. Some products managed facilities or assets individually better; however, BEIMS did the combination the best. BEIMS was also being used by other aged care providers throughout Australia who were pleased with the way the product worked. It also ran on a SQL database which we required.

Please describe the most important factors in your CMMS selection and buying decision.

We wanted a system that was easy to use and that had a Windows Graphical User interface for managing materials. It needed to be able to handle multiple sites with a multi layered asset tree for each site as well as having a web requesting system to allow clients to log maintenance jobs. We wanted a product that could reside on our existing IT infrastructure and didn't have extensive hardware requirements. We also wanted a product that was well supported within Australia and Western Australia. The formal implementation methodologies used by the organisation used was also important.

Price and affordability was important as was the reputation of the provider. That the software provide a good return on investment, was flexible and scalable and had a solid customer base was also critical. The most important considerations were the functionality and features, ease of use, Support and that it was a user friendly system.

BEIMS has been successful in meeting these expectations so far.

Please describe some of the ways BEIMS has assisted you to better manage your facilities and assets.

BEIMS has assisted with the management of assets by giving us the ability to track and manage our assets within a tree structure at a site level and not rely on a financial system that is value driven as apposed to being function driven. It has enabled us to capture all our ad hoc maintenance electronically and report on it and see all our upcoming work. We have been able to create an extensive maintenance plan for all of our assets that is easy to manage and generates work orders automatically each month. It enables us to see our future work commitments.

We are able to capture costs associated with both planned and reactive maintenance requests. It has enabled us to report on all aspects of the business including: outstanding day to day jobs, planned maintenance liability for up coming periods and life cycle replacement of asset for future budget cycles.

Each site can see the planned maintenance liability for the site staff against available hours. It has allowed the maintenance staff on site to see their jobs for the day and any planned for the week ahead. We are able to manage our own maintenance and trade staff much better and allocate resources. For contractors it has allowed us to generate work orders so the sites know when a contractor should be attending and to capturing costs against assets.

Please evaluate BEIMS in terms of the software, support, usability, ROI and any benefits you have received.

BEIMS has been well accepted by all users which came from the ease of use and functionality that it provided to make our work easier. BEIMS was easy to learn and use and we are now able to more effectively manage our facilities and assets as well as extract detailed reports which assist with decision making for assets and maintenance work.

BEIMS has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of our maintenance department as well as improving the service we provide to clients. Staff satisfaction has improved as has our ability to plan and manage our workload. It is easier to monitor costs and we are now spending fewer hours on unplanned work. We have been able to improve our workflow and resource allocation by using the tools and reports within the system and record keeping is now easier. BEIMS also helps us manage compliance inspections.

BEIMS has provided a good return on investment, offering very good functionality and features. The reporting is excellent and BEIMSWeb and the Print Agent are very useful tools.

The Support is also very good with all emails and phone calls responded to promptly. The forum is another very good tool for finding information. The BEIMS staff are always friendly and helpful and provide prompt, accurate information. The User Group meetings provide an excellent opportunity for catching up on the latest BEIMS information and updates and are a good opportunity to catch up with other users and Mercury staff one on one to discuss issues and solutions.

Please describe the process of implementing BEIMS within your organisation. Was this process smooth or what challenges did you face?

The implementation process went smoothly. The planning we did with the BEIMS consultant via phone and email prior to implementing the system was useful for trouble shooting any potential issues. We spent detailed time working out the data relationships between the different fields to work out the best structure for our organisation in order to produce the best results. The consultant provided very good guidance, yet allowed us to own the system. We are pleased that the implementation was carried out in a timely manner with minimal disruptions to workflow.

Would you recommend BEIMS to others looking to purchase facility management software?

We have already recommended BEIMS to other organisations as it has been highly effective at meeting our needs. We would especially recommend it to other aged care providers as it can help with managing industry compliance requirements etc. BEIMS is particularly well suited to aged care as it is able to manage both buildings and assets. Within aged care we have a lot of assets that are critical in order to provide a service to residents including both fixed plant assets (e.g. hot water) and moveable equipment (e.g. hoists). We are able to manage both our buildings and assets with the one system.

Do you have any plans to further develop BEIMS usage at your site?

We are planning to explore pocketBEIMS wireless technology to further enhance efficiency by allowing maintenance staff to send, receive and complete work orders onsite.

Mercury Computer Systems would like to thank Mr Paul Myhill of the Bethanie Group for his time and willingness to share his experience with implementing BEIMS.