The Era COVID-19: Adapting to a New Normal

For Facilities & Maintenance Management Teams

COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus, has created unprecedented times globally and across every industry. While it's first and foremost a health crisis, it's secondly an economic force that has impacted virtually every organization, and changed - for now at least - how they operate. As the pandemic continues, it's imperative that facilities and maintenance management teams create a playbook for managing through the many phases of what is becoming "a new normal."

According to a recent survey by Gartner, a leading research firm, just 12% of more than 1,500 respondents believe their businesses are highly prepared for the impact of coronavirus, while only 26% believe that the virus will have little or no impact on their business. Clearly it's a time of uncertainty.

FMX, a leader in facilities and maintenance management software solutions, has consulted with industry experts and customers to create this helpful guide to assist leaders in developing a baseline for where their organizations are today, along with a prescriptive three phase plan to move forward through communication, preparedness, and sustained operational excellence in the future.

Phase I

Managing triage and ensuring business continuity

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It's a time of social distancing with virtually every organization that is able adopting a work-from-home model. However, some organizations cannot do this, meaning employees are still working in plants, buildings, or facilities to keep the organization functioning.

A Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) can help these organizations ensure business continuity and keep everyone on the same page.

Improve communication

Communication is now more critical than ever and a CMMS helps everyone across the organization communicate quickly and effectively.

Bring everyone together

New people, including new employees, contractors, and even community members, can be instantly added and set up to submit requests, be assigned tasks, follow work orders, and more. With this setup, everyone can assimilate rapidly to the tasks at hand because everyone knows what work needs to be done.

Keep constantly up-to-date

Rapidly forming information and new priorities can quickly and effectively be communicated to all parties involved, including employees, contractors, and even the general public. Cancellations, schedule changes, new work priorities, and status updates enable you to keep everyone informed and up-to-date.

Manage essential vs. non-essential work

Planning for essential vs. non-essential work is a new reality that previously might not have been as important. A CMMS helps you plan, prioritize, manage, communicate, and report on work that is deemed essential, while ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of employees, contractors, and even the general public. In these times, non-essential work can easily be deprioritized so your teams can focus on what's important right now.
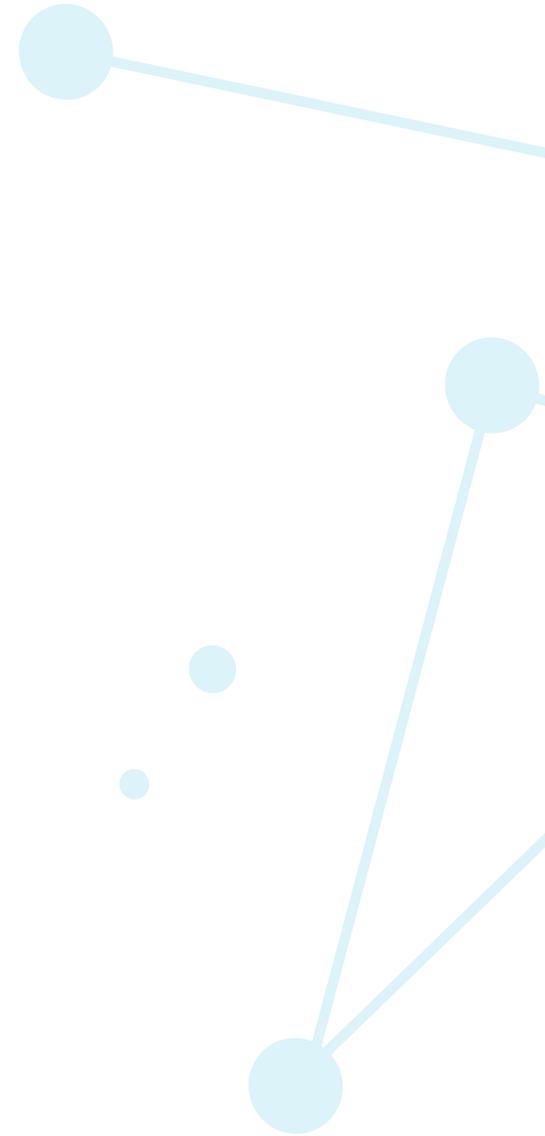
Phase II

Return to normalcy

Return to Normalcy

When the time comes to get things "back to normal," we first must accept that it may be a "new normal" for at least a while. The COVID-19 virus may have lasting effects even after the pandemic period begins to close, which means that carefully documenting, implementing, and following all precautionary measures is more important than ever. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has outlined their Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 to help organizations find paths to normal business practices, while keeping safety a top priority. The list below highlights a few examples our panel of experts put together to compliment OSHA's guidelines.

Establish instruction sets

CMMS solutions help you establish and implement preventive maintenance measures for proper sanitization as outlined, by industry, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Confirm work is getting done

Ensure the procedures you've outlined are getting done the way you want them done, at the right time and by the right team members. Having a digital record of these details gives you confidence that the work was done right.

Set alerts for cancellations

Across the world, events are being cancelled more than any other time in history. Let employees, contractors, and the general public know what's being cancelled the moment the decision is made with automatic notifications.

Add procedures for the "new normal"

Maybe sanitization procedures prior to the pandemic were a little lax, or custodial work should have been done more often. Whatever the case, CMMS solutions help you quickly implement the procedures you want and need for your organization.

Manage your inventory

This starts with your critical sanitization inventory, but doesn't stop there. CMMS solutions help you keep track of stock, understand usage levels, and plan replenishment efforts with ease. Frequently, organizations without CMMS solutions "over buy" or misplace items, requiring last minute purchases, expedited shipping, and unwanted periods with missing supplies.

Optimize your staff & workload

During these unique times, buildings are occupied by fewer employees, contractors, and the general public. A CMMS can help you easily reposition your labor staffing to work with a smaller team or focus on just the required work.

Get ahead of things

If there ever was a silver lining in the current COVID-19 pandemic, it might be that some facilities and maintenance teams can get a jump on maintenance issues that have been piling up. Of course this doesn't apply to every organization, and you must prioritize efforts to ensure safety and business continuity. But where there is time, there could be opportunity. CMMS solutions help you manage your backlog more effectively and efficiently.

Phase III

Plan for the future
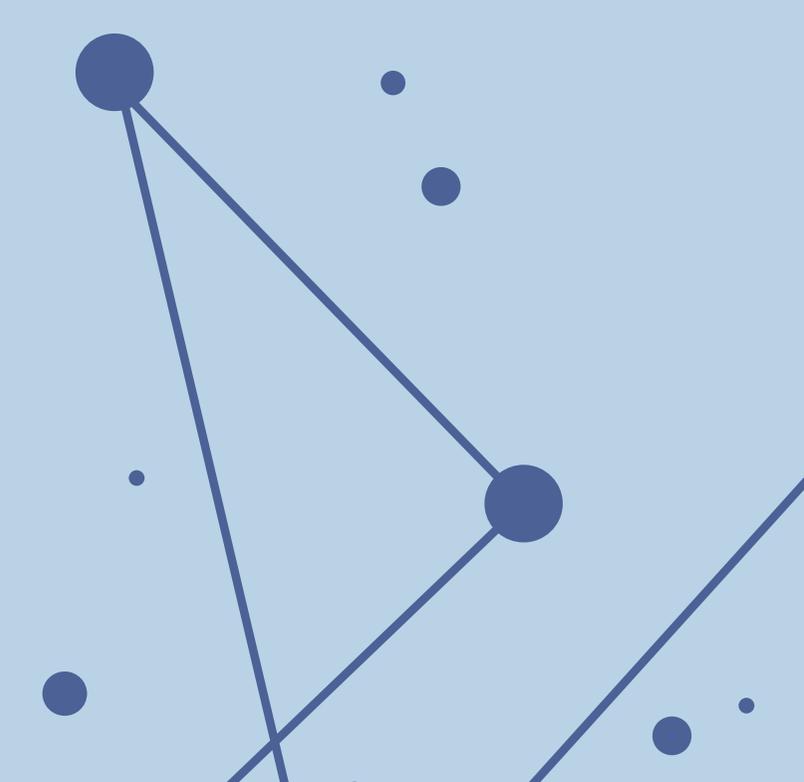
Plan for the future

Once your organization gets back to normal operations and fully recovers from the disruptions of this pandemic, taking steps to plan for the future will help you create new efficiencies, reduce future disruptions, and keep your facilities and maintenance management priorities moving forward.

Lower your maintenance costs

A CMMS system's robust reporting features allow you to track maintenance, labor, and inventory costs in one easy-to-navigate system. Extraneous costs and labor hours can be associated with work orders, preventive maintenance tasks, inventory updates, and more to provide a holistic, real-time view of your maintenance expenses. You can use this data, and other reports, to gain insight into problem areas within your department, while discovering ways to cut costs and improve your bottom line.

Make data-driven decisions

The data collected in a CMMS is extremely customizable and powerful. It can be used to justify capital and labor expenditures, determine when to repair an equipment item versus when to replace it, where bottlenecks lie in your processes, and more. By detailing the number of maintenance repairs, labor hours, equipment downtime, and inventory costs, you can identify the resources your team needs to operate efficiently.

Extend the lifespan of equipment & assets

Routine inspections allow your team to identify problems with equipment and assets before they cause disruptions in your workflows. In addition, broken or worn parts can be replaced before causing unnecessary damage. This extends the useful life of your equipment and reduces the frequency of unexpected breakdowns.

Reduce equipment downtime

By scheduling and tracking preventive maintenance, you are ensuring each asset receives the proper care it needs and ultimately reducing equipment breakdowns. In addition, the system can predict the next time a piece of equipment will break, allowing you to perform preventive maintenance before it fails.

Increase technician productivity

Organizations that implement a CMMS typically see an immediate increase in productivity. Work order response and resolution times decrease, and less time is spent managing requests, which means technicians can get more work done. Less time, more work - that's productivity at its finest.

Streamline every operational process

A CMMS automates processes like never before. Work requests can be routed to the appropriate technician instantly and when that request is being worked on, updates are sent to the requesting user letting them know of its progress. The ability to attach pictures and documents to work orders leaves little room for ambiguity, requires less back and forth between requesting users and technicians, and allows your team to resolve requests faster.

Meet your compliance & safety standards

A CMMS keeps an extremely thorough record of all the maintenance that has been performed on each piece of equipment. Maintenance staff can easily access these reports to verify compliance and safety regulations are being met. In addition, a CMMS can store important information, such as product requirement documents and manufacturing build packages, for easy access to these materials.

Increase labor efficiency & team performance

A CMMS system tracks the amount of labor spent performing maintenance by technician, equipment item, or work order. This information allows you to identify weaknesses in your processes so that you can address and improve them, ultimately increasing efficiency.

Access maintenance information anytime, anywhere, and on any device

CMMS software enables you to do it all anytime, anywhere, and on any device. For many organizations, the COVID-19 pandemic was a phenomenon that created significant changes across their employees, contractors, and the general public they serve. With the right technology solutions, you can remain more adaptable to these unexpected changes and challenges, and still keep your operations running smoothly.

Through these three phases, facilities and maintenance leaders can take charge of their operations. From mitigating uncertainty, to resuming normal activities, and even taking bold steps to deliver best-in-class operational efficiencies, it's all possible with a great CMMS solution and a partner that can help you deliver real results every step of the way.

About FMX

FMX is a provider of Computerized Maintenance Management Systems (CMMS) that allow facilities and maintenance leaders to streamline their maintenance processes, increase asset productivity, and track, manage, and improve the metrics that matter most to them. Our solutions have helped over 1,200 organizations optimize their operations and reach their facilities and maintenance goals.

Learn more about FMX's CMMS Software here.