

Enhanced EAM system | IFS Ultimo boosts ConMet's maintenance and production efficiency

ConMet® installed its first Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) solution in 2018 as part of a broader commitment to achieving the highest standards of production excellence.

The initial EAM platform was used for tasks such as maintenance management across global sites, but it had operational limitations. It was designed with a complex graphical user interface and required a lot of operator training, which was a significant factor when being used by hundreds of people worldwide. The software also used traditional database technology and was run through on-site servers, which meant data exchange between the mobile devices and central infrastructure was slow. Indeed, certain downloads and syncs between servers and mobile devices took several minutes each time. In short, the EAM system was hampering operational flexibility and productivity.

In search of an enhanced EAM solution

ConMet sought a more modern EAM solution. Several vendors, including IFS Ultimo, were assessed, with head-to-head comparisons carried out through specification deep dives and engineering demonstrations. ConMet identified six areas where it thought it could achieve high-value output from EAM implementation, asking the vendors to prove their solution regarding functionality and data quality. After several meetings, it became apparent that the IFS Ultimo solution was superior in every way.

“The evaluation process showed that the IFS EAM platform was much easier to use and understand,” said Haris Bin Maqsood, EAM System Engineer, ConMet. “We were also really impressed by the knowledge and proactive response of the IFS Ultimo sales and engineering teams. They had an excellent grasp on the technical details of the product and gave us clear visibility of how it could be customized to our needs.”

How IFS Ultimo met all user requirements

The IFS Ultimo EAM solution is a cloud-based platform that can be used for a full-service range of activities such as maintenance scheduling, asset lifecycle analysis, spare parts and inventory control, and capital investment planning – providing an instantly accessible single source of truth for critical data.

About ConMet

ConMet is a global manufacturer of systems and components for commercial vehicles, focusing primarily on wheel ends, engine chassis castings, and cab interiors. The company also has divisions focused on e-mobility and emissions-reduction technologies such as regenerative braking and aerodynamics. The company is headquartered in Vancouver, Washington, and has nine production sites worldwide including facilities in the U.S., Mexico, and China. These facilities are asset-intensive operations with high levels of automation.



Benefits seen using IFS Ultimo

- Adoption of an enhanced cloud-based EAM solution
- A more intuitive and responsive system
- Improved visibility of all maintenance-related activities
- High user uptake on the system across the organization

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“We use the solution for pretty much everything to do with the effective management of production assets – from the smallest components to giant production line equipment such as lathes, mills, presses, and injection molding tools,” said Patrick Rowson, Engineering Manager for EAM Manufacturing Systems, ConMet. “Increasingly, it is also being deployed to better oversee engineering administration and workflow processes such as the integration of new equipment and the selection of spare parts. Therefore, it has multiple applications across our organization, and there are sure to be others to follow.”

Delivering a faster, more user-friendly solution

Presently, ConMet has around 270 active users of the EAM system. These include maintenance technicians, storeroom supervisors, inventory managers, planners, and buyers. The software can be accessed through desktop PCs, mobile tablets, and fixed-station installations in the plants. It operates on a software-as-a-service, cloud-based IT architecture, which delivers far superior data transfer than the previous centralized solution.

The EAM system is flexible, intuitive, and easy to use. It has also been integrated with other enterprise resource planning systems, such as SAP, for more collaborative work. Alongside this, IFS Ultimo gives all users access to The Ultimo Academy, an e-learning platform that features resources on how to use the software more efficiently and provides a wide range of materials relevant to different team roles. Adoption of the EAM platform is already delivering tangible operational rewards.

“We use the EAM system to record measurements in support of our predictive maintenance methodologies,” Rowson said. “In just one application – CNC lathe spindle vibration measurement – we estimate that we can save about \$1.23 million each year in one plant by using predictive technology. EAM supports these activities.”

Looking to the future, ConMet is also assessing how it might expand the use of the EAM solution to achieve closer integration with other health and safety platforms.

Recognizing the power of partnership

Adopting the EAM solution has been hugely successful, resulting in more efficient and productive maintenance activities. ConMet says it now has a superior system in place compared to what it had previously, and it is functioning effectively in all of the primary spaces it was designed for. The EAM system is provided to ConMet as a single-source, one-stop solution, making it easier to develop and maintain.

According to Maqsood, the adoption of the platform has been a very positive experience.

“That goes back to the product and the people we have worked with,” he said. “The IFS Ultimo team was really adaptable and worked with us to create a great solution. We now have a complete package that allows us to effectively oversee our enterprise and asset management activities, and, importantly, it has really engaged our end users.”