



UNIVERSAL FOREST PRODUCTS, INC.

CASE STUDY

CUSTOMER DETAILS

Universal Forest Products, Inc. manufactures and distributes wood, wood composite and other products to three robust markets: retail, construction and industrial.

INDUSTRY

Wood, Pulp & Paper

APTEAN SOLUTION

TabWare EAM

CHALLENGES

- Maintenance departments varied in size and complexity
- Maintenance systems varied by location
- More advanced technology with complex maintenance needs

BENEFITS

- Organized maintenance activities across facilities to satisfy equipment warranty requirements
- Standardized reporting across facilities
- Greater insight into performance and cost details

Universal Forest Products (UFPI) is a leading manufacturer and distributor of engineered wood and construction materials in the retail, industrial, and construction markets.

Its product offerings include natural wood, composite wood and plastic products for home beautification, pallets and containers for industry and agriculture, specialty concrete forming products, fabricated roof and floor trusses and wall panels for the site-built and mobile home industries.

Founded in 1955, UFPI is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Mich., with affiliates throughout North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. The publicly traded company generates over \$3 billion in revenue and has approximately 10,000 employees.

LACK OF A FORMALIZED SYSTEM

Universal Forest Products operates 130 facilities worldwide, with each location acting as an independent operation. Initially only one plant had a CMMS/EAM system, a few locations had paper work order systems, but most had no system in place at all. Maintenance staff at the sites varied as well, ranging from one or two individuals to a team of 15 to 20.

The lack of a formalized preventive maintenance system was having an impact on productivity in the plants. Unexpected breakdowns were causing costly repairs and overtime expenses. There was no precise method available to management to identify maintenance expenditures. With more sophisticated equipment being introduced in the plants, it became vital that the equipment be maintained to the manufacturers' recommendations in order to preserve warranties and realize the expected increases in productivity.

SINGLE SYSTEM, STANDARD PROCESSES & TRAINING

A single CMMS/EAM solution throughout the company was a priority. In 2012, the Executive Vice President and Vice President of the Manufacturing division began the search for a system that would fit the needs of UFPI. Aptean TabWare EAM was chosen due to its full features with standard processes and workflows, ease of use and total cost of ownership.

Even though the project had executive support, convincing plant management of the benefits of a CMMS/EAM system was a challenge. Regional engineers were originally planned to be responsible for the implementation of TabWare at their facilities; however it became apparent that solution was not practical. The skill levels for the engineers varied greatly, and the added responsibility of an EAM implementation would make their workloads unmanageable. A dedicated maintenance system lead was established as a single point of contact to streamline implementation of TabWare and user training on the system. Having one individual with the right skillset has made the implementations easier to plan, schedule and support.

The company believes that the best way for employees to embrace the system as their own is to have as much “skin in the game” as early as possible. To that end, the EAM system lead examined what each user persona would be doing within the system in order to focus training on their specific responsibilities. Scenarios are presented in the training environment that mimic each user role. New users then begin working with TabWare by entering actual work orders into the live system to reinforce learning. A workflow process was created for maintenance supervisors, as well as training videos. In addition, general managers at each location are provided with an overview document that details the benefits of using TabWare, such as better visibility into equipment maintenance costs and the ability to track project costs. This approach to training and support has led to almost 100% user adoption.

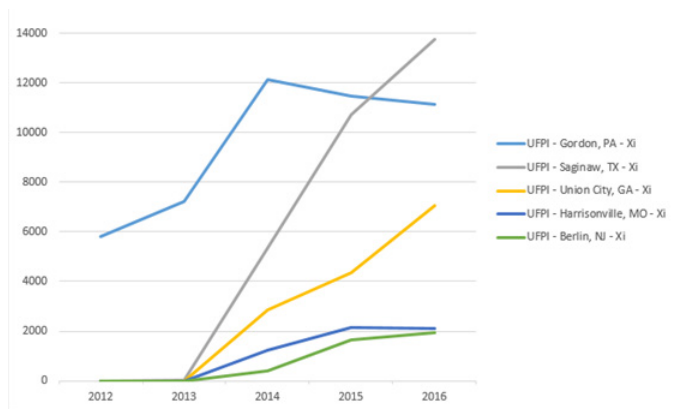
Currently 28 facilities have implemented Aptean TabWare EAM with a goal of adding eight locations per year. In an organization as large and distributed as UFPI, the total implementation time for TabWare varies from site to site. UFPI’s approach to implementation is to first organize and electronically collect the inventory and equipment data for the site, so that it can be immediately used in TabWare when the site goes live. After that task has been completed, the implementation progresses quickly, and TabWare can be live at the site within three weeks.

There are two key factors that enable this implementation speed. The dedicated maintenance system lead has developed

a standard, repeatable process for the final data migration, training and support phases of the project. UFPI also uses TabWare’s cloud model, which means each plant’s instance can be rapidly deployed and ready to begin the data import process within a few days rather than weeks, allowing UFPI to make just-in-time decisions about a site’s deployment timeline.

MORE DISCIPLINED APPROACH

Once early adopters of TabWare expressed satisfaction with the system, demand among the other facilities began to grow. Metrics reflecting the rapid increase of time recorded in the system (see Figure 1) demonstrated the fast adoption rate, validating the usefulness of the other data being tracked. The automatic email notification to work requestors was a feature many teams welcomed; requestors are informed of status changes so they are aware of the progress of the work orders they have submitted, eliminating the need to interrupt the technicians to inquire about the status of their requests.

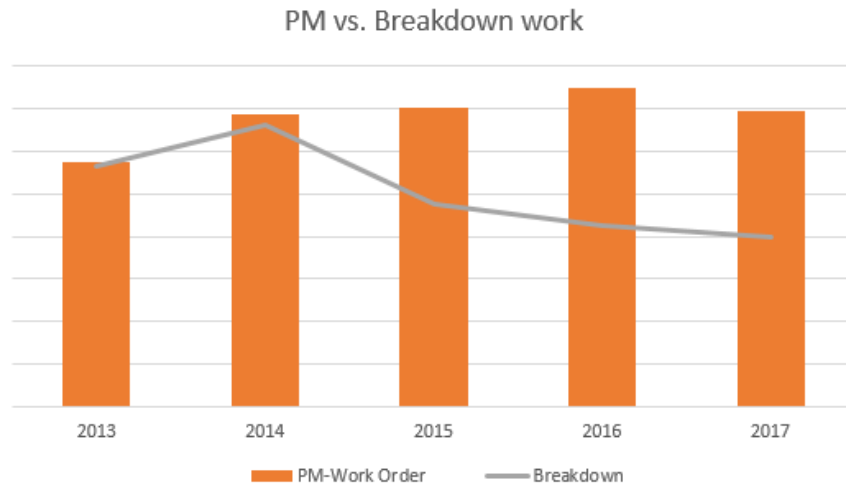


• Figure 1: Hours Tracked by Technician

Monthly reports are provided to plant management detailing the costs and labor hours recorded for the previous periods. UFPI locations have also been able to break down costs and hours based on equipment and work areas. The reports are also used to encourage conversation between management and maintenance about why certain equipment uses the majority of hours and budget.

Another report the EAM system lead provides is a comparison of repair work orders and preventive maintenance. Facilities have seen fewer breakdown work orders as a result of the shift in maintenance strategy. Reporting has also helped improve processes and tracking downtime, first by acknowledging, with data, the actual downtime situations, durations and causes. Improvements made at each location have validated the investment in Aptean TabWare EAM.

One of the larger plants at UFPI demonstrated the power of TabWare combined with a disciplined maintenance program by reducing their breakdown work orders by 30%. The increased attention to a Preventive Maintenance program resulted in a decreased occurrence of breakdowns (see Figure 2).



• Figure 2: Reduction in Breakdowns

An often heard comment from the plants that have implemented TabWare is the degree of organization the solution has provided to work orders. Everyone at the facility is on the same page regarding maintenance. Employees across departments see the same information and are able to provide feedback as to the priorities, based on available resources. Management is then able to make better decisions in guiding the maintenance department to those work orders deemed to have the greatest need. Further, TabWare's cloud solution enables corporate wide visibility to the data, enabling comparisons and best practices sharing across the sites. The more proactive approach to maintenance activities across UFPI locations has led to meaningful cost savings for the organization.

EXTENDING CAPABILITIES GOING FORWARD

As the early adopters have turned into experienced users, the plants are beginning to explore more ways to utilize TabWare to improve their maintenance processes. Facilities are looking at how to utilize scheduling and are beginning to explore more reporting options. One location has begun to use the Storeroom application to manage their spare parts, which will likely lead to additional conversations with other plant managers. The addition of TabWare Technician at the location in San Antonio, TX has opened UFPI to the possibility of a truly paperless system. The maintenance system lead is also planning to incorporate TabWare Analytics, which would mean less time gathering data and more time examining the results. Analytics could further empower plant managers to dig into the information within their facilities for ways to improve. With that capability comes the opportunity to focus on value-add analysis of how facilities compare to each other, addressing areas of concern and areas of improvement.

Interested in learning more about Aptean TabWare EAM? Please contact us at 1.855.411.2793 or email us at info@aptean.com.



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