Brightly

Effective ways to use data as an asset

4 reasons proactive asset management can save your business money

Want to know one of the most expensive phrases anyone in your organization can mutter?

"But we've always done it this way."

Whether you have a reluctant-to-anything-digital operations manager or a board of directors that's struggling to approve an investment in preventive tech, if your company isn't leveraging the data you already have, you're likely losing money.

You read that right.

Now, there are two ways to go about asset management: proactive and reactive. For the proactive business, it might cost a little more upfront. For starters, there might be training and onboarding or you might have to recalibrate some of your systems. Or it could take extra time and energy to get buy-in across the organization.

But if a company is reactive, you're likely not taking advantage of the information that's already available. On top of that you're probably spending too much money when something goes down and what do you know, your organization is losing additional business in places where it could be avoided.

Read on to uncover four reasons why proactive asset management could save your business money.

1. Get out of the break/fix cycle

What if you kept a detailed maintenance record that told you that once every eight months your machine was going to overheat and break down. At which point, you inevitably call your repair person who can squeeze you in — but you'll have to pay a rush fee. And in the meantime, the rest of your operations screech to a halt while you wait to fix your machine.

Leadership signs off on the expense because the machine needs to get fixed for business to resume, but it costs about $10,000 each time (plus parts, plus additional costs for inflation or labor). You lose productivity for 48 hours, resulting in additional lost revenue.

So not only is it costing tens of thousands of dollars to repair the machine while you're probably paying people to stand around and wait for operations to resume, you also lose out on business.

If you flipped your mindset from reactive (paying to fix something when it's broken) to proactively scheduling preventative maintenance, you could get ahead of your overheating machine. Chances are, your asset starts to give indicators that failure is imminent. If you keep and reference records, you might see a pattern that reveals when your mechanism is about to fail. Instead of waiting you could order the part in advance, schedule a technician to come in when operations are not at peak hours, and keep the flow of business running smoothly with no disruptions.

Or, you're not sure what is causing the issue but you know that it's related to overheating, so you invest in an inexpensive IoT sensor to let you know when you're approaching the danger zone. Either way, getting ahead of the issue can save your organization thousands (and thousands) of dollars.

But, you can't seem to convince the board to approve a better documentation system or your team to use a new technology. So you keep having to pay extra expenses for a fix, and lose money on lost productivity and revenue every time your machine breaks down.

It's all about mindset.

So start communicating about how not changing your approach will cost the company a heck of a lot more than getting in front of the issues.

Similar to keeping and monitoring your records, proactively keeping tabs on the data that's right in front of you can help your business save time and money. From regularly scheduled maintenance to real-time indicators, your assets already have all the information you need to make better decisions — you just must shift your mindset.
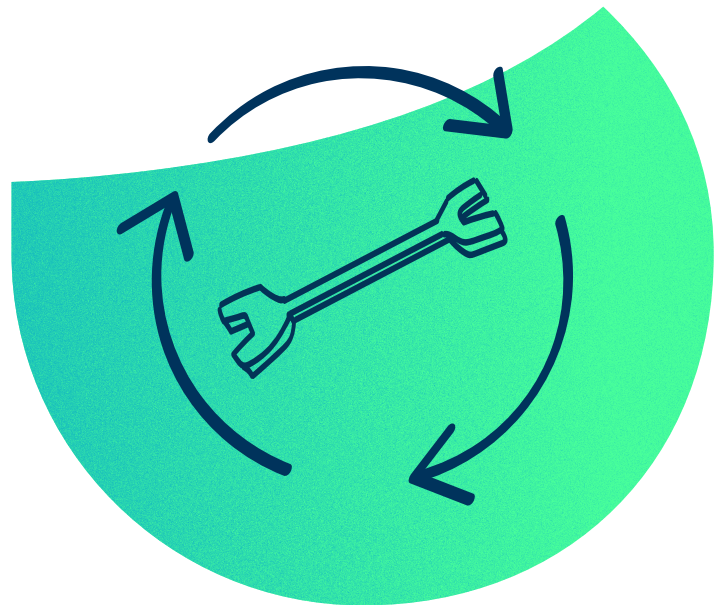
2. Optimize your efforts

For this scenario, imagine you oversee a repair crew. They start each day with a stack of tickets and go down the list one at a time. Your crew begins with the first order, goes out to the site, completes the issue, then opens the next ticket, which has them driving an hour in a new direction. So, they hop in the truck, make their way across town, and do it again.

Great! Your crew is completing their tasks, making the requested fixes. But what if they open that third ticket, and it's only a block away from where the first one was located? Instead of taking time to travel (twice), they could have moved to the next block and resolved the problem.

Many field professionals may be reluctant to technology, whether it's having to learn something new or feeling like they are being tracked. But it's likely that most people on your crew have a smartphone (and know how to use it well). As far as being tracked, your ticket system is essentially doing just that — keeping record of what tasks are completed.

It comes back to mindset.

These days, learning a new program can be as easy as learning a new app. If your work orders for the day were digitally connected you could give your team additional context to help them efficiently do their job. Information like:

• Project one and project three are close to each other

• Project two is near a school, avoid during peak pickup/drop-off hours

• Project four is a repeat. See if you can figure out what's causing this issue.

If you know what type of issue needs to be repaired, you can use the technician best suited for that particular problem. Or you can enable your team to help each other if they complete jobs early or know better ways to resolve repairs.

What if your team could complete their fixes in less time? Then there could be more time for educational opportunities or certification courses. Or even, their day could end earlier when all the work is completed. In return, you'll save money on gas, have happier/fulfilled employees, and depending on your industry, more satisfied clients!

Getting folks to use technology can feel challenging but helping them to understand the benefits of using the data that is already there can make it easier to get everyone on board.

3. Get a better grasp on inventory

Whether you're keeping tabs on service vehicles for your organization or bouncy balls in your warehouse, how you manage your inventory can drastically impact your bottom line.

Inventory management is more than just "how many of 'X' do I have?" From understanding your procurement or replenishment processes and cycles to knowing what parts you frequently need for maintenance, having insight into the current status of your inventory can help you to make better decisions.

Say your organization has a fleet of vehicles. A few things you should be tracking are:

- Who is the driver for each truck?

- When do they need oil changes or servicing?

- Is there a common cause of breakdowns?

- What is their fuel level, or fueling schedule?

- Are they compliant with city, state, and federal regulations?

- Which calls are best suited for which vehicle?

- What is the age of each vehicle?

- Are there any other maintenance concerns?

Not only do you want to know how many vehicles are in your purview, you also need to understand how they are performing and where they are in their asset lifecycle.

If you know when it's time to service or replace your vehicles, you can keep business running smoothly and account for new trucks or maintenance in your budget.

Without insight, you could lose money. If a delivery truck breaks down, will you be able to fulfill your order? You'll likely still have to pay the driver, so not only will you be losing revenue you'll be spending dollars for labor that isn't actually happening.

4. Work smarter, not harder

We get it. People LOVE technology. Gadgets can be fun to gather data in ways you've never been able to before. There is nothing better than discovering how things connect and learning from analytics. But that doesn't mean you should put a smart sensor on every piece of equipment or in every storm drain.

The key is to find the best places to gather the right data that can help your business avoid unnecessary costs.

Imagine you're responsible for public works projects in your city. Every few years, the storm drains flood and cause a colossal mess. They take a highway and bridge out of commission, your public transportation and trash collection get impacted, and everyone points an angry finger at city hall.

Your mayor has been reading up on smart cities and wants to install sensors in every single drain — even those that have never, ever flooded. But that's a multi-million-dollar project! And it will require a lot of additional funds for installation, monitoring, and maintenance. And those budgets might be already allocated to parks, summer concerts, outdoor movie nights, or hundreds of other city projects.

You've seen a few floods, so you approach this from another angle. You know that the drains are all connected and essentially run downhill. So you recommend only placing a few sensors at key points that will communicate when water levels are hitting critical levels. This will trigger preventive maintenance staff to service the area and head off flooding. You also recommend a quarterly preventative cleaning schedule to ensure they are clean and operational. You outline a way to do it that only needs occasional maintenance checks and zero new hires.

The mayor really wants more tech but knows the park and summer concerts will be good for tourism and the community. Your plan also saves the city millions of dollars — and protects it from flooding that could have been prevented.

Once again, it's all about mindset.

Understanding available data and using it intelligently can help you work smarter, instead of harder (And yes, save you money).

Look on the Brightly side of asset management

For anyone working in asset management, you know the historical data is there and it's probably right in front of you.

How often does this break? What is the usual lifecycle for this machine? Why are my crews spending so much time driving back and forth across town?

At Brightly, we are the solution to decentralized and inefficient asset management. We believe that dashboards should be intuitive and customizable, and that analytics should be accessible.

Brightly's industry-leading EAM solutions enable you to:

- Get out of the break/fix cycle

- Optimize your efforts

- Get a better grasp on inventory management

- Work smarter, not harder

Ready to switch from reactive to proactive asset management? **Schedule a demo** with Brightly today.