"MTC is one of the first in the country to implement a PMS…" FHWA

STREETSAVER® Built with .NET Technology Online
MTC Pavement Management Software v.9

6 Key Factors in Evaluating a Pavement Management Software

Sui Tan, Metropolitan Transportation Commission

1. Emphasis on Pavement Preservation

StreetSaver® has been developed fundamentally with a strong emphasis on preventive maintenance since its inception in 1987. Users can easily set up their pavement preservation program within the software. The questions to ask when evaluating a PMS system are: how do other PMS software rank or prioritize preventive maintenance treatments? Do they demonstrate the importance of maintaining the good roads so that the roads will last longer? What is the PCI or remaining service life of a street before and after a treatment?

2. Identification of Candidate Projects

The unsophisticated PMS software may deploy a prioritization process based solely on pavement condition. Typically the roads with the worst conditions will be selected for treatment first. This "Worst First" strategy should be avoided. By minimum standards, a PMS software should use some mixed forms of prioritization processes that include cost, functional class, and condition. It also must include a prediction model to predict future conditions based on surface types and traffic. StreetSaver® pioneered the cost-effective prioritization process with an emphasis on preventive maintenance. The prediction model is built on the performance curve of each segment of street, truly reflecting its field conditions.

3. Ease of Use

Most PMS software put the engineering aspects up-front for the end user - they tout that it is very flexible for users to define. However this method can create more problems than are solved. For example, if the end user is allowed to change the performance curves from year to year, what kind of consistency will there be for performing needs assessments? That is why StreetSaver® places all of the engineering aspects behind the scene. A PMS should not burden the end users to collect data that is not necessary. Also, PMS software must be user friendly so that not only the engineer can use it, maintenance and financial personnel should be able to use it too. StreetSaver® is designed to provide ease of use as has been requested by public works directors, and we continue to build on the same philosophy.

4. Free of Internal IT Support

StreetSaver® is available online, on-demand, anytime and anywhere since 2005. We use a robust enterprise MS SQL Server as our database engine. All we require is that the online user has a MS Internet Explorer browser. There is no additional software to install, no database to maintain. We provide database backup, storage and recovery service for our online users. We learned from our experience dealing with local agencies -- they don't have sufficient IT staff to support server-client software. We have heard horror stories over and over again that because of staff turnover and computer systems upgrades, important data has been lost.

5. Technical Support & Training

The support team has always prided itself on responsiveness to the users using StreetSaver Online, on speed and agility, on innovation and the evolution of StreetSaver itself and never stopping making things better. We understand that no matter how good a PMS software is, unless it can be backed up with knowledgeable and responsive technical support – it won't serve as a useable tool. With our online system, we can provide virtual technical support online. The technology allows us to see the user's screen as if we were right by their side. We also provide a technical support hotline. On top of that, we provide software and distress survey training two times a year during our StreetSaver® User Conference, as well as online self-paced courses.

6. Continued Software Development

There are a lot of "mom and pop" developed PMS software available. Development of these systems often ceases when key personnel retire or close up shop. When the key personnel retired or left, the software could potentially go south. When choosing a PMS, it is important to check out how strong of a development team the software provides has. We collaborate with Texas A&M University, Texas Transportation Institute, University of Texas – El Paso, and California Pavement Preservation Center at California State University at Chico, for research and development. We are committed to the continued development and improvement of the software. More importantly, we are all ears for users' feedback!

With 25 years of experience providing pavement management solutions, we have earned a solid reputation for our domain knowledge and our commitment to quality and service.