

Western Refining

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Blake Larsen,
Information Technology Manager,
Western Refining

Windows-Based Maintenance Management Helps Western Refining Optimize Availability of Plant Assets

by Invensys Operations Management

Goals

- Improve management of maintenance and operations;
- Efficiently track materials and work orders.

Challenges

- Update aging legacy system to a modern windows- based maintenance management system, while reducing costs and improving efficiency.

Solutions and Products

- Avantis.PRO.

Results

- Scalable asset management to support company growth;
- Familiar Microsoft Windows work environment;
- Improved management of maintenance and operations;
- Full accountability of work orders, labor, and materials;
- Streamlined purchasing of materials and services.

El Paso, Texas – Headquartered in El Paso, Texas, Western Refining, Inc. is an independent crude oil refiner and marketer of refined products throughout the Southwest.

The company has a crude processing capacity in excess of 117,000 barrels per day, with more than 90% of its refined products being light transportation fuels, including gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel.

Serving primarily the Southwestern region of the U.S., Western Refining has approximately 4.3 million barrels of storage capacity, and a 45,000-barrel per day marketing terminal.

Aging Legacy System

When Western Refining bought the El Paso refinery and terminal assets from its then parent Chevron Texaco, a comprehensive asset management technology came with the purchase.

This software promised powerful functionality to automate maintenance, purchasing, inventory, and related accounts payable; but it was of an earlier generation.

Management concluded that investing in a modern, standards-based system would have a greater return than would efforts to extract functionality from the aging legacy system.

“It wasn’t that we were having problems with the existing software; we just felt we were missing out on opportunities to cut costs and improve efficiency, mostly because the system we inherited was too complex, too cumbersome, and too expensive to maintain,” said Blake Larsen, Information Technology Manager. *“The functionality was probably there, we just couldn’t get at it easily.”*

The company’s changing business needs prompted an evaluation of asset management system options.

They assembled a cross-functional team that determined what they needed to change in their existing system and conducted a search for alternatives.

The team narrowed its search to two suppliers and chose Avantis.PRO

enterprise asset management software from Invensys Operations Management.

Improved Management Solution

According to Larsen *“Cost-value was the major factor in our decision to go with Avantis. What also helped set the Avantis solution apart was its use of Windows technology and its deep and growing relationship with Microsoft. This assured that employees could work in a familiar software environment and exchange data easily with other applications.”*

The employees now have help from Avantis.PRO software in managing the purchase of materials and services. This includes items for minor maintenance and repairs, as well as items that are specially requisitioned for projects and office needs.

The Avantis.PRO software also helps track materials, maintenance employees, contract labor, and other resources.

Specifically, Western Refining has now implemented the following Avantis modules from the Avantis.PRO suite:

- **Entity Management**, to help manage maintainable and organizational entities and track capital projects;
- **Work Management**, to enable easy retrieval of work and equipment history, and generate work orders from preventive maintenance programs automatically;
- **Preventive Maintenance**, to create a library of standard, repeatable jobs with automatic work order generation, inspection checklists, and preventive maintenance routes;
- **MRO Inventory**, to provide and track material needs for routine maintenance repair and operation, enabling control of inventory value;



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- **Procurement**, to fully automate the purchasing process, including requisitions, purchase orders, expediting, receiving, quotations, contracts, and invoice matching.

"We now have full accountability from the moment that a person issues a work order, requisitions materials, or contracts labor. Asset management is a key application used every day. With the Avantis solution, we can manage our maintenance activity and business more efficiently than before. The software also enforces integrity, keeping all data current and in check," Larsen commented.

Positive Results

The new software has been widely accepted as a daily utility and is used extensively by employees.

"When we first rolled out the Avantis solution, some users expressed very vocal doubts on entering a one-hour training session. But at the end of that session, even the most dubious operators agreed that we had made a major step forward," said Larsen.

Down the road, Larsen sees extending reporting capabilities and integrating asset management functionality with the company's real-time financial system and document management infrastructure. *We see a tremendous opportunity to collect and aggregate a lot of information and that requires a rock solid, easy-to-use asset management foundation. We want to integrate maintenance data with other data on dashboards that can be used throughout the plant,"* concluded Larsen.

For now, however, Western Refining is already well ahead of the game and there is no doubt its new software system has helped put it there.

*This document was realized thanks to the support of:
Western Refining.*