

DPSI Customer Success Story: Wisconsin State Fair

Overview:

Wisconsin State Fair uses PMC to help keep fair equipment properly maintained and the grounds ready for events throughout the year.

Market:

Facilities



Each year in early August, over the course of 11 fun-filled days, nearly a million people visit the Wisconsin State Fair. Livestock, home economics, and horticulture judging are high on the list of favorite fair activities. The Wisconsin State Fair hosts approximately 22,000 entries, awards more than \$400,000 in premiums, and distributes more than 30,000 ribbons to the Midwest's finest dairy and beef cattle, draft horses, goats, sheep, swine, llamas, rabbits, and poultry. Not to mention cakes, cookies, pies, canned goods, quilts, needlepoint, woven items, floral arrangements, and, of course, dairy products.

Before and after the fair, the grounds bustle with rodeos, antique shows, concerts, gun shows, craft shows, auctions, and other festivals such as Cajunfest and West Allis Western Days. One of the reasons the grounds are so popular is the new 200,000 square-foot exposition center, where many of the activities are located.

PMC: A System for All Seasons

Scott Franckowiak, the fair's grounds department office manager, uses PMC, a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) from DPSI, to help keep fair equipment properly maintained and the grounds ready for events throughout the year. He says, "It takes a lot of equipment to manage the Wisconsin State Fairgrounds. We maintain a fleet of vehicles, front-end loaders, outdoor maintenance equipment, saws, leaf blowers, drills, power tools, ladders, and non-motorized carts. We use some equipment almost exclusively during the summer, and other equipment during the winter. PMC reminds us to monitor all of the equipment year-round to make sure it's in working condition."

Maintenance activities vary depending on the season. In the late autumn, PMC prints out a work order reminding the grounds crew to charge the snowblowers to make sure they are ready to handle the snow and ice. Regular preventive maintenance activities also include checking oil levels, fluid levels, and hydraulic systems; rotating tires; making sure gears are greased; and ensuring that the steering is working correctly. Golf carts that are used as transportation during the summer are winterized, which involves removing the battery, flushing the fluids, and doing any engine or body work put off during the busy summer. Then, when summer arrives, the carts are “de-winterized:” the battery replaced, fluids added, and a thorough check made to ensure that nothing was damaged in the cold weather.

“Management wants us to run as tight a ship as we can,” says Franckowiak. “Any money we can save with preventive maintenance is incredibly helpful to the overall running of the fairgrounds. The grounds department is a big chunk of our budget because we’re out doing the manual labor. When we save money it helps the entire process.”

Preparing for Seasonal Events



Work orders generated by PMC also help Franckowiak and his staff prepare the grounds for events — both those for the Wisconsin State Fair and the community. “For example, PMC work orders guide us in setting up the livestock judging areas in the coliseum,” says Franckowiak. “We till the soil with a tractor to soften the ground for the animals. Then we set up tables and chairs so people can relax and have a beverage. We put out risers for the judging area and make sure that the back-up generator works in case of a power outage.” After the animal judging, the grounds crew uses skid loaders with large tractor wheels and a bucket in front to collect barn waste material.



Franckowiak estimates that PMC generates about 10 work orders a day in the fall and winter. “During the summer that rises to 25 a day, and during the 11-day fair, PMC prints out 40 work orders a day,” says Franckowiak.

“We get an extra person or two during the summer to handle the extra work.” Unscheduled requests are filtered to Franckowiak or his assistant. Franckowiak creates a work order using PMC and assigns it to the appropriate person, such as a carpenter or a laborer. When the job is completed, the mechanic notes how much time the job took and Franckowiak enters it into PMC.

“Keeping track of unscheduled requests helps with preventive maintenance, and helps us control costs,” notes Franckowiak.

Tracking Costs

Franckowiak uses PMC’s parts and inventory module to track items rented to the promoters of outside groups using the fairgrounds for their events. Tables and chairs are the most commonly requested items, along with small electrical parts and forklifts. “We enter the amounts into PMC and print out a report so each promoter can be properly charged,” says Franckowiak.

Reporting Features Allow for Better Planning

Franckowiak generates reports in PMC to help him plan for outside events. "When we're staffing an event and unsure of how many people we need, we can check and see how many people we used last year," he explains. "If we want to know how long it's going to take to clean something or set something up, we can look up last year's data as well. We also keep track of our time and bill it to the promoter."

"It allows us to charge people the right amount. If renters damage something, we can even add that to PMC where it will be printed out on their bill as a miscellaneous charge," adds Franckowiak. "It will come out as one clean bill we can send to the promoter." Reports on the Wisconsin State Fair also help him plan. "The fair is a unique event in that there is no promoter," he says. "Even though we're the ones running it, we track how much labor is going into it and we do a large report similar to the ones we do for outside events. It tells us how much of our budget we need to set aside to take care of the fair. We also use it to determine how much one internal department should charge another."

Franckowiak says he would definitely recommend PMC. "It has a variety of functions and it makes sure that things get done. Not only that, it's quite easy to learn the rudiments in a day or so, and within a week someone can use just about all of the functions."

"We take PMC almost for granted," concludes Franckowiak. "But it helps us control our costs and overall saves us quite a bit of money."

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