

by Howard Millman

Not every road leads to Oz, nor does every capital request lead to funding. How's your track record? At a recent regional conference, I listened to the director of a Midwestern university's physical plant department describe his problem and then share his success secret.

He recognized that the trustees rejected his requests because his group had a credibility problem. It's not that the trustees did not believe him, but he could not persuasively make his case without backup; he needed hard numbers before they would pony up any cash.

Does this scenario play out in your facility? The speaker commissioned a custom software application to capture and present facility audit information. He estimates it cost them "about \$15,000 and still counting." Fortunately, it's successful.

You, however, may want to investigate an auditing program, Facility AuditMate, from Diversified Intelligence. It uses custom algorithms to track, analyze, and chart deferred maintenance, asset replacement costs, and optimal replacement dates. The program runs under Windows 95 and 98.

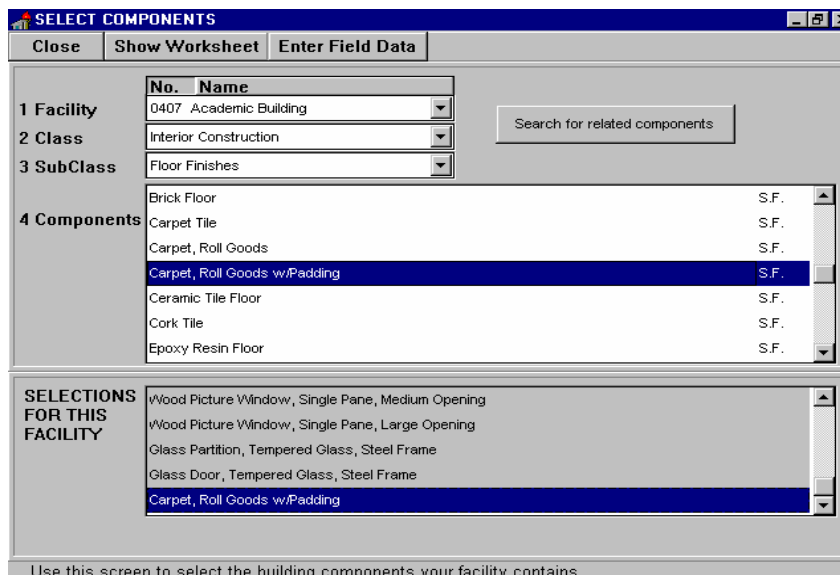
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Working with a fully functional demo from Diversified, my impressions are that the product lives up to the vendor's promises. Incidentally, the software was developed by Jay Oschrin, an experienced facility management pro.

A Streamlined Data Process

One concern regarding Facility AuditMate, and all such programs, is dealing with the time consuming process of collecting and entering the required data. For each building (asset) you want to track, you will

components. These include the superstructure, foundations, roofing, interior finishes, plumbing, electrical, and so on. In turn, each of these components have sub-groupings that further define the building's physical elements. For example, interior finishes sub-listings include concrete block, painting, carpeting, and many more. These detailed classifications unburden you from having to analyze every building's features and reduces the chance of you forgetting to include a building component.



Individual building components are selected for each facility from easy-to-use pick lists. There are over 2,400 components to choose from.

need to know its year of installation or construction and quantity (for example, square feet, linear feet, each or lump sum). While this one-time effort of keying in the data is not difficult, in fact it's almost a no-brainer, it will prove time consuming in direct proportion to the quality of your existing blueprints and records.

Diversified does its share to help accelerate entering the information. For example, Facility AuditMate uses a 13-level classification system to identify all of a building's

and current level of deferred maintenance. Diversified provides 34 predesigned reports and graphs to slice and dice the data in order to help you persuasively make your case.

To receive more information about Facility AuditMate 3.0, contact Diversified Intelligence at 804-984-5139 or by e-mail at info@telligence.net. The package price depends on the number of buildings in your plant. Price includes six months telephone support. Annual maintenance is available at 15% of the initial cost.

Diversified supplies its own unit costs and predicted lifespans for all of the sub-groupings in the program. You can edit any of these constants, including an inflation rate, to reflect your own values.

From there, the program takes over. It computes the lifespan, current age, next renewal (replacement) date, renewal cost,