



Guide

5 Minute Guide to HVAC Management in Commercial Office Spaces



Introduction

In commercial office settings, HVAC systems play an important role in ensuring tenant comfort and satisfaction. No tenant likes to be stuck in an office that's sweltering in the summer or freezing in the winter.

But managing these systems has always been challenging and costly for property teams. In commercial office spaces, HVAC systems alone typically account for 15-20% of each building's overall maintenance budget when you factor in repairs and maintenance along with electric and water. Given the steep costs associated with HVAC and the impact that these units can have on tenant satisfaction, it's important to ensure that your HVAC is managed as efficiently as possible.

Wondering where to start?

The easiest way to do so is to choose an HVAC management software that includes a complete digital inventory view of all HVAC equipment. Armed with the right solution, your property team will be able to maximize asset value, facilitate capital planning, and reduce HVAC costs.



5 Steps to Improve Commercial HVAC Management

Are you ready to improve HVAC management in your commercial office space? Follow these five steps:

1. Digitize all HVAC inventory data
2. Consolidate maintenance records
3. Procure within budget
4. Find trusted vendors
5. Facilitate capital planning



Why Year-Round HVAC Management is important

- ✓ Ensuring your HVAC doesn't break down improves tenant satisfaction
- ✓ Preventive HVAC maintenance can lower operating costs by catching problems before they become expensive or can only be fixed by replacement
- ✓ Regularly maintaining HVAC can improve its lifespan by keeping it in good shape

Digitize All HVAC Inventory Data

HVAC data (like model, year, and manufacturer) is traditionally tracked with a variety of spreadsheets or paper records.

Not only is this manual method time-consuming, it also makes it easy to lose track of important information. So, when you need to know what service was performed on an HVAC unit, you need to spend hours sorting through spreadsheets or papers. After putting in this time, you still can't find what you need – making it difficult to keep your HVAC in great shape. And when tenants or leasing prospects have questions about your unit, it can take days to get back to them, which might lead them to consider a more responsive property.

However, with HVAC management software, you can store all HVAC information in one central database. With everything in one place, you can find the information you need faster, and have the visibility you need to fuel informed decisions.



Consolidate Maintenance Records

Your HVAC unit might be maintained by a combination of engineers (for preventive maintenance) and HVAC vendors (for service calls). However, these two independent teams might record data in different formats or store it in different places. This makes it difficult for property management teams to pull this data together when they need it and leverage it to make smart decisions. With the right HVAC management solution, all service history and data is recorded in one central location, making it easy for property teams to put to use when it comes time to replace equipment.

This consolidated data also means that property managers have only one report to run, cutting down the time they spend on administrative work and helping to facilitate capital planning.



Procure Within Budget

There's no way around it—replacing your HVAC equipment isn't cheap.

However, there are ways to make sure that you're being as cost-efficient as possible, whether your unit needs a small tweak or a large-scale replacement. The right HVAC management software will give you the option to order HVAC parts directly from the manufacturer. This means that you can avoid sneaky retailer markups and get the best price every time.

Then, you can further keep costs in line by having a specialist from your solution's vendor network do the install. These features help keep your operating expenses lean while ensuring a longer lifespan for your asset.



Find Trusted Vendors

Whether for a quick fix or a large-scale repair, you need trustworthy service providers to help maintain your HVAC unit.

But, finding a vendor through traditional means like peer recommendations or using previous vendors can result in you overpaying for subpar service. To make matters worse, vendors often mark up their prices if you need immediate repairs during peak season (like summertime when inventory is low).

Looking for answers?

The right HVAC management software will have a vast network of vetted vendors, so you can find trusted service providers in no time. In this type of solution, you can compare a variety of vendors apples-to-apples to ensure you find the right vendor for your property – at the right price.



Signs You Should Replace Your HVAC Proactively

- ✓ You're unable to order replacement parts
- ✓ Repair costs are higher than replacement costs
- ✓ Your equipment is at the end of its life
- ✓ You want a more energy-efficient unit.

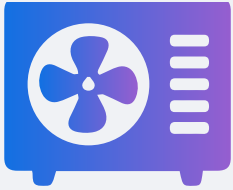
Facilitate Capital Planning

In commercial office spaces, it's common to run your HVAC system within a few years of its service life.

But, it can be hard to know just how long this service life may be. And to keep your building competitive, you want to avoid HVAC failure that might anger tenants at all costs.

The easiest way to know how much life is left in your HVAC unit is with HVAC management software. With life expectancy-based reporting, the ASHRAE life left score makes it easy to determine exactly when you need to replace your HVAC, so you can budget ahead of time for the hefty replacement costs.

This insight will also help you avoid HVAC failure that can drive up your capital expenditures. When your HVAC fails unexpectedly, you need to get a replacement as quickly as possible. This urgency may mean having to accept a subpar replacement unit because it is the first one available, or paying exorbitant fees to have parts shipped quickly.



Fast HVAC Facts During COVID-19

- ✓ 80% of tenants have asked about their HVAC and air quality more frequently than before COVID.
- ✓ 58% of tenants are requesting more frequent cleaning.
- ✓ 4% of tenants want their HVAC systems to be fully replaced.

Source: [The Evolving Importance of Effective HVAC Management](#)

How COVID-19 is Changing Tenant Expectations for HVAC

HVAC systems have always contributed to tenant satisfaction in commercial office spaces. But during COVID-19, these systems and their upkeep have taken center stage.

As COVID-19 is an airborne virus, air quality has become a top priority for tenants weighing a possible return to their spaces. This meant a dramatic shift in the way HVAC systems are viewed. Suddenly, effective ventilation and purification units went from a behind-the-scenes “good-to-have” to a key part of staying in business. To encourage re-occupancy and renewal of leases, property teams need to show clear, thorough HVAC data (including service performed, filters changed, etc.) to prove that you’ve done your part to maintain their safety.

And for leasing prospects, time spent gathering this data means more time for them to potentially choose a more responsive building. Instead, find an HVAC management solution that consolidates all HVAC data in one easily accessible location.

Conclusion

Great HVAC management is essential to keeping your commercial office building safe and your tenants comfortable. Given the challenges of the pandemic, HVAC safety has become even more important to encourage tenant re-occupancy and drive lease renewals.

The easiest way to manage your HVAC is by using HVAC management software. This software can help you reduce expenses, increase revenue, and improve the tenant experience with features like digitized HVAC information, a vendor marketplace, ASHRAE life-left score, and more. You'll gain the visibility you need to make good decisions, with none of the administrative headaches.

Get Started Today

Are you ready to improve HVAC management in your commercial office space?

[Schedule a demo of Prism HVAC Management](#)



About Building Engines

For over 20 years, Building Engines has delivered on its mission to help customers improve NOI, increase revenue, reduce operating expenses and deliver greater tenant satisfaction. Building Engines is trusted by hundreds of commercial real estate organizations who manage billions of square feet. With our latest release, Prism, Building Engines is reaching a new level of building operations innovation. Prism comes equipped to help you exceed today's goals while preparing you and your team to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Exceptional Building Operations. Extraordinary Business Outcomes.



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