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CRE guide

CRE technology guide for **Retail** properties

How to choose the right building operations
software as your Retail real estate
portfolio grows



BuildingEngines

A JLL company



Introduction

As the Retail commercial real estate (CRE) sector has evolved, so too have the challenges that property owners face on a daily basis. These challenges, multifaceted in nature, require **robust and adaptive solutions** that not only address immediate concerns but also set the foundation for future-proofing a real estate portfolio.

At the core of these challenges lies the complexity of creating and maintaining appealing and accessible shopper environments. As Retail property portfolios grow, teams face increased responsibility to ensure that each property delivers strong brand consistency, operates with exceptional efficiency, remains compliant with health and safety standards, and continually adapts to the changing preferences and behaviors of consumers.

Additionally, many Retail property owners are hindered by obsolete practices and outdated systems, such as relying on manual processes or basic spreadsheet programs. These methods may have once been adequate for small-scale operations, but as Retail portfolios expand and customer expectations evolve, these practices become increasingly inefficient, prone to human

error, and ultimately unfit to meet the dynamic demands of modern Retail management.

Enter the need for a **holistic building operations platform**, designed with the Retail sector in mind. Such software goes beyond simple property management to provide integrated solutions in areas such as preventive maintenance, COI insurance tracking, HVAC management, inspections, and more. By seamlessly integrating these functionalities, the software not only addresses immediate pain points but also empowers you to be proactive to avoid potential pitfalls and maximize your returns on investment.

This buyer's guide will dive into the must-have functionalities to consider when upgrading your building operations technology for the Retail real estate sector. From extending the lifespan of your equipment and reducing risk through COI insurance tracking to streamlining tenant compliance and harnessing data for actionable insights, you'll learn the comprehensive solutions the right platform should bring to the table.

Welcome to the future of Retail property management.



Work orders in the digital age: Streamlining operations for Retail portfolios

The backbone of effective property management lies in the ability to promptly address and resolve issues. Retail operations need to ensure minimal disruption to shoppers. From a faulty HVAC system to hazards in a Retail center that could disrupt foot traffic, timely interventions ensure smooth operations and safeguard your property's value. At the center of this intricate dance is the work order management system.

Old-school work order systems – for instance, ones backed by Excel spreadsheets – often lead to delays in communication, tasks falling through the cracks due to manual tracking, potential misplacements, and often a lack of real-time transparency.

Next-gen, digital work order management systems leverage technology to streamline, optimize, and enhance the entire lifecycle of a work order.



Build your building operations platform: Work order management software

When the scale of operations can be staggering, the ability to swiftly address and manage issues is not just a convenience — it's a necessity.

A work order management system optimizes the process by:

- Enabling you to know at-a-glance which items require immediate attention or have been on hold for too long
- Allowing you to quickly track work order status and assign work based on priority levels
- Auto-flagging duplicate work orders to save time and money for teams
- Empowering tenants with visibility into work order completion times and status updates

The key benefits of modern work order management technology include:



Instant creation and assignment

Digital systems allow for the rapid creation of work orders. Whether generated by an inspection, a tenant, or routine checks, these work orders can be instantly assigned to the appropriate team or vendor.



Real-time tracking

Stakeholders – such as property team members, vendors, and tenants alike – can track the progress of a work order in real-time. This ensures timely interventions, keeps all parties updated, and drastically reduces resolution times.



Centralized database

All work orders, be it past or present, are stored in a centralized digital database. This aids in quick retrievals, analytics, and provides an organized record of all maintenance and repair work.



Automated prioritization

Based on the severity or type of issue, the system can automatically prioritize work orders, ensuring that critical tasks are addressed immediately.



Integrated communication

Work order management technology often includes communication tools, allowing seamless interaction between property managers, vendors, and tenants, all within one platform.



Mobile accessibility

Modern work order management systems are accessible via mobile devices. This on-the-go access ensures that technicians in the field can update the status, view details, and even close orders without the need for physical paperwork.



Reporting and analytics

The system can generate reports highlighting trends, recurrent issues, and even vendor performance. This data-driven approach can inform preventive maintenance strategies and optimize operational efficiency.

The screenshot displays the PRISM By Building Engines Work Orders interface. The tablet screen shows a list of work orders with columns for Order #, Type, Details, Assignee Company, Assigned To, Charges, Company, Satisfaction, Specific Location, Status, Requested For, Created By, Priority, and File. The smartphone screen shows a detailed view of a work order for an elevator, including a photo of the elevator and a status of 'High'.

Order #	Type	Details	Assignee Company	Assigned To	Charges	Company	Satisfaction	Specific Location	Status	Requested For	Created By	Priority	File
W0054-00005	Lighting	Create work order Light out	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Wells Fargo	None provided	None provided	New	Tammy Tenant	Tammy Tenant	Medium	14
W0054-00004	Cleaning / Janitorial	Restoration Information: Business Meeting Friday	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Patent Mana...	New	Pat Manager	Pat Manager	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00003	Security	Restoration Information: Business Meeting Friday	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Patent Mana...	New	Pat Manager	Pat Manager	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00002	Cleaning / Janitorial	Restoration Information: Business Meeting Friday	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Wells Fargo	New	Tammy Tenant	Tammy Tenant	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00001	Security	Restoration Information: Business Meeting Friday	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Wells Fargo	New	Tammy Tenant	Tammy Tenant	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Cleaning / Janitorial	Restoration Information: Business Meeting Friday	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Wells Fargo	New	Tammy Tenant	Tammy Tenant	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Security	Restoration Information: Business Meeting Friday	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Wells Fargo	New	Tammy Tenant	Tammy Tenant	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	HVAC - Over-time	After Hours	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Patent Mana...	New	Pat Manager	Pat Manager	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Lighting	Lightbulb out in hallway	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Patent Mana...	New	Pat Manager	Pat Manager	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Lighting	Lightbulb is not on the first floor	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Patent Mana...	New	Pat Manager	Pat Manager	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Lighting	Create work order Light out	Patent Management	Matt King	\$31.88	Wells Fargo	None provided	None provided	New	Tammy Tenant	Tammy Tenant	Medium	14
W0054-00000	HVAC - Two Cold	After Hours	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Patent Mana...	New	Pat Manager	Pat Manager	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Trash Removal	Trash out	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Patent Mana...	New	Pat Manager	Pat Manager	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Vacuum	Need more water	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Wells Fargo	Office 5	Tom Tenant	Tom Tenant	Urgent	14	56	14
W0054-00000	HVAC - Over-time	After Hours	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Data Drg	New	John Davis	system user	Medium	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Roof Leak	There are water stains around a light in our office	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	JS Consulting	Back right corner, res...	Dana Moore	Dana Moore	Urgent	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Art	Need artwork put up	Patent Management	Edly Engineer	\$0.00	Wells Fargo	New	Tammy Tenant	Tammy Tenant	Low	14	56	14
W0054-00000	Plumbing / Leak	There is water on the floor in the lobby	Patent Management	Matt King	\$0.00	Data Drg	on the floor in the lo...	John Davis	John Davis	Urgent	14	56	14

COI tracking: Safeguard assets and reduce risk

Risk is an omnipresent factor in commercial real estate. From potential property damage to liability concerns, you must constantly be on the lookout for ways to protect your investments and mitigate unforeseen challenges.

Retail tenants often have more varied insurance needs due to their high-traffic status. Without a robust system in place to keep up with coverage, your assets could be at risk.

Among the most crucial protective measures is the Certificate of Insurance (COI) – a document that verifies the presence of insurance coverage. Managing and tracking these certificates can become a daunting task, especially when dealing with multiple vendors, contractors, and tenants. COI tracking can accommodate the array of coverage necessary for

different Retail businesses, from food services to clothing stores.

Given the pivotal role insurance plays in risk management, ensuring that all relevant parties possess valid and adequate insurance coverage becomes non-negotiable. A lapse in insurance or inadequate coverage can lead to significant financial implications in the event of incidents or disputes.

Streamline COI management with technology

COI tracking software revolutionizes the process by which these certificates are managed. Instead of sifting through physical documents or disjointed digital files, the solution provides a centralized repository for all COIs, making access, verification, and management seamless.

Build your building operations platform: COI tracking software

The stakes are high, and the margins for error are slim when it comes to COI compliance. Therefore, COI tracking becomes a cornerstone of effective risk management. When you stop manually tracking COIs and instead implement software, you can:

- Manage all certificates, requirements, and more from one central (digital) place
- Gain immediate visibility into COI status for all vendors, suppliers, and tenants
- Easily enable agents to upload COIs directly to you



Benefits of implementing COI tracking technology include:



Timely verification

Automated reminders and alerts ensure that COIs are always up to date. The software can flag upcoming expirations, prompting renewals and ensuring there are no coverage lapses.



Automated compliance checks

Beyond just tracking, the software can also be set to check for compliance against predefined criteria, ensuring that the COIs meet all necessary requirements.



Risk reduction

By ensuring that all vendors, contractors, and tenants have the necessary insurance coverage, you can significantly reduce potential liabilities.



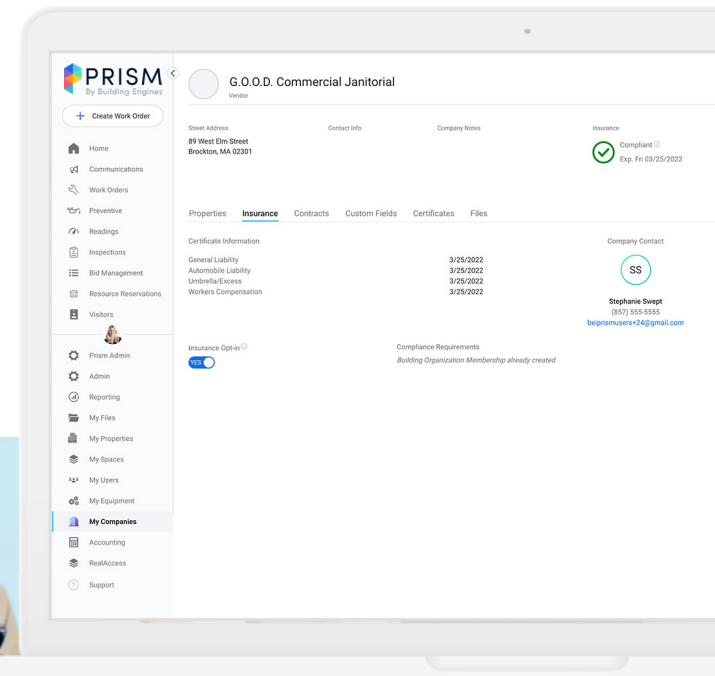
Integration with other systems

The right COI tracking software can integrate seamlessly with other property management systems, providing a holistic view of all operational aspects.



Easy access & retrieval

Need to verify a vendor's insurance status? Or perhaps present a tenant's COI in the event of a dispute? The software allows for instant access and retrieval, simplifying the verification process.



Vendor management: At the center of smooth operations

Vendor management spans a gamut of services, each contributing to a property's overall functionality and value. Retail property owners work with a spectrum of vendors, including those supplying inventory, security services, cleaning services, marketing and event planners, technology support, and more. Each vendor type presents its own set of requirements and challenges. Digital vendor management turns the narrative into one of streamlined processes, enhanced collaboration, and strategic partnerships.

Old-school vendor management often resembled a jigsaw puzzle, pieced together with phone calls, emails, paperwork, and manual follow-ups. This fragmented approach often led to miscommunication, missed opportunities, and inefficiencies.

By organizing vendor management into **one centralized digital database**, all the information you need is right at your fingertips. That includes service

portfolios, ratings, compliance data, and more. This repository aids in quick decision-making and ensures that the best-suited vendor is always a few clicks away.

For recurring tasks or in emergency situations, a robust building operations platform can **automatically assign jobs to preferred vendors**, reducing response times and ensuring continuity of service. What's more, the best building operations platforms offer a wider reach, allowing you to request and compare bids from a larger pool of vendors. Bid management software not only ensures competitive pricing but also introduces you to newer, potentially more efficient service providers.

A building operations platform with vendor management at its center allows owners to **submit work orders directly to vendors**. Vendors can give an estimate for the work right in the request. And when the platform is connected to the accounting

Build your building operations platform: Vendor management software

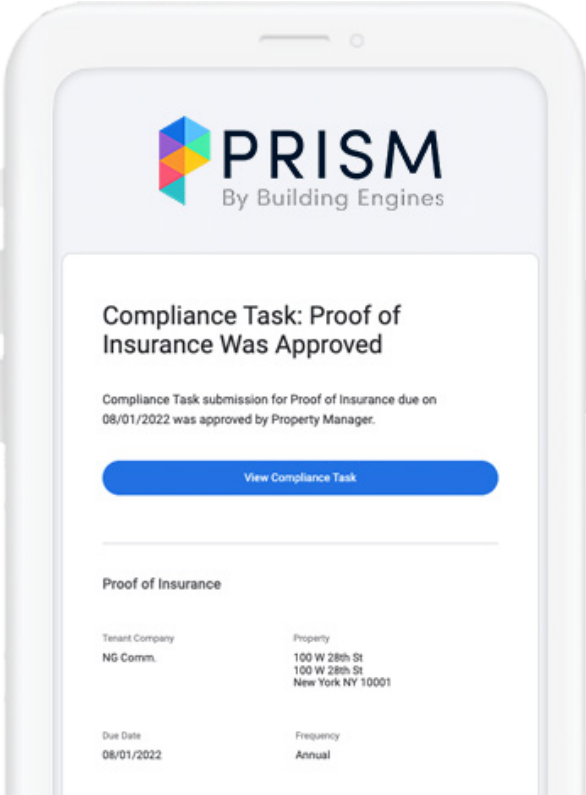
Deep into the myriad services that a Retail property demands, there is one consistent: a seamless, data-driven, and proactive approach to vendor interaction. A building operations platform with vendor management built in can:

- Centralize vendor information so that quick decision-making is just a few clicks away
- Offer a robust network of vetted vendors, ensuring you reduce response time to requests
- Monitor vendor compliance and notify you if there are any lapses
- Quickly onboard new vendors as a portfolio scales
- Submit work orders directly to preferred vendors

system, there's no room for error or leaving any money on the table.

The software constantly **monitors vendor compliance**, be it insurance, certifications, or licenses. Any lapses trigger instant alerts, ensuring that every vendor on the property meets the mandated standards.

As portfolios and properties expand or diversify service needs, a digital vendor management system can easily **onboard new vendors or scale existing partnerships**, all without missing a beat.



HVAC management: Centralizing data across portfolios

In a Retail building, the HVAC system is much more than a means to regulate temperature. It's crucial to maintaining a comfortable shopping environment, which in turn can influence consumer behavior and sales. Because of this, effective HVAC management is non-negotiable. In today's tech-forward era, digitizing HVAC management processes, especially inventory, stands out as the key to unlocking optimal performance and longevity.

Traditional methods of HVAC management often involve cumbersome paperwork, manual logging of equipment details, and inefficient tracking systems. Such methods, while functional for smaller setups, falter when scaling your portfolio, leading to mismanagement, missed maintenance schedules, and potential system failures.

A powerful tool to centralize data

Digitization is a powerful tool to **centrally manage HVAC data** for every unit in every building across your portfolio. With digital HVAC management tools, all equipment details — from model numbers and installation dates to warranty details — are stored in a centralized digital inventory. This not only allows for quick access but also enables streamlined scheduling of maintenance or replacements.

And, especially crucial for properties spread across regions, remote monitoring allows for **real-time updates on HVAC performance**. Any anomalies can be addressed promptly, ensuring that properties remain operational without hiccups.

What's more, **periodic reports** on HVAC performance, maintenance schedules, energy consumption, and more can be automated within the system. Such reports are invaluable for decision-making and long-term planning.

Build your building operations platform: HVAC management software

The shift from manual to digital doesn't just represent a technological upgrade; it signifies a strategic move toward efficiency. By implementing HVAC management software to digitize your data, you can:

- Get the full picture of your HVAC systems across the portfolio, including make, model, warranty, tonnage, and more
- Access complete service histories to stay ahead of issues
- Ensure compliance with Retail tenants, as automated reporting makes it easier to track and prove compliance of NNN leases
- Improve capital planning with detailed HVAC asset reports, complete with life expectancy data based on ASHRAE scoring

Benefits of implementing HVAC management software include:



Centralized database

The software digitally consolidates maintenance data for each device (manuals, historical records, etc.), so everything is at your team's fingertips whenever they need it.

Centrally manage HVAC data for every unit in every building, and get the full picture of make, model, warranty, tonnage, and more.



Ensure tenant compliance

Automated reporting makes it easier to track and prove compliance of triple-net lease obligations.



Improved capital planning

Streamline annual budgeting with detailed HVAC asset reports – complete with life expectancy data based on ASHRAE scoring.



Accurate service histories

See the full record of services performed on each asset for up-to-the-moment visibility into past maintenance tasks and issues.



HVAC vendor network

Enable your CRE property teams to pick their price and compare local vendors for HVAC equipment, repairs, and services.



Preventive maintenance software: Maximize equipment lifespan & anticipate needs

Preventive maintenance is an essential aspect of Retail property management, not only for the longevity and efficiency of equipment but also for the aesthetics that are crucial to a Retail setting.

Maintaining proper lighting, clear and vibrant signage, and a clean exterior is vital since these elements attract customers and create the first impression of the Retail experience. Regular preventive maintenance ensures that these visual and operational elements are always at their best, supporting the overall brand image and customer satisfaction. By taking a proactive approach to maintaining both the machinery and aesthetics of a Retail property, owners can enhance the shopping environment, minimize downtime, and prevent costly emergency repairs. Yet, as with all things mechanical, wear and tear are inevitable. The key challenge? Ensuring that maintenance isn't just reactive but also proactive.

The value of proactive maintenance

Modern preventive maintenance software moves beyond the “fix-it-when-it-breaks” concept to a more forward-thinking approach. Reactive maintenance, while sometimes necessary, can lead to extended downtime, increased costs, and potential damage to other connected systems. **Proactive maintenance**, on the other hand, works on the principle of addressing minor issues before they grow into major problems.

Extending equipment lifespan

By consistently monitoring the health and performance of equipment, preventive maintenance software plays a pivotal role in extending its lifespan. Regular maintenance checks, based on manufacturer recommendations and real-time performance metrics, ensure that the equipment operates at its optimal capacity for a longer period. This not only ensures consistent performance but also translates to cost savings in the long run by reducing the need for replacements or significant repairs.

Build your building operations platform: Preventive maintenance software

Preventive maintenance software is not just a tool; it's a strategic asset for Retail property owners and operators. With such software, you can:

- Gain total equipment visibility across your portfolio
- View, schedule, and assign maintenance tasks – for every piece of equipment in every building, no matter where you are
- Digitally consolidate maintenance data for all equipment
- Track issues in real time to stay on top of your equipment's health
- Reduce capital expenditures & maximize asset value
- Avoid costly repairs down the road

Anticipating the end-of-life stage

One of the standout features of preventive maintenance software is its ability to predict when equipment is approaching its end of life. Through the analysis of usage patterns, wear rates, and other critical metrics, the software provides you with alerts well in advance. This proactive approach allows for adequate time to source replacements, budget for upgrades, and ensure that there's minimal disruption to the property's operations.

And because you're informed in advance, you can make decisions regarding:

- Potential equipment upgrades
- Cost-benefit analyses of repairs versus replacements
- Understanding the end-of-life stage for your equipment (improves your capital planning and helps you make better CapEx decisions)



Benefits of implementing preventive maintenance software include:



Total visibility

You can view, schedule, and assign maintenance tasks for every piece of equipment in every building, making it easy for you to stay on top of tasks – especially as your portfolio scales.



Centralized database

The software digitally consolidates maintenance data for each device (manuals, historical records, etc.), so everything is at your team's fingertips whenever they need it.



Complete service histories

See the full record of services performed on each asset to get up-to-the-moment visibility into past maintenance tasks and issues.



Anytime mobile access

With both online and offline access, the mobile app is always on, enabling engineers to complete assignments faster on the go.



Simpler workload management

Gain new insight into the time required for upcoming maintenance tasks to ensure engineering hours are properly allocated.



Extend equipment life

Always know when equipment is reaching end of life for more effective capital planning and consistently track maintenance completion to avoid costly repairs down the road.



Inspections software: Revolutionizing property oversight

Maintaining the pristine condition and peak performance of every asset is essential in the Retail environment. From boutique storefronts to shopping centers, each space requires consistent oversight to ensure a great customer experience. Traditional methods, relying extensively on manual checks, are often inadequate for the breadth and depth of care high-traffic Retail spaces demand.

The complex nature of Retail spaces, which may combine various shop formats, food courts, and

entertainment areas, demands regular inspections with comprehensive checklists and seamless coordination among different teams, including merchandising, maintenance, and security. Manual inspection methods can fall prey to oversight, cause slower report generation, and suffer from a lack of clarity. Digital inspection tools directly address these challenges, delivering a complete and efficient system for overseeing the many components that contribute to a thriving Retail property.



Build your building operations platform: Inspection software

With the right inspection software at the helm, you can ensure rigorous, efficient, and data-driven oversight, transforming inspections from a procedural activity to a strategic asset in property management by:

- Spotting problems early thanks to a rich visual analytics dashboard and reports
- Rating or scoring inspections to evaluate your property's performance against targets
- Automating escalations, notifications, and task creation upon failed inspection points
- Standardizing maintenance processes and schedules for all your properties

Benefits of commercial property inspection software include:



Automated checklists

Pre-defined digital checklists can be customized for different areas of the property. These ensure that no aspect is overlooked and that inspections maintain a consistent standard.



Seamless collaboration

Digital platforms foster better collaboration between inspection teams, maintenance crews, and property management teams. Issues logged can be immediately assigned to the relevant department, ensuring faster resolution.



Integration capabilities

Modern inspection software can integrate with other property management tools, from HVAC systems to vendor management, ensuring a cohesive approach to property management.



Real-time reporting

Inspectors can instantly log findings, upload images, and even tag issues, allowing for immediate awareness and quicker decision-making.



Record keeping

Maintaining a digital log of all inspections provides an invaluable record for compliance, audits, and future reference. This organized archive can also be pivotal during negotiations or resale, offering transparency about the property's condition over time.



Data analytics

Over time, the software within a building operations platform can analyze inspection data to identify patterns. This can highlight recurring issues, helping you address root causes rather than just symptoms.



Tenant compliance software: Ensure all NNN lease obligations are met

Just as vendor compliance ([see page 7](#)) is important, so too is tenant compliance and ensuring that all NNN lease obligations are met. The NNN (Triple Net) lease puts forth a delicate balance where tenants not only pay rent but also cover the property's net real estate taxes, net building insurance, and net common area maintenance. While it offers numerous benefits, the intricacies of ensuring tenant compliance in an NNN lease can be challenging. A proactive, transparent, and organized approach is crucial to navigate these waters smoothly.

Because tenants bear a significant portion of the property's expenses in an NNN lease, the structure is attractive to landlords as it minimizes their financial risks. However, it also demands meticulous tracking to ensure all obligations are met.

Top challenges for ensuring tenant compliance include:

- **Complexity of costs:** With tenants responsible for a variety of expenses, from insurance premiums to maintenance costs, there's a maze of payments to track.
- **Variable expenses:** Because many of the costs in NNN leases, such as maintenance or utility charges, can fluctuate, tenants may face unexpected expenses, leading to potential disputes.
- **Lack of transparency:** Without a clear system in place, tenants might feel they are being unjustly charged or may be unaware of upcoming expenses or lease obligations.

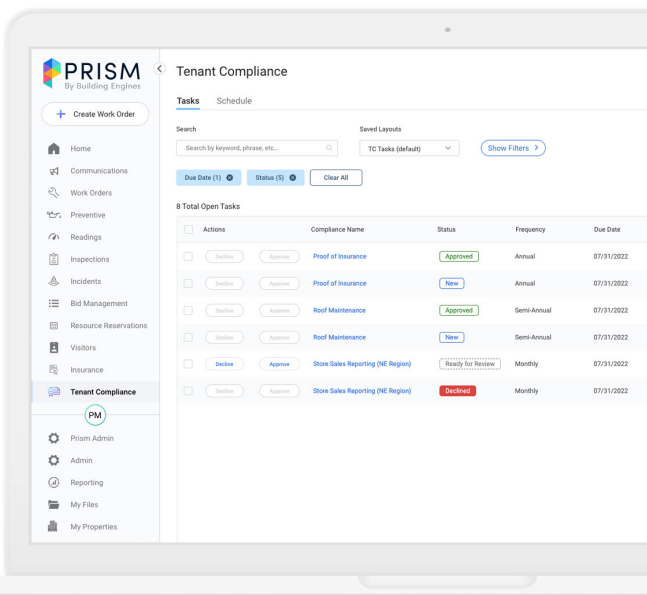
Build your building operations platform: Tenant compliance software

Tenant compliance in NNN lease obligations is a delicate dance between clear communication, transparency, and efficient tracking. With the right tools and strategies in place, you can be sure to minimize disputes. Tenant compliance software can:

- Provide transparency between landlords and tenants
- Increase tenant compliance rates 120%
- Ensure equipment is properly maintained to avoid costly repairs or replacements down the road

Tenant compliance software helps solve these problems. With the right tool, you'll be able to:

- Set rules for tenant activities to remain compliant with lease agreements
- Automate workflows, notifications, and proof of completed work for HVAC and more
- Produce documentation and compliance reports to ensure greater visibility across your properties
- Easily identify who's falling behind on maintenance activities to prioritize follow-up
- Provide a consistent way for tenants to submit proof of service
- Alert tenants of work to be completed with personalized, automated notifications



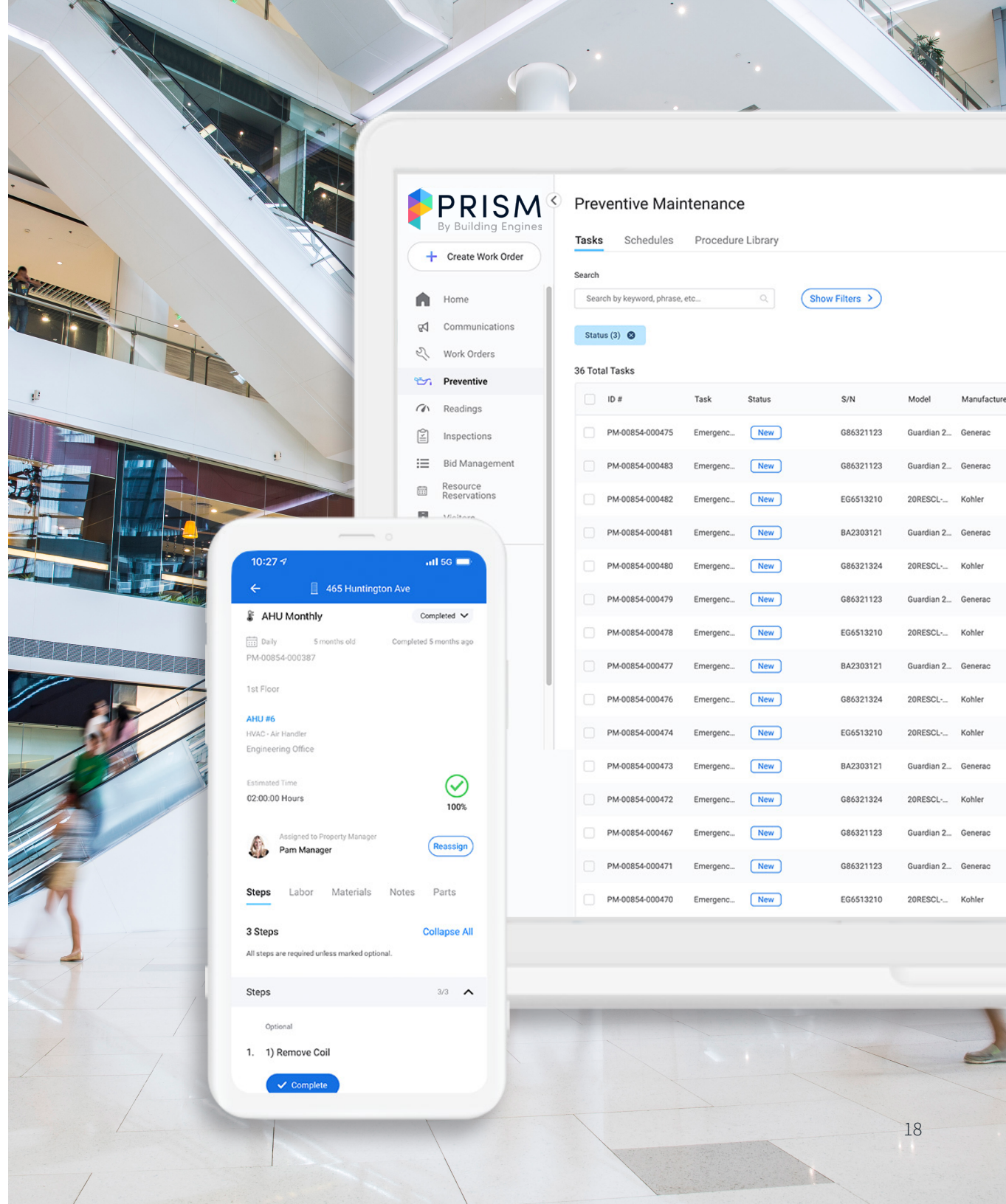
Conclusion

Navigating Retail building operations requires modern methods. It demands a robust, integrated, and intuitive solution that addresses every challenge head-on. From managing vendor relationships to ensuring tenant compliance in NNN lease obligations, the complexities are many, but the solution is singular: **Prism by Building Engines.**

With Prism, you have at your fingertips a platform designed to modernize, optimize, and revolutionize building operations. It goes beyond mere software; it's a comprehensive ecosystem tailored for the unique needs of the Retail sector. The transparent tracking systems, automated reminders, detailed reports, and real-time updates are just a few facets of what Prism can do for you.

As you venture deeper into the ever-evolving world of Retail real estate, you don't have to go it alone. Equip yourself with a platform that empowers, enlightens, and elevates every aspect of your building operations.

Request a demo →



About Building Engines

Building Engines, a JLL company, improves net operating income and performance across the world's most successful commercial real estate (CRE) portfolios. Our customers increase property management efficiency, deliver the best tenant experience, and reduce operating costs with Prism – the industry's most innovative and powerful building operations platform. Today, more than 1,000 customers—including Beacon Capital Partners, Brixmor, and SL Green—rely on Building Engines to manage critical operational needs across more than four billion square feet and 35,000 properties worldwide.

About JLL

For over 200 years, JLL (NYSE: JLL), a leading global commercial real estate and investment management company, has helped clients buy, build, occupy and invest in a variety of commercial, industrial, hotel, residential and retail properties. A Fortune 500 company with annual revenue of \$20.9 billion and operations in over 80 countries around the world, our more than 103,000 employees bring the power of a global platform combined with local expertise. Driven by our purpose to shape the future of real estate for a better world, we help our clients, people and communities SEE A BRIGHTER WAYSM. JLL is the brand name, and a registered trademark, of Jones Lang LaSalle Incorporated. For further information, visit jll.com.

