

# Case Study

## Michels Corporation



### How Michels Streamlined Tool Management with AssetWorks

For over 50 years, Michels has been a provider of quality construction solutions for organizations across North America. They credit their long-term success to staying true to their core values: safety, quality, innovation and teamwork.

#### The problem

With over 12,000 assets across multiple locations, Michels needed a comprehensive fleet management solution to streamline processes and improve efficiencies. “We had no maintenance tracking software at the time. It was done sporadically and on paper,” said Jason Pucker, Business Systems Solutions Analyst at Michels.

In 2013, they invested in AssetWorks FleetFocus fleet management software to solve these challenges.

While FleetFocus helped Michels achieve many of their established goals, there was one element missing: integrated tool management. With tens of thousands of tools throughout the organization, Michels’ existing solution for tool management wasn’t meeting their expectations.



“The program we were using to manage our tools at the time was not integrated with FleetFocus, which had already been rolled out to some of our shops and warehouses,” said Pucker, “We weren’t able to open work orders on tools or track tool inventory, and we didn’t have a convenient way of knowing what we had on the shelf at a given time.”

In addition to not integrating with the fleet management system, the method they were using to manage tools was also very manual in tracking repair history and other important aspects of tool management.

“These were the main goals in looking for something new,” continued Pucker.

#### The solution

In order to solve their tool management challenges, Michels turned to AssetWorks. AssetWorks then presented EquipmentFocus to the organization.

EquipmentFocus is a comprehensive, browser-based asset maintenance management solution capable of tracking an unlimited number of equipment units and supports an unlimited number of workstations from any number of locations. With EquipmentFocus, Michels can track and manage all tools within one, integrated system.

Michels defines a tool as anything that is an inventory item, but isn’t a major asset—like chainsaws, small generators and jackhammers. They run equipment operations as a rental house. One portion of the company owns all of the tools and assets and rents them out to other portions of the company. “Things that are tools don’t have rental rates,” said Pucker, “That helps make the decision of what gets tracked as a tool and what gets tracked as an asset.”

Not only does EquipmentFocus allow for data integrations, but also allows for powerful analysis of tool maintenance and costs. In the system, you can see the complete maintenance history of a tool and how that affects the organization's bottom line in the long-term. Through this information, employees like Pucker can analyze current operations and streamline them in the future.

"There's better information here. There's better analysis. You can learn from it," he continued.

**Training staff**

For any fleet organization, training staff on a new system takes time. In Michels' case, the transition from their old tool management system to EquipmentFocus was made simpler because of the established electronic database.

**“We already had a large database that we could import and export into FleetFocus,” said Pucker, “That eased the transition.”**

"From then," he continued, "It was basically training."

"There are some people who weren't as tech-savvy or as comfortable with computers as others," said Pucker, "But they're the same sort of workers who also had difficulty clocking into labor or creating work orders."

"It's a learning curve," he continued, "But it's something that our trainers are fairly experienced with helping people overcome."

**Advice**

Many organizations do not have an integrated solution for tool management in place. While a tool management solution has many benefits for organizations, there are things to consider before making the investment.

Pucker's advice for organizations thinking of investing in a solution like EquipmentFocus? Understand your tool inventory.

"We've broken down our tools into lots of different levels, types and subtypes," said Pucker, "So we can understand what our tool inventory looks like."

Being able to analyze tools and tool maintenance is a key benefit to an integrated tool management solution, but if you do not have your inventory cataloged properly

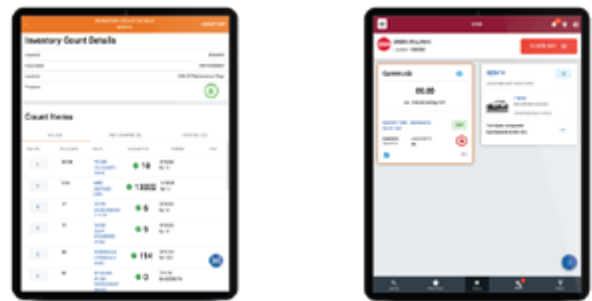
before importing your data, that analysis becomes an uphill battle.

Simply tracking maintenance costs alone will bring forth benefits. "If you're maintaining a \$100 tool, it's likely not worth it. Being able to do that analysis to decide the recycle verses repair verses replacement is really beneficial," continued Pucker.

**Moving forward**

In order to make sure they're making the most out of their fleet software investments, Michels meets with AssetWorks periodically to discuss not only the goals they wish to accomplish, but also upcoming AssetWorks features that may help overcome additional challenges.

"AssetWorks knows what we're actually using and where we plan to go, and we can see what development items are on the roadmap for the long-term so we can see if a particular pain point is being fixed in the future."



**To learn more about the fleet management software mentioned in this case study, visit [assetworks.com/fleet](https://assetworks.com/fleet).**