



## Technical Evaluation Centre : Tero Software

TEC staff writer - January 27, 2006 Amendments by John Hookham

### The Company

Tero Software is a private company that was originally founded as a consulting firm in 1979 with the aim of teaching organizations about preventative maintenance strategies and how to automate them through the use of computerized maintenance systems. In the mid-1990s, Tero began delivering its own Web-based request management system, which helped users deal with in-coming phone, fax, e-mail, and paper work requests.

In 1997, based on the success of its first Web foray, it released its own Web-based maintenance management system, Web Work. Tero's systems now help clients manage maintenance facilities, fleet, and plant equipment.

The company is headquartered in Coquitlam, British Columbia (Canada).

### Business Background

Tero is a software development firm that also offers consulting expertise. While the company originally focused its attention on organizations in the forestry and mining industries, its current solutions address the education, military, and government sectors, as well as the property management and manufacturing industries.

Tero's solutions are primarily used by many small and medium businesses (SMB), though the company is also gaining tier one customers that appreciate its slimmer solution. Most of Tero's target clientele have revenues of between \$100 million (USD) to \$500 million (USD).

Tero resellers are based throughout North America, India, the UK, South Africa, Poland, Russia, Iran, and Asia.

### Supporting the Customer

Tero's Web Work solution is available in an application service provider (ASP) hosting model with twenty-four hour a day, seven day a week support. However, some clients prefer to have their own on-site installations, for which Tero provides customer-specific service level agreements (SLA). Web Work is a system with robust work order management and equipment history functionality.

However, Tero is particularly proud of its method for supporting data division. An organization may have many facilities and each facility may have many plants in separate data divisions. The Web Work solution allows clients to separate data from these various plants, so that people at a given plant can view only information related to their job functions, while maintaining one database and a common naming convention. This system allows, for example, a regional manager who runs four or five plants to get reports on, and see data for, all those plants.

Moreover, because there is a parent/child relationship in the hierarchy going all the way up to the head office, it is possible to view reports on activities and costs from a national, regional, or local perspective.



Another of Web Work's strengths is its reporting functionality, which demonstrates Tero's ease-of-use philosophy. Tero believes that information technology (IT) personnel and analysts should not be the only ones capable of producing reports. In fact, according to Tero General Manager, Rob Saare, "By giving the report writing back into the hands of the maintenance manager or the maintenance folks they can now report on the littlest aspects or the largest aspects of their jobs."

Thus, Web Work's reporting functionality enables maintenance personnel to readily create custom reports that drill-down and detail the work they have actually done.

These strengths are the basis for a Tero success story involving the Washington State Patrol (WSP), which runs the US State of Washington's police department. The department is responsible for maintaining approximately sixty buildings and facilities, as well as overseeing inventory that includes a fleet of about 1,600 vehicles. To complicate this, the WSP has several divisions, including a supply division and an electronic services division, and had to deal with the inefficiencies of maintaining separate databases for each division.

Tero helped solve this problem through a series of meetings that got the divisions working as a team and that established that a single database and a common naming convention would enable the whole organization to work more efficiently. In the year and a half since those meetings, the WSP has successfully moved from maintaining separate databases to having only one database. The WSP supply division uses Tero's purchasing module, and collaborated with Tero to incorporate several new features. The electronic services division is now able to manage all the organization's radios and electronics. At long last, all the divisions communicate with each other and follow the same business practices.

## Challenges

One of the biggest challenges Tero faces is encouraging clients to overcome maintenance practices that have been ingrained over time and do not necessarily work as well as they could.

Though many companies assert that this is not an issue with their practices, Tero has often found that it can refine and improve their practices once its consulting arm has the buy-in of people within the organization. As Rob Saare states, "We try to teach people that it's all about people, process, and tools. The software is merely a tool, it's a means to an end, a data-repository if you will. The process: if you follow the methodology in the software you inherently have immediately success."

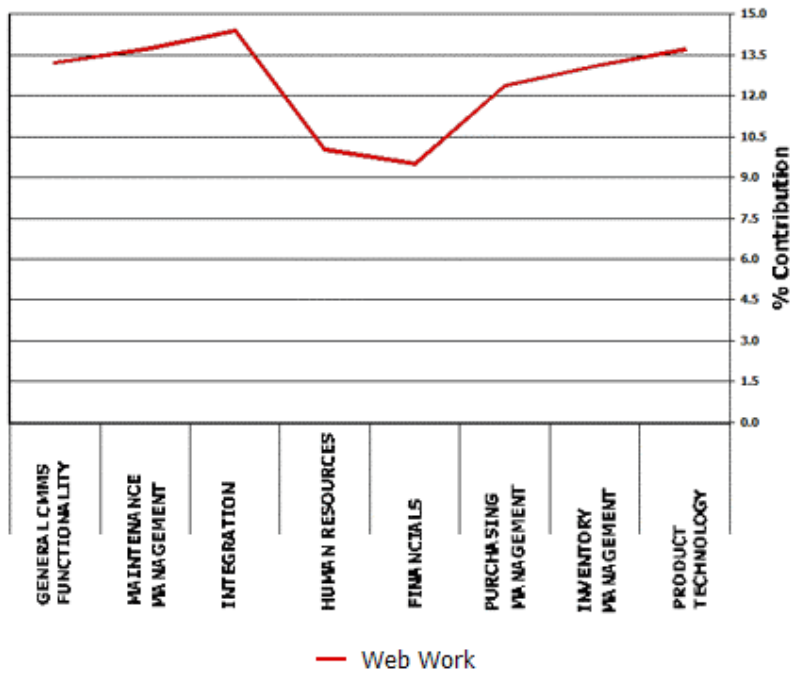
## The Future

The next important projects on Tero's roadmap include many interface improvements. Since Tero has built its product on Microsoft technology, it will take advantage of .NET and extensible mark-up language (XML) to provide drag-and-drop functionality, more user customisation, and more user-defined screens and graphical user interfaces (GUI). Tero also hopes to expand the applicability of its solutions, as it is seeing more interest in the area of IT asset management (ITAM). Tero has noted that IT assets can be maintained in the same way as facilities, fleet, and inventory, and so it is letting customers know that they can run all maintenance and asset management activities on one package.

Finally, the contribution analysis graph below demonstrates the degree to which each area of Tero Web Work contributes functionality to the overall solution.



**Contribution Analysis for TEC's Model of CMMS/EAM Categories**



This graph is based on Technology Evaluation Centres Inc. (TEC)'s model of computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) and enterprise asset management (EAM) solutions.

### About the author

*John Hookham is a director of maintenance management consulting and marketing services company Adrelia.*

- Tel: 020 7286 7073
- Email: [john.hookham@adrelia.com](mailto:john.hookham@adrelia.com)
- Website: [www.adrelia.com](http://www.adrelia.com)