

Interview Summary: Participant A

Professional Background

Participant A has over eight years of experience in asset management, before joining an IT consultancy firm with a specialization in IBM Maximo, a leading Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) platform. Their work primarily involves implementation and customization of Maximo, with clients in railway and infrastructure. The company also works with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and visual data transformation.

Understanding of Digital Product Passports (DPP)

Is familiar with the concept of DPPs, although not specifically the European Union's current framework. Has previously worked in related areas and understands their purpose in promoting transparency, traceability, and circular economy practices.

Potential and Impact of DPP in Industry

Sees significant potential for DPPs to improve interoperability between suppliers and clients. In current infrastructure industries like railways, vital data is often lost across lifecycle stages, especially between construction, maintenance, and demolition. DPPs can help maintain continuity of product-related information, including technical specifications and end-of-life data, allowing automation of lifecycle management processes such as flagging outdated components and planning replacements.

Current Integration Practices with IBM Maximo

The interviewee highlighted that integration with external data sources is a routine task, especially for economic data such as order amounts, pricing, and labor hours for financial reporting. Integrations also occur between client systems and suppliers' systems, facilitating data exchange on maintenance activities.

Data Formats and Transformation

Data often arrives in formats like Excel, XML, or via database-to-database connections. Transformation work is largely manual, with data coming from disparate sources such as PDFs or CAD models. There is no fixed template used; instead, data is adapted to the structure of the receiving system (e.g., Maximo).

API and Future Integration Needs

Acknowledged REST APIs are in use within the organization, however the interviewee doesn't work with them directly. Participant A believes APIs will become increasingly important, especially as Maximo evolves with machine learning and AI for predictive maintenance. DPP data, if structured semantically and accessible through APIs, could integrate well into these systems.

Interoperability and Semantic Technologies

Stressed that interoperability is a key factor, particularly due to the long lifespan of infrastructure assets (25–100 years). Systems must remain adaptable as software evolves. Using open standards and semantic technologies, such as ontologies, could make integration easier and more robust in the long term.

Data Validation and Consistency

Data quality is often manually checked, with some validation steps or sampling used to assess data consistency. However, a lack of standardized validation methods persists.

Customization and Standardization in Maximo

Customization is often driven by client demands to replicate legacy workflows. While Maximo is highly flexible, there's a lack of guidance on standardized data handling. Participant A pointed out that although international standards like ISO 55000 for asset management exist, they are not always applied. The lack of standardization sometimes stems from limited organizational knowledge.

Use of QR Codes and Mobile Access

Participant A hasn't directly implemented QR code access but noted a project using barcodes in industrial environments where QR codes may not be robust. Mobile scanning to identify assets can reduce errors and help workers access relevant data like maintenance instructions, supplier details, or warranty terms.

User-Specific Data Views

Emphasized the need for role-based data presentation. Maintenance staff, for example, should only access relevant maintenance data, while procurement teams or managers may require cost or performance comparisons. Overloading users with excessive data reduces usability.

Implementation Challenges

Major challenges include:

- User adaptation to new workflows and data access methods.
- Long transition periods due to the co-existence of legacy assets and systems.
- Suppliers may withhold certain data to protect business interests.
- Integration efforts can be hindered by inconsistent data formats and supplier cooperation.

Security and Data Sharing Concerns

Doesn't see data security as a major concern but noted potential issues around intellectual property and competition. Open DPPs might inadvertently expose sensitive supplier information to competitors.

Opportunities for Feedback Loops

Suggested the possibility of two-way data sharing, where suppliers could receive feedback on product usage and performance from the clients, improving future maintenance instructions or designs.

Outlook and Recommendations

Participant A views DPP integration as essential for improving environmental sustainability and lifecycle efficiency. Recommendation made by the interviewee were:

- Using standardized data frameworks.
- Structuring data access based on user roles and lifecycle phase.
- Ensuring ease of integration to existing systems like Maximo.
- Gradual implementation with parallel systems for legacy assets.