



Top 5 Reasons for Poor Primavera P6 Performance



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1. Requirement to Run Global Changes Prior to Publishing Reports

Primavera P6 runs a specific set of calculations based on data entered into key locations in the database. Sometimes, users do not want the results given by these calculations, nor do they want to input the data required by these calculations, so they write Global Changes to generate other answers. However, this leads to a number of issues:

- The results generated by Global Changes have no merit in a Project Control context
- The data in the Primavera P6 database is corrupted and can no longer be relied upon to produce quality reports
- These results require time consuming manual verifications
- Introduces the element of human error: if the Global Changes are carried out in the wrong sequence this will lead to further corruption and often irreparable damage to the data

2. Over-Reliance on Excel, particularly for Resource / Bed Planning

One of the key benefits for using Primavera P6 is to record, integrate and store all of the cost, time and resource data associated with the organisation's projects: creating integrated resourced plans which contain all the work to be executed.

There is a wide-spread perception that Primavera P6 cannot accurately calculate Person on Board (PoB) and resource data, that this needs to be maintained in a separate Excel spreadsheet.

The reason for this mis-conception is that the data at summary levels within the Resource Usage Spreadsheet and the Work Breakdown Structure is not displaying an accurate total of the detail. This is caused by conflicting global settings chosen by the system administrator and is not a fault of Primavera P6 itself.

3. Using Activity Code Structures to Replace / Replicate Work Breakdown Structure

Work breakdown structure (WBS) is vitally important for managing the project, and should be one of the first pieces of information created by the project team. By definition, WBS breaks the overall project down in to manageable chunks, so even if it is later decided that a detailed schedule is not required, a WBS will always be useful.

Within the context of Primavera P6, the WBS Code forms a very important part of the unique identifier of each and every activity in the database, in order to document and secure their place in the project hierarchy.

When activity codes are used to replace the WBS function, this causes a number of problems:

- Within the database, the activities are an unstructured list, missing a vital piece of identifying information
- When updating activity information or running reports, relying on every activity code assignment to be correct leads to failure to identify missing activities
- Introduces a high chance of error into the system

4. Fear of Scheduling the Primavera P6 Data

Scheduling the data, or critical path analysis to give it its proper title, is the technique which analyses the project schedule to compute those activities which are on the critical path: meaning where the duration of those activities drives the duration, and therefore completion date, of the overall project. It is important that these critical activities are monitored and controlled throughout the life cycle of the project as any delay will impact on the finish date of the project.

It is incorrectly assumed that this technique is not relevant for planning on-going operations. While it is true that, by their very nature, on-going operations do not have a project finish date; it is not true that they do not have paths through the activities, the activities still have relationships.

Not enabling the scheduling and progressing of the Primavera data leads to the following restrictions:

- Unable to determine key and critical paths through a series of activities
- Unable to assess the impact of break-in activities upon scheduled activities
- Unable to progress the schedule
- Unable to report the status of the completion of the work
- Over-reliance upon primary constraints to hold the activities to their start dates, rather than utilising Primavera P6 calculations, means the planner must remember to change any successor activities when a predecessor activity is updated, introducing a high chance of error into the system

5. Percent (%) Complete Problems

All other things being equal, there are only a few core non-calculating fields in Primavera P6, one of them being Physical % Complete. This means it is neither the input to nor the product of any of the Primavera P6 calculations.

There are different % completes (Duration, Cost, Units and Physical, to name just a few), each measuring a different aspect and together they tell the story of the health of the project. Manipulating the data to align these different % completes demonstrates a lack of understanding of project controls and a fundamental mis-use of the Primavera system.

If you are experiencing any of the above issues, or would like information on our Primavera P6 support packages, please contact us:

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