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Improving Maintenance Repair and Overhaul Through Innovation

By [Matthew Potter](#) | Dec 31, 2009

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Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MR&O) is a key component of the modern aerospace industry. It provides not only an income source for airline and aviation repair companies but also is critical for the rapid repair and return to service of aircraft. The military utilizes their various depots including contractor ones to perform this kind of work. The United States **Army** and **Marines** because of the requirements of Iraq and Afghanistan have been flying thousands of hours beyond what they normally planned on their helicopters. MR&O activities need to be done quickly and efficiently to maximize the availability of aircraft to support their combat operations.

If an aircraft is not available due to being in MR&O this will drive a requirement for a larger force costing of millions of dollars in new aircraft. Commercial and military entities all strive for having the largest amount of aircraft in their fleets and minimizing time in overhaul to maximize use and revenue.

When MR&O commences an aircraft may enter the facility for an extended amount of time depending on what work needs to be done. This time may be lengthened by any number of factors. The work force is not large enough to complete the necessary repair or overhaul. Vendors might not be able to provide the necessary parts to support the planned work in the originally scheduled time. These uncertainties lead to situations where the work force is fully utilized but working in an unsynchronized fashion.

Because of these factors a company like **Realization Technologies** provides software and services that provides the ability to synchronize available resources and activities in the face of the uncertainties occurring at the repair facility. The goal is to provide a uniform set of priorities for all resources. The impact of this is that interruptions and wait times will shorten and time to complete and throughput at the facility will improve.

The use of Realization products and services have provided results such as increasing throughput of over twenty-five percent and seeing cycle times reduced by up to thirty-three percent. These kinds of results may be achieved in six months of use. The effect is obvious in that reducing cycle time and increasing throughput provides more aircraft for the fleet able to conduct necessary missions.

Aircraft require scheduled maintenance and overhaul to maintain their airworthiness and ability to support missions and generate revenue. The use of products to reduce the time spent on these activities only enhances their operational readiness and maximizes their return. At a time where most of the major military forces involved in Afghanistan for example are increasing their fleets of heavy lift helicopters such as the CH-47 or the Mi-17 and Mi-26 reductions in cycle time at the depot only aids in providing the necessary forces.

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Matthew Potter works supporting US Army aviation programs. He holds degrees in history as well as studying at the Defense Acquisition University. He has written for Seeking Alpha and at his own website, [Defense Procurement News](#).

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