

## In this Issue...

### Page 1

Welcome to the  
**FTA2000 Family**

### Page 2

Welcome to the  
**FTA2000 Family**  
(continued)

Future **FTA2000**  
family members

MerrillSoft's  
Businesses  
Alliances

The Lighter Side

Lab Supplies

Conferences

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## Trendy News

### Welcome to FTA2000

In May, MerrillSoft was pleased to welcome *Shepherd Machinery*, who also processes sample for *Pacific Machinery* in Hawaii, to the **FTA2000** family. *Shepherd Machinery* spent quite a bit of time analyzing available LIMS software and weighing the idea of waiting for a solution of which they were not sure was going to be better than **FTA2000**. *Shepherd Machinery* had already ironed out their procedures and processes to allow them to be as efficient as possible and the only piece that was lacking to complete the picture was reliable and efficient software. After many months of working with *Shepherd Machinery* they decided that waiting for an unsure solution might not be in their best interest and they were in need of current and dependable LIMS solution with customer support to address their current issues.

*Shepherd Machinery* is a two person lab processing approximately 40,000 samples a year. The LIMS package had to be efficient to keep up with their practices in the lab and the lean staff. Like many labs, *Shepherd Machinery* was apprehensive when it came to switching software. Dave Dunavant, Fluid Analysis Lab Supervisor explains in his **FTA2000** Conversion Summary that "Like Cashman, I too am apprehensive about the installation of any new lab system, be it instrumentation, or in this instance, software. I've heard too many horror stories about software that doesn't work, is too slow, or is limited in what it can do."



*Shepherd Machinery lab staff sporting their smiles after the apprehension is gone and the conversion is complete. From left, Dave Dunavant and Ed Gunnoe.*

Dave Dunavant also explained that "With the exception of all the customer data I needed to correct, the conversion process went much smoother than I had anticipated. Knowing all the problems and errors we had with the "other" software, I believed something major would be wrong on our side delaying the conversion until this could be corrected." To Dave's surprise, the conversion went as scheduled and minor issues were resolved between *Shepherd's* IT personnel and MerrillSoft.

*Shepherd Machinery* was running on M&I Series I and through the conversion, all customer, equipment and history data was converted into the new **FTA2000** system. Dave Dunavant was pleasantly surprised when he actually saw the conversion run. He stated "The speed with which your software converted our data was unreal. Knowing our database had 150MB of data to be converted, I thought it would take a few hours to complete. I think it took somewhere around 30 minutes to convert!"

As with all new installations there are bound to be some issues that need to be resolved. In this case it was the wear metal interface. Dave worked with MerrillSoft and the vendor and the issue was resolved quickly. Dave Dunavant explains "The rest of the installation process went extremely smooth but for the wear metal interface. But your professionalism and product knowledge shined, the problem was resolved and we were ready for production on Monday morning." Dave Dunavant went on to say "Management is also pleased that the conversion and installation went so well".

Before a new installation is implemented, it is MerrillSoft's practice to send a complete installation of **FTA2000** to the lab so the staff can familiarize themselves with the product and ease in the learning curve. Dave Dunavant expressed how this helped them when he stated "This gave us a good opportunity to take a look at the system, familiarize ourselves with some of the basic functions generally feel the system out. With other companies, we learn the system after installation is complete and training is usually weak at best."

**FTA2000** was written with lab personnel in mind and it seems like we did something right. Mr. Dunavant explains "FTA2000 is very user friendly

## Welcome to the FTA2000 Family - continued

which I feel is necessary in an environment where one is required to be knowledgeable about a lot of things and doesn't have the time to concentrate on learning user-Unfriendly software."

Another key issue that **FTA2000** addressed for **Shepherd Machinery** was the ability to produce a PDF file for **Pacific Machinery** Trend Analysis reports. At the end of day, this file is automatically Emailed to **Pacific Machinery** where they print it out and stuff in their own envelopes with their logo imprinted on them. All **Pacific Machinery** reports have their own lab title on them. The ability to automatically fax and Email Trend Analysis reports to all their customers should prove to be both a time and money savings to **Shepherd and Pacific Machinery**.

The addition of the website capabilities provided by [SampleResults.com](http://SampleResults.com) will allow **Shepherd's** customers to obtain their own historical information relating to each piece of equipment. The functionality provided also allows lab customers to graph and export data for their own manipulation. Providing this service to their customers will allow **Shepherd and Pacific Machinery** to better compete with the independent labs in the industry today.

Our goal at MerrillSoft is to provide the best tool for our lab customers to allow them to deliver a quality analysis to their customer base in a timely fashion. Mr. Dunavant relayed to MerrillSoft that he has already had several customers call and comment about the new Trend Analysis Reports they now receive. He says "All have said they REALLY like them as all the information is on one page and is in a more logical order".

The last issue that Shepherd Machinery was concerned about was customer support. MerrillSoft believes this to be an important issue and strives very hard to be the best in this area. This is what Mr. Dunavant had to say in his **FTA2000** Conversion Summary, "It is extremely rare to find a company who returns calls within 10 minutes but this has always been the case with you. Again, your knowledge and professionalism has helped in resolving the small problems we've encountered. I want to thank you for all that you did to make this transition as smooth as it was and also want you to know we feel we made the right choice in choosing your software for our company".

MerrillSoft would like to say **THANKS** to the lab staff at **Shepherd Machinery** for all their effort in helping this conversion go smoothly and especially for the support you have shown for **FTA2000**. We are very pleased to welcome you into the **FTA2000** Family!

## Future FTA2000 Family Members

MerrillSoft will also be welcoming **Pape Brothers** to the **FTA2000** family in the near future. We are currently working on their conversion programs and will be scheduling an installation date in the near future.

## MerrillSoft's Business Alliances

In keeping with our commitment to provide tools necessary for our customers to be competitive in the oil analysis industry today, MerrillSoft has joined alliances with the following businesses, Dell Computer Corporation and the Maintenance Resource Superstore. Dell Computer Corporation can offer dependable and reliable computer equipment and a reasonable price while the Maintenance Resource Superstore offers training material and a reference library related to the oil analysis industry.

Simply go to [SampleResults.com](http://SampleResults.com) and click on the links to access these resources.

## On the Lighter Side ...

While at Shepherd Machinery performing the conversion, we happened to run across this on Ed Gunnoe's desk.



*This is what we call "utilizing a product to it's fullest". We replaced it since we thought he had used the entire life out of his mouse pad.*

## Lab Supplies

We encourage you to compare your lab supply pricing with MerrillSoft. In many cases we have been able to beat existing pricing other dealers had obtained from other sources. If for some reason we are unable to beat the pricing, we will advise you to go to another vendor.

## Conferences

**MerrillSoft** will be at the Dealer Advisory Group (DAG) Conference in Peoria, Illinois from September 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>. Please stop by our booth to see [SampleResults.com](http://SampleResults.com) in action and to check out **FTA2000** v4.0. We look forward to seeing you there!