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#### Review Article ManagePro 3.1

By David English and Kathy Yakal, *Computer Shopper*  
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While it's important to track employee information such as benefits and salaries, the ability to track the performance of employees and provide meaningful feedback can make a significant contribution to productivity. A few years ago, Avantos Performance Systems virtually created a new category in low-cost, widely distributed PC software with ManagePro. To date, no other product has matched this program's competence and usefulness.

ManagePro was designed to help employers achieve their goals through effective people management, and it succeeds overwhelmingly. The program shares some common features with PIMs and project managers, but it's tightly focused on the process of setting personal and employee goals and evaluating their progress.

Two versions of the program are available. For \$279, the Individual Edition lets managers maintain a central database containing information about goals, people, and actions. Organizations can use the Multi-User Network Edition for \$650 per seat to share goal-oriented data across workgroups. Both versions are exceedingly easy to use, thanks to an inventive interface that simplifies both data entry and the process of retrieving data to view it in a meaningful way.

The Goal Planner provides tools to help you define detailed, quantifiable corporate and individual goals and subgoals and to monitor their progress. The goal data entry screen asks for basic information, such as goal description, responsible party, and due date. You can do such things as schedule checkpoints and define standards for measuring a goal's level of success, attach notes, and send e-mail. A simple utility lets you add or modify the fields your goal screen contains.

Once you define your goals, you can view them in an outline format, collapsing and expanding the list to zoom in on specific ones. You can sort and filter the list to see particular goals, and add progress notes and attach outside documents. The Timeline View lets you see all of your goals simultaneously, allowing you to rearrange them if conflicts arise. The Goal Status Board lets you monitor the progress made on all goals.

An important element of the goal management process is the ability to track pertinent information about employees and workgroups. ManagePro's People/Team Planner streamlines data about your employees' goals and encourages you to keep up with your notes related to their progress. It also prompts you to do regular feedback and coaching, all of which gives you much more concrete information to use when employee evaluation time comes around.

Data entry in the People/Team Planner is done much as it is in the Goal Planner. You enter each employee's name and relationship to you, his or her phone number, and the frequency with which you want to provide feedback. You can also assign employees to teams. The Planner lets you enter and view information related to employee goals, as well as track commitments employees have made, progress on goals, and other evaluative data. ManagePro's final core area, the Action List, contains generic to-dos and calendar items you've created, as well as goal due dates and people management reminders. You can look at a comprehensive list or view only the actions that fall into a certain category.

Thanks to an intuitive interface and a lot of internal support for users, ManagePro can be up and running in your organization very quickly. Icons, command buttons, well-crafted dialog boxes, and collapsible lists are used effectively, and the program's Management Advisor offers deeper, more specific guidance than is available in online help.

It's surprising that ManagePro has no head-to-head competition; in today's business climate, effective employee management is more critical than ever. Any competition that comes along, though, will be hard-pressed to top the standard that Performance Solutions Technology has already established. ManagePro compiles and displays management data effectively using familiar interface conventions.



PO Box 2157  
Harbor, OR 97415  
(877) 487-3001 Fax: 800/645-6618  
Email: [pst@managepro.com](mailto:pst@managepro.com)  
Technical Support Email: [mis@managepro.com](mailto:mis@managepro.com)  
International Fax: 011-240-248-3035

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