# Building Facilities: Leveraging Modern IWMS Solutions in Emerging Biopharmaceutical Companies

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The adoption of Integrated Workplace Management Systems (IWMS) now often referred to as Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) has become standard practice among large biopharmaceutical companies. These platforms offer enhanced operational insight, centralized data management, and with some applications support for regulatory compliance. However, many early-stage biotech firms postpone IWMS implementation, often to their detriment.

While constructing or retrofitting facilities tends to dominate the strategic focus of emerging biotech organizations, the real operational challenges begin post-construction. “Building Facilities,” in the operational sense, means developing robust infrastructure systems to support evolving organizational needs. Implementing a scalable IWMS platform early in the company lifecycle minimizes data fragmentation, eliminates redundancy, and reduces long-term costs.

Though certain facility components are regulated by the FDA or other authorities, properly designed IWMS systems (**aligned with 21 CFR Part 11,** **GAMP 5)** can fully support compliance without conflict. Non-regulated functions such as physical security, preventative maintenance, IT infrastructure, telecommunications, space utilization, real estate management, and Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) also benefit significantly from a unified data environment.

Startups with fewer than 50 employees rarely possess the internal resources to develop and maintain comprehensive facilities operations. Equipment and systems are often procured with little regard for long-term data governance or system integration. This leads to disjointed information silos, duplicative effort, and inefficient operations.

As companies transition into growth phases (typically surpassing 100 employees), dedicated facilities teams are formed often including a Facilities Manager, technicians, and EH&S professionals. Despite being understaffed, these teams are expected to support expanding operational complexity.

Infrastructure development demands a parallel investment in digital infrastructure. Without a centralized and extensible system in place from the start, the eventual transition to an integrated solution becomes far more daunting task. IWMS platforms provide this foundation aggregating asset data, maintenance records, space planning, and compliance tracking in one accessible interface.

Modern IWMS/EAM systems not only serve cross-functional needs but also reduce the proliferation of disparate applications. A single solution reduces training burdens, accelerates onboarding, and improves visibility across departments. What once took days such as compiling a departmental space report can now be accomplished in minutes with real-time reporting. The key to success, however, lies in consistent data maintenance and clearly defined change management processes.

Importantly, most contemporary IWMS platforms can integrate with validated systems and support FDA-compliant workflows when designed appropriately. With careful planning, alignment with GAMP 5, an IWMS solution can meet 21 CFR Part 11 requirements and support GxP environments.

Conclusion  
Implementing a IWMS early in the growth cycle of a biopharmaceutical company provides a scalable infrastructure backbone. A well-configured system tracking personnel, equipment, space, and maintenance can be managed with modest staffing and supplemented by external consultants. As the company evolves, the IWMS can scale with it. By establishing a strong digital infrastructure early, companies can avoid the pitfalls of data silos and ensure their facilities are ready to support scientific and operational excellence.