

Computer Specifications For ProHelp® EPM

This application note describes the minimum specifications for a customer-supplied monitoring node computer for ProHelp® EPM.

Computer capabilities change rapidly. You should view the requirements in this document as the minimum requirements for a new computer that will be used as a ProHelp® EPM monitoring node. If you are purchasing the computer through a vendor other than Mattec, it is a good idea to check with Mattec's Manufacturing Department to ensure that the computer that you are purchasing will be sufficient for your needs.

1. Monitoring Node Computer

Mattec strongly encourages you to purchase a name-brand, server-grade computer that is designed to be run 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. If you are going to have a heavy client load, or will be collecting a lot of parameter data, it is strongly encouraged to purchase the upper end of servers. This would include a 64-bit operating system and the minimum of 8 gigs of RAM.

- Server-grade computer with monitor, keyboard, mouse, and CD/DVD.
- **One PCI slot (full-height) or one PCI-X slot. A full-height PCI slot is preferred. This slot is used for a full-height PCI Rocketport board.** This is only necessary when using serial architecture for MIU communications. If Ethernet communications are being utilized, this does not apply.
- An available USB port is required if the Mattec Voice Alarm option has been purchased.
- SPEED – Any of the latest processors from Intel are sufficient for a server computer. The more cores that can be purchased the better the performance will be.
- RAM – At least 4 GB of RAM is recommended and 8 GB of RAM is preferred. If you are purchasing a computer that supports more than 4 GB of RAM, then 64-bit Microsoft Windows Server and 64-bit Microsoft SQL Server should be used.
- Hard Drive – The minimum recommended hard drive is 500 GB (7,500 RPM).

The following hardware devices are optional:

- Backup Device. You can backup the system to another computer's hard drive, or you can back it up to an internal tape drive, a CD/DVD writer, etc.

For questions concerning specific hardware compatibility, visit Microsoft's website.

2. Operating System and Software

ProHelp® EPM, Release 7.7 and later, is typically loaded using the following software:

- Microsoft Windows Server 2008
- Microsoft SQL Server 2008

You can optionally use 64-bit Microsoft Windows Server 2008 and 64-bit Microsoft SQL Server 2008.

It does not matter which Microsoft licensing model you purchase (e.g., per seat), and it does not matter if SQL Server is installed as a named instance.

3. Mattec-Supplied Hardware

When you purchase a (full) monitoring node license, Mattec may supply the following hardware:

- Rocketport Board. This board is a PCI serial-expansion card that typically supports 8 channels. It requires a full-height PCI slot and supports 3.3 and 5.0 volt PCI bus architectures. No other serial expansion boards will be accepted.
- Buffer Box. The buffer box is a device that is designed and manufactured by Mattec. It converts the RS-485 signal from an MIU to an RS-232 signal and “conditions” the signal.

4. Secondary Monitoring Node

When using multiple monitoring nodes, one node is designated the “Primary” Monitoring Node and is responsible for installing/upgrading the database. In fact, Microsoft SQL Server is usually loaded on the Primary Monitoring Node computer. Additional monitoring nodes are designated “Secondary” Monitoring Nodes.

A Secondary Monitoring Node computer will still be loaded with Microsoft Windows and will typically contain a Rocketport board. However, the Secondary Monitoring Node computer does not require Microsoft SQL Server. As such, the computer for the Secondary Monitoring Node does not need to be as fast, nor contain as much RAM, as the computer for the Primary Monitoring Node.