WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for creating a comparative trend view in a graphical user interface of a building management system comprising the steps of:

maintaining a system manager application in a data processing system of a management system configured to perform building management system functions and to provide a graphical user interface; and

running the system manager application to:

display a trend view chart on the graphical user interface using a trend view definition selected by a user;

acquire trend data associated with the trend view definition from a trend database in the data processing system;

populate the trend view chart with the trend data values associated with the trend view definition;

display a predefined comparative trend view button on the graphical user interface;

display a comparative trend view chart on the graphical user interface based on the trend view definition upon selection of the predefined comparative trend view button by the user;

wherein a graphical comparison between how a particular measured value changed during a particular time period with how the value trended at a time offset from the time displayed in a first trend view chart is generated and wherein the comparative trend view is displaying point data in a second trend view chart for a time range offset in time either before or after the time range displayed in the first trend view chart;

acquire trend data values from the trend database in the data processing system based on an offset time period selected by the user; and

populate the comparative trend view chart with the trend data values associated with the offset time period.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of displaying one or more predefined time offset buttons on the graphical user interface.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of displaying an area on the graphical user interface for entry of a time offset.

4. The method of claim 1 , wherein the comparative trend view chart is displayed immediately above the trend view chart.

5. A non-transitory computer-readable medium encoded with executable instructions that is configured to run in a data processing system of a management system, configured to perform building management system functions, and configured to provide a graphical user interface capable of:

displaying a trend view chart on the graphical user interface using a trend view definition selected by a user;

acquiring trend data values associated with the trend view definition from a trend database in the data processing system;

populating the trend view chart with the trend data values associated with the trend view definition;

displaying a predefined comparative trend view button on the graphical user interface;

displaying a comparative trend view chart on the graphical user interface based on the trend view definition upon selection of the predefined comparative trend view button by the user; wherein a graphical comparison between how a particular measured value changed during a particular time period with how the value trended at a time offset from the time displayed in a first trend view chart is generated and wherein the comparative trend view is displaying point data in a second trend view chart for a time range offset in time either before or after the time range displayed in the first trend view chart;

acquiring trend data values from the trend database in the data processing system based on an offset time period selected by the user; and

populating the comparative trend view chart with the trend data values associated with the offset time period.

6. A method for creating a comparative trend view in a graphical user interface of a building management system comprising the steps of:

maintaining a system manager application in a data processing system of a management system configured to perform building management system functions and to provide a graphical user interface; and

running the system manager application to:

display a comparative trend view chart on the graphical user interface, based on a trend view definition, in response to a user selection;

wherein a graphical comparison between how a particular measured value changed during a particular time period with how the value trended at a time offset from the time displayed in a first trend view chart is generated and wherein the comparative trend view is displaying point data in a second trend view chart for a time range offset in time either before or after the time range displayed in the first trend view chart;

acquire historical trend data values from the data processing system based on a selected offset time period; and

populate the comparative trend view chart with the historical trend data values associated with the offset time period and with current data values received from at least one building automation system device.

7. A data processing system, comprising:

a storage device comprising a system manager application;

an accessible memory comprising instructions of the system manager application;

a processor configured to execute the instructions of the system manager application to:

perform building management system functions and to provide a graphical user interface;

display a trend view chart on the graphical user interface using a trend view definition selected by a user;

acquire trend data values associated with the trend view definition from a trend database in the data processing system;

populate the trend view chart with the trend data values associated with the trend view definition;

display a predefined comparative trend view button on the graphical user interface;

display a comparative trend view chart on the graphical user interface based on the trend view definition upon selection of the predefined comparative trend view button by the user;

wherein a graphical comparison between how a particular measured value changed during a particular time period with how the value trended at a time offset from the time displayed in a first trend view chart is generated and wherein the comparative trend view is displaying point data in a second trend view chart for a time range offset in time either before or after the time range displayed in the first trend view chart;

acquire trend data values from the trend database in the data processing system based on an offset time period selected by the user; and

populate the comparative trend view chart with the trend data values associated with the offset time period.

8. The data processing system of claim 7 wherein one or more predefined time offset buttons are displayed on the graphical user interface.

9. The data processing system of claim 7 wherein an area for entry of a time offset is provided on the graphical user interface.

10. The data processing system of claim 7, wherein the comparative trend view chart is displayed immediately above the trend view chart.

11. A data processing system, comprising:

a storage device comprising a system manager application;

an accessible memory comprising instructions of the system manager application;

a processor configured to execute the instructions of the system manager application to:

perform building management system functions and to provide a graphical user interface;

display a comparative trend view chart on the graphical user interface, based on a trend view definition, in response to a user selection;

wherein a graphical comparison between how a particular measured value changed during a particular time period with how the value trended at a time offset from the time displayed in a first trend view chart is generated and wherein the comparative trend view is displaying point data in a second trend view chart for a time range offset in time either before or after the time range displayed in the first trend view chart;

acquire trend data values from the data processing system based on a selected offset time period; and

populate the comparative trend view chart with the acquired trend data values.

12. The data processing system of claim 11 wherein one or more predefined time offset buttons are displayed on the graphical user interface.

13. The data processing system of claim 11 wherein an area for entry of a time offset is provided on the graphical user interface.

14. The data processing system of claim 11, wherein the comparative trend view chart is displayed immediately above a trend view chart.