

HOW AIRWAVE SUPPORTS A 24X7 MINING OPERATION



Newmont Mining Corporation is one of the world's largest gold producers and is the only gold company listed in the S&P 500 Index. In 2007, Newmont became the first gold company selected to be part of the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. Headquartered near Denver, Colorado, the company has approximately 34,000 employees and contractors worldwide, with significant assets or operations in the United States, Australia, Peru, Indonesia, Ghana, Canada, New Zealand and Mexico.

Al Smith, senior communications technician for Newmont Mining, first installed a wireless LAN at Newmont's Phoenix Mine in Nevada in 2003. The WLAN plays a critical role in mine operations, providing the communications infrastructure for the integrated mining information system. With information about production reporting, truck assignment, health monitoring, and fleet analysis passing across the WLAN 24x7, the stakes are high when it comes to network uptime.

Newmont has deployed Cisco switches, access points, and workgroup bridges, primarily Cisco Aironet 1310 Outdoor Access Points for a total of 160 devices. Smith has 90 radios continuously transferring data back and forth from his various mining equipment to his console. In addition to the mining system, the wireless infrastructure also supports laptop users, wireless cameras and wireless IP phones. Thus, quick troubleshooting is imperative.

As one of the early adopters of wireless technologies, Smith's site was also one of the first Newmont locations to deploy the AirWave Wireless Management Suite™ from Aruba Networks. "When you have 90 radios out there, you really need a single view of what's going on across the network," he says. "I found it hard to get to the information I needed using my element management system."

FASTER TROUBLESHOOTING, TIME SAVED

Smith finds AirWave to be invaluable for monitoring the network and troubleshooting. Using the AirWave Management Platform™ to work through a progression from the access point, to the workgroup bridge, to the equipment, Smith can usually pinpoint problems quickly. "AirWave eliminates a lot of work because I know what's up and what's down. And when I have a problem, AirWave is right there to tell me why. In addition, it's very easy to upgrade the firmware for all the access points and I could do it right from my desk."

WIRELESS NETWORK SIZE:

- 160 wireless access points and devices
- 90-110 concurrent wireless users on average, 24x7
- 12 switches and routers

INFRASTRUCTURE MIXTURE:

- Cisco WLAN controllers/APs

ARUBA PRODUCTS:

- AirWave Wireless Management Suite

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Al Smith

Senior Communication Technician
Newmont Mining Corporation

SUPPORTING EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

AirWave has also proved useful for management reporting. Smith has used event logs in the system to report exact time when a piece of equipment lost communication, so that the management team can do root cause analysis on problems, understand utilization, and improve mining operations.

KEEPING A MISSION-CRITICAL NETWORK UP AND RUNNING 24X7

The AirWave Wireless Management Suite has helped Smith to keep his wireless network running reliably, 24x7. Smith reports, "My operations team is counting on having connectivity 24x7. I had 19 APs up for a year without failure. My network has never been down."

EXPANDING USE

Building on the success at the Phoenix mine, Newmont has extended its wireless networks to two other Nevada mines and is preparing an underground implementation as well, all monitored by AirWave.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:

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