

Unique Collaboration Creates a Wireless Communications System In Remote Jungle Areas of South America



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Industry

Oilfield Services

Business Challenge

- Integrate end-to-end wireless communications
- Deliver satellite data services to remote jungle areas
- Increase computing connectivity
- Maximize employee productivity
- Reduce network and administrative costs

Network Solution

- Pre-configured telework solution provides convenient voice and data networking for remote workers and sites
- Built a secure Cisco unified communications infrastructure supporting voice, video, and data
- Critical application upgrades

Business Value

- Secure, reliable wireless solution eases communication and helps improve employee productivity
- Easy administration helps keep network management costs under control

Saxon Energy deploys Cisco Unified Wireless Network to support advanced applications and improve critical communications.

Business Challenge

Saxon Energy Services Inc., located in Calgary, Alberta, is a growing international oilfield services company that operates multinational and national oil and gas exploration with production companies in Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, United States and Venezuela. Since January 2005, Saxon has expanded its South American presence by way of acquisition and organic growth, and now operates 10 separate drilling and exploration sites in Colombia. To increase productivity and daily communications, Saxon needed to keep all of its sites connected 24/7, not only to one another, but also to the company's headquarters in Calgary. Because of the remote locations of these sites, and the sheer size of the country, traditional cabling methods from location-to-location was impossible, impractical, or too expensive, while a wireless solution allowed Saxon the ability to extend the office network environment securely to the wellhead and manage all assets of exploration and production. Wireless solutions have great potential in process automation applications since they enable flexible, quick and cost effective communications for various process machines, instruments and field devices. Saxon turned to their longtime IT provider, Long View Systems, also of Calgary, to help them implement a wireless communication system, data transmission, and security; along with all of the necessary network support and training

required, to all 10 sites, as well as to their company headquarters.

Results

“Creating a wireless network, for us, was an easy proposition; we do them all the time. The challenge in this case was language. More specifically, not knowing Spanish was a real hindrance to us in getting the most traction from this installation and providing the best solution for Saxon.” notes Lane Irvin of Long View Systems.

Long View Systems is one of the largest and fastest growing IT solutions and services companies with over 600 technical consultants operating from offices across North America, offering project based technology solutions focused on IT infrastructure, as well as end to end operational outsourcing solutions for SMB to enterprise customers.

Saxon values their relationship with Long View and did not want to go outside for a new vendor to implement this broad based installation. Likewise, Long View wanted to do everything in their power to maintain the strong bond with their client. Because Long View is a member of 1nService, Inc., a worldwide collaborative organization of IT solutions providers, they posted a request on the organization’s member-to-member web portal for assistance from another member. Firefly Communications, based in Atlanta, answered the call to assist Long View. Firefly is a leading global provider of advanced technology education and consulting solutions, offering expert-led classroom instruction, state-of-the art remote lab access, professional services, and strategic technology consulting. Firefly has developed and delivered innovative solutions for numerous Fortune 500 and FTSE 250 companies, and boasts Cisco’s highest certifications.

“When Lane came to us with his collaboration request, it couldn’t have come at a better time. We had just finished a major installation in Central America, and our team was well versed in the challenges that we may face working in remote areas. We had all the language requirements, certifications, technology training, and our passports in place, so we were set to move.” adds Firefly’s Carlos Moros. “Long View simply had to do all the project management work and need identification, and hand it off to us. This is a seamless illustration of how true collaboration works in that each party involved maintains a piece of ownership, and the satisfaction that the job is done right and within budget.” continued Carlos.

Solution

Colombia is a vast country, encompassing over 400,000 square miles, coursing from the Pacific, over the Andes Mountains, to the jungle plains of the east; the terrain can be formidable at best. Wireless communications was the only reasonable solution for this application so that all 10 exploration sites communicated together, and with the home office. The choice to go with Cisco products was an easy one for the project manager of this installation. “We chose a Cisco solution because we wanted a proven and tested end-to-end network that would future-proof Saxon’s investment. We trusted that Cisco could provide the reliability, scalable mission-critical business applications, and performance to support our growing needs.” Irvin says.

Initially, a data center was installed at an easily accessible location to maintain all the backend infrastructure support to the new wireless installation. Cisco 1800 Series fixed-configuration routers were installed to enable a network infrastructure to provide access to the Internet, corporate headquarters and all remote locations, while securing and protecting critical data with integrated Cisco IOS Software security features and capabilities. Cisco IOS Software allowed the flexibility to provide a robust, scalable, and feature-rich internetworking support, while utilizing the accepted standard networking software for the Internet and private WANs. The installed appliances communicate with the Cisco switches and wireless access points throughout the environment to provide intelligent, adaptive network defense against malware and other threats. And, because the appliances combine firewall and IPS services in a single platform, they provide a more manageable, cost-effective solution.

“To deliver true business mobility, we had to take a practical approach focused on unifying networks, managing the wave of mobile devices, and enabling mobile application development. Our job for Saxon was to create a wireless network to support a variety of new mobility applications allowing these applications to extend across multiple networks and be scalable for future modifications. Our solution allows for the delivery of mobile applications across access networks, including Wi-Fi, Ethernet, cellular, and WiMAX.” stated Moros.

The Cisco Wireless Solution allows Saxon to deploy a robust network foundation that centralizes management, unifies multiple wireless access points, and the ability to manage the entire wireless infrastructure to keep all of their locations up-to-date with one another, share critical data, process information streams, and keep their business communications secure.

Business Results

Today, Saxon’s employees in Colombia, and in Calgary, enjoy the robust and reliable benefits of a network foundation that supports a rich suite of state-of-the-art applications, but even more important, it provides the communications accessibility, where and when they are needed.

- Quicker and easier access to communication and information – for multiple remote locations, administrative tasks and production status updates and reporting
- The creation of an infrastructure fully capable of optimizing ‘first mile’ localized wireless service that encompasses integrated hardware, software, and support for well site communications
- Ability to improve productivity, provide faster and more accurate data collection and reduce capital and operating expenditures
- Proactive and reactive support towards an “always on” network which helps field engineers and supervisors create, define and routinely execute equipment surveillance and regulatory procedures following best practices, corporate policies and regulatory mandates
- Ensured security of sensitive data and compliance reporting

