Huntsman Rolls Out Huge Industrial Wireless Project

Apprion and the Enterprise Mobility Solutions business of Motorola, Inc. recently announced they have completed work at Huntsman Corporation's facility in Port Neches, TX on one of the largest and most ambitious industrial wireless application networks to date.

Huntsman Corporation undertook an aggressive program to eliminate injuries, product defects, and environmental releases at their Port Neches facility. Termed "Project Zero", this program required a completely mobile solution to empower operations and maintenance personnel to capture defects, track work progress and make process and safety related decisions in real-time.

"At Huntsman, we strive to achieve the highest levels of safety and operations excellence in chemical manufacturing", said John Prows, Vice President of Manufacturing Excellence for Huntsman's Performance Products division. "Our goal with Project Zero is to eliminate defects, safety incidents and unscheduled downtime at our facilities."

To help deliver on the objectives of Project Zero, Huntsman partnered with Industrial Mobility, Apprion, and Motorola. Industrial Mobility contributed their MobilOps field mobility software that enables field operators to execute electronic "smart" rounds and checklists, enter real-time defect elimination work requests in the field, monitor and control Standard Operating Conditions (SOCs) for each piece of equipment, and access the most up to date Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for execution in the field including Consequences of Deviation (CODs) and Corrective Actions (CAs).

Huntsman believes it is crucial to centralize and manage safety critical information in one place rather than building nested safety data into each round, checklist or procedure. The MobilOps solution contains an SOC database engine that provides safety critical data to operators and mechanics at the point of decision making in the field. All field executable procedures, rounds and checklists pull their safety critical data from this same central source. Legacy information such as process and instrumentation diagrams, process flow diagrams, drawings, procedures, incident reports, etc are also immediately available on demand in the field.

To ensure that Huntsman personnel have a reliable, high performance, mobile platform to run MobilOps, as part of its ION System, Apprion selected Motorola's industry-leading, MC9090 rugged mobile computer. Motorola's MC9090 is a versatile device – empowering mobile workforces with the reliability and performance to provide real-time visibility into business-critical information. Designed to withstand the rigors of everyday use in the harshest environments, the MC9090 mobile computer offers rugged construction and support for multi-mode wireless connectivity to ensure maximum accessibility to personnel and business systems.

Using Motorola's MC9090 mobile computers, Huntsman personnel connect anywhere throughout the four square mile plant via the Apprion ION System – a Class 1, Div. 2 rated wireless application network. The Apprion's ION System provides easy wireless application deployment (applications include video, voice communications, energy efficiency and condition monitoring) and a centralized dashboard that brings together application data, wireless regional maps, and equipment status and maintenance views and reports.

"Manufacturing IT executives view mobility as strategically important to their business," said Tom Gleason, MSSI vice president for sales, Motorola Enterprise Mobility Solutions. "Together with its ecosystem of partners, Motorola is helping manufacturers streamline operations, improve quality control and empower their personnel with real-time information when and where it is needed."

Initial results are impressive. With real-time wireless tracking of the rounds activity, the number of pumps requiring daily inspection has been reduced by 50% - allowing more time for other crucial inspection areas. Defect elimination work requests are initiated in the field in real time. The process automatically identifies redundancies, makes work planning more effective and will lead to significant reduction in the average "time to closure" for each request. Real-time monitoring of SOCs have led to significant process improvements and cost savings due to increased uptime and longer equipment lifetime.

"By increasing the speed and effectiveness of our defect capture process, we are now able to see beyond the tip of the defect 'iceberg'," remarked Huntsman's John Prows. "The operator scans the RFID tag with the handheld, pulls down a defect pick list, and punches the enter button. It is that quick. Capturing and eliminating defects while they are small will drive down maintenance costs, eliminate redundant work, and ensure Project Zero goal delivery while the improvement in

Overall Equipment Effectiveness will increase both production quality and quantity. Most importantly, Huntsman now has a tool that drives safe operating data to the personnel in the field, right at the very time they need the information, to ensure that the safest approach to each task is followed."

"Once again, we see how safety, productivity, and environmental stewardship go hand-in-hand. Huntsman's approach to providing real-time operational information to their people in the field is a great example of the type of mobile application we will see more broadly adopted over the next few years", commented ARC Advisory Group analyst Harry Forbes. "The value provided to Huntsman by the MobilOps application and the solid coverage and reliable services delivered by the Apprion wireless network enable operators and maintenance personnel to rely on the information in the field. Huntsman was able to get this system operational quickly because the availability of network services was a given, not a question mark."

For more information, visit www.apprion.com [1] and www.industrialmobility.com [2].

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