

# UNIVERSAL REMOTE

Taking control of the construction universe with remote asset management technology. By Mark Bittner

The construction universe is comprised of construction company owners, job superintendents, risk management personnel, and many others. In this arena, big iron may be operating on a single jobsite, in several jobsites in a regional area, or in jobsites situated in different countries.

With remote asset management technology—telematics—contractors can control their world, regardless of how big it is, or how many machines are needed to monitor, or the jobsite location.

## VIRTUAL APPROACH

Telematics is a virtual hand's-on approach to asset management. Contractors will soon be using this technology to control their jobs. The technology simply makes too much sense not to invest in it, especially when the technology is guaranteed to minimize maintenance and operation expenses on every machine and on every jobsite, maximizing bottom line profit.

Right now, there's a construction company owner sitting at a laptop in some American office building. At his fingertips is a bevy of construction-site information—oil pressure, idle time, fuel usage, maintenance records . . . even an in-cab view of the jobsite—on machines in South Africa. Or China. Or South America. Pick any place on the map. Put a piece of machinery in that spot. Add specific software and GNSS positioning technology like Topcon Tierra's remote asset management system.

Voila! Real-time information on machines and jobsites from virtually any place on Earth.

## REMOTE ASSET MANAGEMENT

Many companies totally overlook or overtly ignore this all-important segment of company operations—remote asset management. Long-distance equipment is a crucial element in maximizing the machine production on every jobsite. With fuel costs fluctuating, the number of jobs in a holding pattern or declining, and having to make tough decisions to maintain company brand and profitability, any product or system that will increase a company's ability to keep its equipment operating at optimum efficiency, while lowering costs, would be a welcome addition to any company.

The newest advanced system on the worldwide market is Tierra, a Web-based telematics service that provides real-time information on every piece of equipment. Tierra publicizes it is a unique on-site job management system that provides meticulous data to companies interested in maximizing productivity and drastically reducing unexpected and unnecessary equipment maintenance.

## VIABILITY MEETS TECHNOLOGY

In periods of economic instability, smart manufacturing companies focus on two critical areas for viability: short-term actions to hold down expenses wherever practical, and a long-term commitment to growth by pushing the development and introduction of technologies. Those actions are what set progressive companies

apart from those that are stagnating or moving backward.

With the state of the economy today, now is the perfect time for contactors, municipalities, and other government entities to invest in new technology. The tactical yield of products that promise—and, more importantly, deliver—increased production, lower costs per job, and drop more money to the profit line—is direct and immediately measureable.



## MELDING WITH WORK ENVIRONMENT

Topcon Tierra, the company's new Web-based telematics service, perfectly melds with the current work environment. In Tierra, software and hardware are integrated to remotely monitor, assess, and report on every machine or asset on a jobsite . . . anywhere in the world.

Check fuel consumption and oil pressure. Monitor machine idle time and maintenance needs. Secure machines to a set area through geofencing technology. Reduce fuel consumption and save money. Reduce maintenance cost by knowing the operation details on every machine and save time and money. What is the value to a company of securing equipment to a particular site, to know where equipment is, and what it is doing at any particular point in time?

Again, a period of unfavorable economic conditions is the best time to invest in new technology. Progressive companies will pursue around-the-corner technologies to make them more competitive . . . and that includes telematics technology, which will be aggressively pursued by progressive companies in 2009. ♦

ABOUT the AUTHOR



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