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AUSTRALIAN MINING TOWNS: NORTHERN TERRITORY

OCEANS DEEP

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"Space-age" effect

Software company Minetec is helping workers overcome difficult situations. By **Vetti Kakulas**

Software programs are constantly being improved and updated.

Additional features and improved capability are usually the message from companies announcing the latest version of an existing product. It's difficult to keep up with a constantly changing sector, especially when it comes to programming.

Western Australian software firm Minetec describes its latest software – SMARTS II - as an enhanced version of its flagship mine management and control system, offering a new level of productivity to underground and surface miners.

New features include three-dimensional graphics, improved reporting capabilities, "dynamic" real-time scheduling, updated and improved usability, new mine planning formats and a web interface.

Minetec's SMARTS II addresses different mining cycles for most methods and scenarios.

The SMARTS II system can interface to Minetec's Trax+Tags II – a tracking system which can locate, in real-time, miner and machinery whereabouts.

Minetec general manager Andy Sheppard said SMARTS allowed the project manager to monitor and control its mine at all times.

"We can provide real-time optimisation. A manager may be experiencing delays because a vehicle or piece of machinery has broken down," he said. "The software can provide an alternative plan to get the operation back on track. It's a bit space age and very effective."

Minetec's SMARTS II software is helping miners plan more effectively.

Sheppard described competing products as somewhat ineffective, equating them to like driving a vehicle by looking through the rear-view mirror.

"A lot of systems out there just look at past performance to predict how they're going to perform in the future," Sheppard added.

"We're using a sophisticated simulation model that brings in all the inputs from the mining cycle and we use them to adapt the plan. If something goes wrong onsite, we can rush to that delay and using a simulation plan, work out what to do next." AMM

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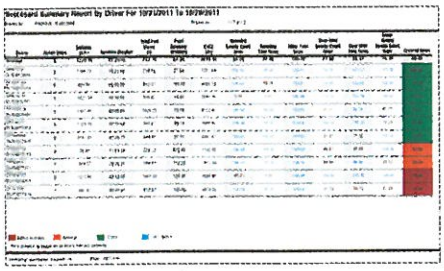
Driver details

AN ADDITION to Navman Wireless's Online AVL2 fleet tracking system has hit the shelves.

The Driver Scorecard feature enables fleet operators to identify drivers compromising safety and fuel efficiency with their behaviour.



A Driver Scorecard summary report.

It displays speeding, idling, harsh braking, high engine RPMs or other user-defined bad habits, utilising metrics gathered from Navman Wireless GPS tracking units and integrated hardware installed in the vehicle.

Based on a daily 100-point scoring system, it normalises scores against a standard distance and duration to allow fair comparison between drivers, a unique feature of the Navman Wireless software.

Each point lost is then deducted from the daily 100-point allocation and averaged across total distance driven to produce a Driver's Scorecard for that day.

A screenshot from the SSR-Viewer 8.1 softwar

Slope safe

A NEW software release for Geotechnical specialist GroundProbe's flagship product the Slope Stability Radar (SSR), has been launched.

The SSR-Viewer 8.1 software offers a range of features, including a combinatior of alarm triggers to continually monitor the movement of the wall.

"We now have six different triggers that can be set per alarm. This greatly improve alarm persistence through changing conditions," software engineering manage James Usherwood said.

The triggers are based on detecting dangerous movement of a mine wall and include tools such as deformation alarms, a range of velocity alarms, tracking alarm and even alarms if the shape of the surfac changes.

Dragline data

MINEWARE has launched a digital terra mapping system as the latest addition to i Pegasys dragline monitor.

Developed in partnership with LC, MineWare's Digital Terrain Mapping (DTM) system uses boom-mounted laser scanners and GPS sensors to continuousl scan and map the terrain around the dragline.

The DTM system tracks movement around the dragline itself, providing live and historical comparisons between the mine plan and the actual terrain.

MineWare CEO Andrew Jessett said a complete scan of the dragline operating environment—both inside and outside of the current work area—was generated while the machine was swinging through its normal operation.

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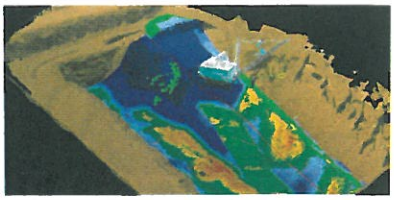

A screenshot of the DTM system.