

CASE STUDY

SIERRA WIRELESS

HEART OF THE WIRELESS MACHINE®

AirLink™ Mobile & M2M Products

Malin Integrated Handling Solutions & Design

Malin is one of the largest authorized Raymond electric forklift dealerships (based on trucks in the field), serving the states of Texas, New Mexico, Louisiana, Mississippi and parts of northern Mexico. Like a car dealership, Malin provides new and used forklift sales and rentals, forklift parts and repair service. However, the company completes all customer lift truck maintenance and repairs on-site at customer locations, rather than requiring customers to bring their heavy equipment back to the dealership.

Business Challenge

With the rising cost of gas, Malin wanted to observe their fleet in order to improve routing efficiency and optimize schedules for field service engineers. To accomplish this, the company decided to add global positioning system (GPS) tracking capabilities to its fleet of service vehicles.

While evaluating automatic vehicle location (AVL) solutions, Malin was introduced to OnTerra Systems, offering integrated location solutions leveraging Microsoft's Virtual Earth and MapPoint mapping software and GPS tracking devices. OnTerra's FleetTracker 2.0 software pulls vehicle location information from a customer's database and presents it through a graphical user interface (GUI) framing the Microsoft mapping software. This allows customers like Malin access to several different views of their tracking information, and integrates their own fleet visuals onto the general maps.



After evaluating GPS device options to install in their fleet of service trucks, Malin selected the Sierra Wireless AirLink™ PinPoint intelligent modem running on Verizon's EV-DO cellular network. Providing advanced quad-band functionality, Malin recognized that the AirLink PinPoint would provide Malin with a progressive tracking solution that would grow with their fleet.

Sierra Wireless AirLink™ Solution

OnTerra Systems provided complete integration and installation of the Sierra Wireless AirLink PinPoint modems. OnTerra turned to Sierra Wireless value-added partner, Wireless Mobiledata – a ruggedized mobile computing systems provider – who offered extraordinary responsiveness to, as well as follow-on support for, OnTerra's device needs.

AirLink PinPoint units were installed in vehicles over the course of a month and a half at nine different office locations. Malin currently has about 150 PinPoint modems deployed in their entire service fleet, as well as in several parts trucks and a delivery semi-truck. The solution will only grow, as the company plans to continue installing the PinPoint units in each new truck that is added to the service fleet.



Powered By: 

The Sierra Wireless AirLink PinPoint is a compact, intelligent and fully-featured mobile communications platform that includes a high-precision GPS receiver and rich, embedded intelligence provided by ALEOS™ technology – the longstanding industry benchmark for reliable and feature-rich intelligence. The Remote Application Protocol (RAP) embedded in ALEOS enabled seamless integration for OnTerra to deploy their application on the PinPoint modems. Furthermore, the PinPoint modem's Store-and-Forward feature also prevents loss of GPS data due to coverage drops, relieving Malin's concern about losing data when traveling into the lower coverage areas of Mexico and northern Louisiana.

CASE STUDY: Malin Integrated Handling Solutions & Design

Sierra Wireless Solution, continued

The combination of OnTerra's FleetTracker and the AirLink intelligent modems provided Malin the ability to centralize their once distributed routing operations. Malin was able to create a centralized dispatch operation to control assignments and manage tracking of their entire fleet, across nine different Malin office locations. So not only does Malin's new tracking abilities improve the efficiency of its service fleet, but a centralized dispatch has improved Malin's overall operating efficiencies.

The information captured through their AVL solution also allows Malin to clarify discrepancies between a service engineer's time card and a customer's service report. With service engineers paid hourly, Malin wanted to ensure that service engineers were accurately tracking their labor and weren't going significantly off-route during lunch or using service trucks for personal transportation while stored at their homes.

After seeing a noticeable improvement in customer service since deploying their new tracking solution, Malin plans to roll-out a web-based customer module. Currently, Malin's tracking solution allows the company to provide accurate estimates on service truck arrival time based on the trucks location and time on the current job, but Malin's goal is to provide customers with direct access to that information to reduce dispatcher time on customer calls and enable customers to better self-serve.

"With most of our customers on paid service contracts, like a warranty, they may not follow how long a service engineer spends on scheduled maintenance or repair work," explained Gavin Rick, IT director at Malin. "Our tracking system provides precise, objective data on the daily progress of our service engineers, which encourages them to pay closer attention to the amount of time they spend on each job."

Results

Considering that gas savings was the main goal for implementing their AVL solution, Malin considers their expectations exceeded. In addition to more efficient dispatch operations and fleet routing, Malin can use their new tracking data to clear reporting discrepancies and provide customers with more accurate repair truck arrival time, allowing customers to better manage their own time.

Malin's AVL solution using OnTerra System's FleetTracker 2.0 and the Sierra Wireless AirLink PinPoint modem on EV-DO resulted in:

- Reduced gas costs and service engineer payroll expenses by verifying work hours and location encouraging engineers to remain on-route.
- Decreased internal operational expenses and improved efficiencies by providing remote tracking and management capabilities, allowing Malin to centralize dispatch of fleet service vehicles spread across nine office locations.
- Improved customer service by enabling Malin to view truck locations at all times and provide accurate arrival estimates to waiting customers.
- Cost savings and improved field service efficiency by providing the ability to send work orders directly to service vehicles.



Sierra Wireless - Connecting people and systems to mobile broadband networks around the world

Sierra Wireless modems and software connect people all over the world with mobile broadband networks that keep them in touch, informed, and productive from wherever they need to be. The Company offers a diverse product portfolio addressing enterprise, consumer, original equipment manufacturer, machine-to-machine, and specialized vertical industry markets. Sierra Wireless also provides professional services to customers requiring expertise in wireless design, integration, and carrier certification. For more information, please visit our website, www.sierrawireless.com



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