

Home > Data management > IoT to speed mining technology shift

IoT to speed mining technology shift

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Modular Mining has about 250 customer companies using its mine reporting and production management systems worldwide

Modular Mining Systems vice president product innovation, Michael Lewis said just as the consumer world was moving toward the IoT, there was a continuing trend in mining toward connecting, collecting, correlating, and extracting value from all assets in a mine.

“As a result, significant value to improve productivity, maintenance, and improve safety through optimisation of the data is available to be claimed,” he said.

“Mines are looking to make a step change in productivity and performance, and Modular is ready to help them achieve their goals. Many of the building blocks are already in place, as we have been working on this vision for many years.

“With the release of our cloud-based maintenance technology, mines will be able to take a giant leap forward, not only on an individual mine site but, ultimately, across their entire enterprise.”

Modular’s soon-to-be-released MineCare 3 Maintenance Management system, its first cloud-based offering, will provide users with “lower cost of entry, maximum total cost of ownership and ease of installation, upkeep, and management”, according to Lewis.

“We believe there are significant benefits to cloud computing, which enables big data management and enterprise-level visibility,” he said. “As such, we are researching a number of big data analytics technologies that will enable mines to look at trends within a discrete mine, or at an enterprise level.”

US-based Modular, which has about 700 employees, has built a global business over 35 years on the back of the initial success of its DISPATCH mine fleet management system, and subsequent product releases catering to demand for equipment health monitoring, proximity detection and collision avoidance, and more recently advanced automation systems and the mine management platform, IntelliMine. Modular claims to have about 250 customers worldwide.

Lewis said the company expected to see “sustained growth in 2015, with an expected 30% increase in product development resources”.

MineCare 3 used the software as a service (SaaS) delivery model to eliminate the need for costly IT infrastructure, and data storage headaches.

“Deployment in the cloud allows mines to efficiently and cost-effectively monitor and manage a single machine or thousands of units across an entire corporation,” Lewis said.

“MineCare 3 also delivers enhanced event handling, data monitoring, and equipment tracking capabilities via dynamic, user-configurable dashboards and event snapshots, and a new Live Map view provides high visibility of in-pit activity.”

The product’s intelligent data monitoring and analytics capabilities enabled users to specify real-time, conditional and aggregate data options “in support of specific maintenance management goals”, Lewis said.

“We see the greatest opportunities in 2015 in continuing to help our existing customer base improve in the areas of production, guidance, asset health and safety.

“We will continue looking for ways to leverage existing technologies, such as cloud-based deployment and remote management, to better serve the needs of our customers,” he said.



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