

SouthernLINC Wireless Cements Communications for Pensacola Ready Mix

Overview

With 60 trucks on the move every day and a staff of 40 based out of four regional offices, Pensacola Ready Mix (PRM), a division of Ready Mix, USA, needed a reliable way for all employees to instantly communicate. SouthernLINC Wireless stepped in more than six years ago to provide a tailored communications solution to the large, community-oriented ready-mix concrete company.

Challenge

PRM takes pride in providing quality concrete to development projects across the Florida panhandle. In order to deliver superior concrete every time, PRM's success is dependent on reliability. Even more, the drivers must not only remain flexible enough to change destinations within minutes, but they also need the right directional information in front of them should such a change occur.

Barry Spurlock, former dispatch manager, and Pamela Baggs, former dispatcher, know the challenges associated with managing PRM's fleet better than anyone else. Both used to play integral roles in overseeing the company's fleet of trucks spread across dispatch locations in Milton, Gulf Breeze, Perdido Key and the company's main plant in Pensacola. When investigating the best communications solution for the company's needs, Spurlock and Baggs quickly realized they needed more than just a traditional cellular phone service. Spurlock, for instance, wanted the phones to be able to send messages between the drivers once they confirmed deliveries.

Additionally, anyone familiar with Pensacola's landscape knows that it is prone to severe weather. Even in the rockiest conditions, deliveries must take place. In the past, landlines would frequently go out of service when harsh weather occurred, so PRM demanded a wireless carrier that could deliver consistent service in all weather conditions.

Solution

SouthernLINC Wireless has been a key operational tool for PRM since 2001, ensuring its drivers, mechanics, dispatchers and clients can always communicate. The crew starts each day at 5:30 a.m. by reviewing the agenda for the fleet, and the dispatcher uses his/her SouthernLINC Wireless Push to Talk service to direct each driver to the day's first work-site. Each truck is installed with a multi-service dash-mounted phone. Drivers and dispatchers frequently use the GPS truck-tracking feature as well as the status-messaging system so that anxious builders know their orders will arrive on time.

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PENSACOLA READY MIX

Category: Business Solutions

SouthernLINC Wireless Solves Communications Equation for Pensacola Ready Mix

CHALLENGE

With a fleet of cement trucks, and staff located in separate offices, Pensacola Ready Mix (PRM) needed a sophisticated wireless communications system for all employees. Former dispatch manager Barry Spurlock and former dispatcher Pamela Baggs determined that their cellular phones should also include Push to Talk, GPS and messaging capabilities. PRM's cellular service also needed to be able to withstand the region's extreme weather.

SOLUTION

SouthernLINC Wireless has proven to be a valuable partner for PRM with its cellular and Push to Talk-enabled phones that are also equipped with a truck-tracking feature and a status-messaging system to keep employees connected.

RESULT

The start of the day is much easier for the dispatchers, thanks to SouthernLINC Wireless. Every morning, they're able to direct each driver to the first work-site by using SouthernLINC Wireless' Push to Talk feature. Spurlock and Baggs also know that when the weather gets rocky, SouthernLINC Wireless will stay dependable. The company's phones were PRM's only source of communications that worked during the 2004 hurricane season.

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“Each truck hauls four to five loads per day anywhere from the Alabama state line to the Okaloosa, Fla. county line,” said Spurlock. “We keep our drivers on course using SouthernLINC Wireless’ Push to Talk and the status messaging system; those capabilities play a critical role in providing quality service to our customers.”

To initiate any Pensacola Ready Mix delivery, PRM dispatchers are able to send wireless command messages or “tickets” from their ruggedized phones to a batch plant to load a truck. When the truck is loaded, the driver simply pushes a status alert button on the dash-mounted phone as each step is completed – loading the truck, arriving on the job, beginning the pour, completing the pour, and finally, returning to the plant.

“Our business is about the quick connect and quick response. The dispatchers have to be aware of each driver’s whereabouts at any given moment,” said Spurlock.

“Even when the landlines are down, SouthernLINC Wireless has helped to ensure business runs smoothly,” Spurlock adds. “Landline calls that would have otherwise been missed can be directed to one, two or three other SouthernLINC Wireless cellular phones, which allows us to keep the Pensacola Ready Mix promise of reliability and excellent service to our customers.”

Now working in accounts receivable, Baggs recalls the events that solidified the partnership during the 2004 hurricane season. “Our SouthernLINC Wireless phones were the only source of communications that worked,” Baggs said. “It was an awesome tool – we depended on the SouthernLINC Wireless network to deliver supplies and coordinate relief efforts for several employees throughout the region.”

Benefits

SouthernLINC Wireless has improved communications for PRM in the following ways:

- *Instant communication:* SouthernLINC Wireless’ Push to Talk provides an effective way for the dispatchers to instantly communicate with the drivers. This is especially beneficial when the drivers have to suddenly re-route their deliveries to another location. Additionally, the command ticket feature provides instant status updates for the dispatchers.
- *Functionality:* In addition to providing dependable cellular and Push to Talk services, SouthernLINC Wireless has also proven to be a valuable tool in PRM’s arsenal. The phones provide a GPS system, which ensures the drivers understand where they’re heading at all times.
- *Reliability:* Even under the most severe weather conditions, SouthernLINC Wireless has proven to be a reliable communications tool for PRM. During the 2004 hurricane season, PRM’s SouthernLINC Wireless phones provided the only mode of communications.



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BENEFITS

Instant Communication:
With SouthernLINC Wireless, PRM’s dispatch managers are able to immediately confirm when drivers make deliveries.

Functionality:
SouthernLINC Wireless’ messaging system provides a quick and reliable way to assign deliveries to its drivers. PRM can re-route drivers quickly, if an emergency arises. The drivers, in turn, use the GPS feature to confirm their routes.

Reliability:
Even when landline phones are down due to weather, PRM has been able to count on SouthernLINC Wireless for service.