

SouthernLINC Wireless Solves Evolving Communications Needs For Saiia Construction

Overview

With several high-profile construction projects underway at any given time, the 500-plus employees of Birmingham, Ala.-based Saiia Construction have little time to worry about dropped phone calls, bad reception or busy networks when making deadline-driven decisions in the field.

For Saiia Construction's managers and their crews, exchanging information in real-time is one of the most critical components in delivering large grading and site-preparation projects on time and within budget—especially for major projects on fast-track schedules.

“In a construction company, the patience level is very low,” said Matt Moon, who oversees communications contracts for Saiia Construction. “We must have the ability to communicate vast amounts of information quickly and reliably in the field to make sure our projects are finished when we say they will be finished.”

Good communication is central to Saiia Construction's reputation as a responsive and collaborative company that must meet tight deadlines. The company generates approximately \$100 million in revenue annually, and has received a number of Excellence in Construction awards from the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC).

Challenge

Saiia Construction employs a multi-generational workforce with over 60 years of combined experience in grading and site preparation for commercial, residential, retail and office construction projects.

With several projects in progress at the same time, it is essential for crew managers and staff to stay connected to keep jobs on track. Previously, crews relied on a mix of pagers, cell phones and two-way radios to communicate. As the company grew and took on larger projects, executives at Saiia realized the need for an integrated communications system so all employees would be on the same network.

“It's hard to imagine that we used to rely on beepers, where you literally had to get in your truck, drive to a pay phone in the middle of nowhere and drop a dime to exchange information essential to the project at hand,” recounted Moon. “We thought the convenience problem would be solved when we moved to cell phones, but the field personnel found them to be very unreliable in rural areas where we were doing a lot of our work.”

Moon said the field crews then switched to commercial two-way radios, which often are used among various mobile professionals such as truck drivers or taxi dispatchers. While the commercial two-way radios

SAIIA CONSTRUCTION

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Saiia Construction Depends on SouthernLINC Wireless for Reliable Service

CHALLENGE

As Saiia Construction's employee base grew, so did its communications needs. With employees spread out over many construction sites, Saiia Construction needed to get its employees on the same network to facilitate instant communications — particularly in rural areas.

SOLUTION

Saiia Construction partnered with SouthernLINC Wireless nearly 10 years ago to obtain a private and reliable communications network. Since SouthernLINC Wireless built its network to be dependable even when severe weather strikes, Saiia Construction knew the company's cellular and Push to Talk service would be ideal for all of its communications needs.

RESULT

Because of SouthernLINC Wireless' Push to Talk service, the staff from the company's executive team and other departments can communicate with each other — instantly and privately.

BENEFITS

Immediate access to employees has proven to be valuable for executives at Saiia Construction. Plus, the reliability — even under adverse weather conditions — that comes with the SouthernLINC Wireless network has helped keep project deadlines on track.

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allowed for instant communication and eliminated dropped calls or busy networks, many at Saiia Construction were unhappy about broadcasting potentially proprietary information over public airwaves. Additionally, everyone on the fleet had to endure constant conversations between colleagues that were unrelated to work, which made it clear that it was time for a new solution.

Solution

Saiia Construction introduced SouthernLINC Wireless service to its field crew about 10 years ago, and, according to Moon, the company hasn't looked back. It was clear that Saiia Construction's communications needs mirrored those of SouthernLINC Wireless' parent company, Southern Company, as both require a reliable and private way to connect instantly with employees in both urban and rural areas and during severe weather conditions.

SouthernLINC Wireless was founded in 1996 and was designed to meet the communications needs of Southern Company's electric utilities including Alabama Power, Georgia Power, Gulf Power and Mississippi Power. SouthernLINC Wireless added redundancies and extra security features when building its wireless network to help provide power company employees with a reliable way to communicate with each other out in the field – especially in severe weather.

Furthermore, SouthernLINC Wireless' network was built to function in remote areas, which national wireless carriers often do not serve. Using Motorola's IDEN (Integrated Digital Enhanced Network) technology that offers instant communications, SouthernLINC Wireless effectively combines two-way radio, phone service, paging and wireless Internet and data access in one, hand-held device.

With SouthernLINC Wireless, essential staff from Saiia Construction's executive team, as well as project managers, heavy equipment operators and site supervisors are able to communicate with each other—instantly and privately.

Benefits

According to Moon, SouthernLINC Wireless has improved communication for Saiia Construction in the following ways:

- **Instant communication:** "Instant communication allows us to do the best job for our clients, and complete their jobs on time. In this business, every minute counts when it comes to finishing projects on schedule."
- **Reliability:** "Most jobs we have are in rural locations that aren't covered by any other major carrier. SouthernLINC Wireless covers such a large footprint, and does it so well. That is a major benefit for us."
- **Durability:** "We need handsets that fit the environment in which we work because we really beat our phones up. We need strong, rugged units that won't break or have other issues out in the field."

Moon said he knows his field crews are pleased with SouthernLINC Wireless because the system makes their jobs easier and he knows his executive team is happy, too.

"Our vice president of operations asks me almost every month, 'How much does this service cost, again?' When I tell him, he just shakes his head and says, 'These things pay for themselves every single day.' He's still amazed by how good and affordable they really are to our day-to-day operations."



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