

Mineware: It's the size of the solution that counts

Since 1996, Mineware Consulting has produced a range of software solutions to improve business systems and production by offering real time reporting to flag problems as they arise, thereby saving time and costs.

Mineware not only develops customised software, but adapts and redesigns a client's current products to ensure seamless integration of the system and easy understanding for operators. It is this flexibility that has brought the company success in South Africa's mining industry.

A recent development with long-time client Gold Fields saw Mineware upgrading its PAS system and incorporating it into the standard CPM system used across Gold Fields. Mineware customised the system to accommodate unusual conditions at Gold Fields' South Deep mine.

Mineware MD **Paul Saker** notes that training was conducted to migrate staff from the original South Deep Mineware system to the new design. User feedback noted that the system was easy to understand and operate and no further training has been required, due to the seamless upgrade. The system went live in June 2007.

These cost-saving factors, along with Mineware's experience in and understanding of the mining industry have seen it acquire several new contracts in this sector in the last six months, including:

- Gold Fields South Deep CPM
- Overtime control and management system, Lonmin
- Backfill system, Lonmin and Gold Fields
- Bonus system, South Deep
- Risk management, Lonmin
- Dash boarding implementation, Gold Fields and Lonmin
- Costing visibility (Capex splits, expanded analysis), at Lonmin
- Underground car tracking, Lonmin
- Equipment control, Gold Fields
- Equipping, planning and booking, Gold Fields

Other successful applications can be seen at Simmer & Jack Buffels, Lonmin Limpopo and Northam Plats.

Mineware's core activity is providing products that fit a client's precise needs by tailoring its software. As requirements change, Mineware integrates changes seamlessly to ensure no time is lost on having to retrain personnel on new systems.

Based in Northcliff, Mineware's 16 staff members are a "can-do" crowd. They are not in the business of creating "one size fits all" solutions, and aim for fast turnaround at a fair price.

Mineware GM, **Ian Saker** believes that the company's interaction with its clients enable it to generate solutions that are workable – and upgradeable. "Mineware has had success outside of the mining industry, with point of sale, bonus and HR systems because they meet the client's exact requirements. We listen to our clients, develop a product and then work with the client to make sure the system does what it needs to do."

In a competitive arena, Mineware has survived against larger software suppliers to generate continuous – and repeat – business with some of South Africa's big name companies, proving that size is not nearly as important as ability. Where companies have used spreadsheets in the past, Mineware is finding that secure, auditable tamper-proof data, is becoming a standard request. The company's CPM software offers secure facilities, reducing risks with its single-version display of information.

According to Mineware Consulting's Managing Director, **Paul Saker**, none of their products have reached full potential yet – they are still a work in progress.

"A great deal of work still has to be done to raise the profile of the sections of CPM that will really change the bottom line", he says.

Saker says that developments would include mining precisely and according to plan. This will ensure that any problems are flagged and directed to the correct people as quickly, and with as much transparency as possible, so that action can be taken.

Mineware Consulting's General Manager, **Ian Saker**, notes that systems are constantly being upgraded to accommodate users' changing needs.

"We are at our best when having face to face discussions with clients to understand exactly what they need, and modifying their system or adding to it on a week-by-week basis. It is the constant changing, reviewing and introduction of new ideas and technology that keeps the system dynamic."

Designed to assist the mine with sticking to its plan, the day-by-day control that the CPM system facilitates, enables Gold Fields to act on daily issues without losing sight of its long term goal.

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Images

Ian_paul_saker.jpg : (Left) Ian Saker General Manager and (Right) Paul Saker Managing Director of Mineware, a great father son combination.

Paul_saker.jpg : Paul Saker, Managing Director of Mineware.

Ian_saker.jpg : Ian Saker, General Manager of Mineware.



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