

Nu-West Industries Applies AMS[®] Suite: Intelligent Device Manager With Great Zeal



RESULTS

- Saves nearly 75% on technician time to troubleshoot suspected problems
- Decrease time require for configuration of new devices by 50%
- \$30,000 in annual savings



APPLICATION

Production of about three million tons of fertilizer per year for sale under Agrium trade names in the western US and Canada.

CUSTOMER

Nu-West Industries, a subsidiary of Agrium U.S. Inc., is a manufacturer of phosphate fertilizers in Soda Springs, Idaho.

CHALLENGE

The fertilizer plant built with a pneumatic control system in 1965 was upgraded and expanded in 2001 with the installation of a DeltaV[™] digital automation system and AMS Device Manager predictive maintenance software. Currently, AMS Device Manager manages 366 HART[®] devices. The plant also plans to include 739 FOUNDATION[™] fieldbus instruments at their next upgrade.

The change from total pneumatic control of production processes to the DeltaV digital automation system was something of a culture shock to both operators and maintenance personnel. According to Brian Wood, who was a technician at the time, "It was a huge step for the maintenance guys who had to learn about electronics. Trying to troubleshoot suspected problems with those smart devices was a big challenge for everyone. We knew the information was there; we just didn't know how to extract it."

"I feel as though AMS Device Manager is very simple to work with. We installed it at the same time as the DeltaV, and everything was new, so we just jumped in."

Brian Wood
DCS Specialist



For more information:
www.assetweb.com



SOLUTION

Four Nu-West technicians received DeltaV training in Edmonton, Alberta, and then went to Calgary where they were involved in creating logic for the control system. As a long-time Nu-West employee, Wood was well acquainted with the production process, and the early experience with DeltaV gave him a head start on understanding the controls and instruments that were being installed in his plant.

As an instrument technician, he was also very interested in AMS Device Manager and wanted to make sure Nu-West utilized the diagnostic information available. He relied on the help files as he determined the best practices for using AMS Device Manager to monitor field devices and extract their diagnostics.

Having been promoted to DCS Specialist, Wood has become the go-to-guy when operators suspect a problem. "I can often diagnose a situation by just scanning the plant area for Status Alerts and checking the usual suspects. By the time an I&E tech gets here, I can tell him exactly where to go to and what he will encounter, so he knows what to expect. Often, he can simply pass by the storeroom on his way to the field and pick up what he'll need when he gets to the device. We save a tremendous amount of legwork that way. Troubleshooting time has been cut by about 75 percent just by viewing the diagnostics from these smart devices. Everything is right there in front of you."

AMS Device Manager is also used for device configuration. While the job can be done with a handheld if it has the proper data, it is much faster to use AMS Device Manager. "There's a real big savings when it comes to configuring a replacement device," Wood said. "It takes only a few minutes to install the configuration right from my office with big savings as a result."



"AMS Device Manager is really easy to work with. I've been in other plants where they have HART devices but not AMS Device Manager, and I felt lost."

Brian Wood
DCS Specialist
Nu-West Industries

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