

Optus Construction Industry Solutions

OVERVIEW

The construction industry is rapidly evolving from a focus on human resources, materials and equipment to improved processes through the deployment of sophisticated technology. Enhanced collaboration with project partners and clients is fundamental to maximising productivity, boosting profitability and seizing competitive advantage.

Construction projects require intensive effort and logistical feats, and it is often a challenge to provide project teams with access to the appropriate technology. For example, companies operating projects in remote regions must overcome the tyranny of distance, and the lack of access to traditional communications infrastructure presents challenges. Tight budgets and the penalties of overrunning project deadlines demand operational flexibility and scalability, requiring reliable and responsive communications networks.

Optus customers include leading Australian construction companies. We have developed a special understanding of the demands their business operations place on their communication requirements. Regardless of the way you need to collaborate and communicate with your staff, contractors, joint venture partners and clients, Optus can offer an effective solution.

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Optus can fulfil all your telecommunications needs, as well as provide solutions specifically tailored for your industry – to help you plan ahead and control your costs.

As a first-tier carrier, Optus provides a full portfolio of communications services. Our core services of voice, mobile, satellite, data and IP networks have been developed to deliver a complete range of solutions which offer significant business value to our construction industry customers. These include:

- communications infrastructure planning, design and review services
- managed network services
- wireless and mobility services and applications
- access, authentication and IT security
- hosting services for communications equipment, servers and applications
- disaster recovery to ensure business continuity

Optus inCITE, Satellite and IP Convergence are three examples of our innovative solutions, which specifically address key issues faced by construction companies today:

- Overview
- Comprehensive Communications Services
- Construction Industry Case Example
- Further Information



Optus inCITE

The Optus inCITE portal, www.optusincite.com, was developed as a neutral information exchange for the Australian construction industry, providing a web-based platform for communication and collaboration across many thousands of industry participants. Open to clients, sponsors, architects, contractors, engineers and suppliers, Optus inCITE offers the industry a common, standardised and cost-effective approach to project management and collaboration.

Centrally hosted and managed in Optus data centres, Optus inCITE applications address specific challenges faced in managing large or small construction projects:

- **Optus inCITE Document Management** is a powerful workflow-based communication and collaboration tool. Highly-flexible, it can be configured to manage multiple processes and teams within the most complex of projects. It provides easy-to-use access to project documentation subject to participant authorisation levels – delivering accurate version control, audit trails and traceability.
- **Optus inCITE Tender Management** provides a complete and secure solution for developing, distributing, controlling and collaborating on tender documentation and estimation processes. It reduces the cost of requesting quotations and negotiating contracts, and helps suppliers by integrating with commonly-used estimating software and enabling online responses, resulting in more accurate and timely results.
- **Optus inCITE Purchasing** integrates with the other Optus inCITE applications – or can stand alone – to provide a streamlined order processing system with online supplier and catalogue information, and automated matching of orders to invoices. It delivers more accurate reporting and payment control, speeds approvals within spend limits and category types, and eliminates off-contract purchasing.

Optus Satellite Services

Construction site offices are often located in remote regions where terrestrial service is poor, slow to deliver, cost prohibitive or unavailable. The key challenges in providing remote communications are to connect new sites quickly and cost-effectively and to provision communications services regardless of locations. Optus Satellite Services enable you to meet these challenges by customising satellite solutions to your needs.

To meet the needs of the construction industry, we offer a choice. SatData fixed, IP-based satellite solutions can be deployed to isolated project sites anywhere in Australia. Optus has also developed trailer satellite solutions, Optus SatFly, when mobility is required throughout a construction project in remote locations. With Optus SatFly, mobile satellite communications can be deployed without fuss – allowing fast start-up of work sites and offering the flexibility to expand your network by adding more remote project sites in the future. Optus satellite solutions ensure continuity of business by connecting your site teams to other remote sites and to your headquarters.

With over 20 years experience of delivering satellite services, Optus operates and flies its own satellites, as well as those of other operators. Through our parent SingTel, Optus Satellite Services also provide cost-effective satellite solutions for your site offices, located in New Zealand, Asia, Europe, Africa, China, India, Hawaii and the West Coast of USA. With SingTel Optus you will have the advantages of regional reach with the simplicity of a single point of contact.

Optus IP Convergence Solutions

Convergence enhances every aspect of your internal and partner communications by integrating voice, data and multimedia applications over one secure network. Convergent networks increase the mobility of construction professionals, improve project workflows, and reduce the complexity and cost of communicating within your business and collaborating with your partners.

Convergence is a reality – almost a third of our Private IP customers are running voice over their IP network today and double that number are planning to implement a Convergence solution in the next year, according to the Optus IP Index 2004.

For the construction industry, convergence delivers:

- reduced network complexity and costs, including seamless connectivity with remote site offices and branches
- increased productivity and electronic collaboration with project partners
- improved mobility through ubiquitous connectivity and a range of remote access options

Optus was the first Australian provider to launch a fully integrated range of converged communications; with SingTel we offer one of the most extensive IP coverage across the Asia Pacific Region.

We deliver a range of industry-leading communications solutions for the construction industry, to enable you to realise the benefits promised by convergence technology. They include:

- Optus IP Centrex solutions (hosted multimedia service) and Optus IP Telephony (premises based) – integrating data networks with Voice over IP, integrated messaging and other productivity tools
- ‘on demand’ value-added business solutions such as secure intranets, financial accounting and desktop applications
- business continuity and redundancy solutions, which include a comprehensive suite of access, authentication and network security services

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY CASE EXAMPLE

Consider a large civil engineering company operating dozens of projects around Australia at any one time, many of them in remote regions. This Optus customer is involved in several joint ventures and public works projects, demanding a high degree of collaboration with business partners and local authorities.

Faster Deployment of New Sites

Staff located at remote construction sites require continuous access to corporate information resources. Getting new sites connected to their Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) was a major headache involving multiple service providers, and the time required to commission new links had the potential to delay project commencement dates.

After consulting with the IT infrastructure team and project managers to explore the specific business issues they faced, Optus developed an IP-based solution which enables them to connect new sites anywhere – in days not weeks. Based on both satellite and fixed telecommunications services, project managers can choose from a selection of cost-effective ‘shrink-wrapped’ connectivity solutions for each project, reducing guesswork and enabling them to budget and control costs with confidence.

Improved Productivity, Enhanced Decision Making

Optus provides the company with a dedicated Service Delivery Manager to streamline provisioning and issue management. We deliver consolidated billing across their multiple service providers with customer access to sophisticated reporting and analysis tools. As a result, the company has reduced its internal administration costs and has the financial information they need to allocate against cost centres at their fingertips.

Effective Teaming

Our customer has joined the many members of the Australian construction industry using Optus inCITE to help manage its project workflows. Optus inCITE Document Management provides a framework for keeping tight control over project workflows which involve multiple parties, and manages the masses of documentation generated by participants in complex projects.

The company also recently issued a major tender to over 50 potential subcontractors using Optus inCITE Tender Management. Use of the system was at no cost to the subcontractors, and they were able to respond online. At the end of the day, the company received quotations from an unprecedented 90% of the subcontractors through Optus inCITE, and all the responses received closely met the required specifications. This meant the company was given more supply options for less effort, greatly streamlining an otherwise time-consuming process.

Having experienced the benefits, the company has decided to standardise its internal and external collaboration and communications over the Optus inCITE platform, and is actively promoting usage to its partners within the construction industry.

Business Benefits

By trusting their communications requirements to Optus, our construction industry customers have:

- access to innovative solutions from Australia's leading challenger telecommunications provider
- a solid strategy for migrating to the productivity and cost benefits of converged IP networking
- a productive partnership with a service provider which understands the special communications needs of the construction industry

FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about Optus' integrated communications solutions for the construction industry, contact your Optus Account Manager or visit optusbusiness.com.au Alternatively, send your enquiry to construction@optus.com.au