

Mining software adds value in tough economic climate

Despite operating in an increasingly challenging economic environment, software solutions provider Micromine has emerged as one of the few mining and exploration software providers still investing substantially in research and development (R&D) and product development in the global mining and exploration industry.

Combined with below-target production, financial pressures on mining operations are becoming a familiar picture in mines around the world.

The need to effectively manage grade reconciliation and coping with growing skills shortages have become key issues requiring urgent attention by mining companies.

"We are focusing greatly on R&D in these difficult times, as innovation is the key to value creation for our clients. Our mining solution, Pitram, in particular, can have a positive effect on cash flow management immediately," says Micromine CEO **Peter Rossdeutscher**.

Capital expenditure reduction is one of the first focus points, after safety, for many operating mines planning to stay solvent.

"Pitram's scalability, not only in functionality and price, but also in its ability to function across a diverse array of communications platforms, has placed it at the forefront of financially viable fleet management solutions delivery for mines of all sizes," Rossdeutscher explains.

"This product ensures that production requirements are met on the back of limited or no communications infrastructure," he adds.

The product has been used for the communications infrastructure at gold-miner Barrick Gold's Buzwagi mine, in Tanzania, which has a fully automated data capture system.

Rossdeutscher adds that the Pitram's real-time, or end-of-shift, management reports, material movements and personnel key performance indicator tracking tools allow mines of all sizes and budgets to manage their sites effectively and productively.

"Pitram was also able to identify that the mining process was causing a bottleneck at mining group Exxaro's Glen Douglas dolomite mine, in Meyerton, Gauteng.

"As a result, Exxaro introduced an additional mobile crusher to aid in the processing of ore, saving the operation significant amounts of time and money," he adds.

"With the latest version of Pitram, we have included a fully scalable solution to reduce the upfront cash outlay, thereby enabling both large and small mines to benefit from this cost-effective solution.

"This can easily be upgraded in discrete steps, when a business expands."

Further, this scalable approach can be tailored to suit any size mine, meaning that no mine is too small to consider a fleet management system.

"Through a detailed requirement analysis, Micromine can tailor a solution to suit a mine's budget and requirements," Rossdeutscher concludes.

MINING WEEKLY COUPON ON PAGE 34 E180433