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NICKEL REPORT

Emphasis placed on long term planning

The effects of the global financial crisis in 2008 have infiltrated business world-wide.

Yet Australia's vast mineral industry continues to lead the world mining sector, navigating volatile economic issues and anticipating increased demand despite ongoing high costs for development, materials and labor.

American inventor Thomas Edison wrote: "Good fortune is what happens when opportunity meets with planning" – and it has never been more important to take advantage of opportunity than today.

Leaving nothing to accident, Australian mining companies have long been avid users of sophisticated mine planning software, always looking for new tools to help maximise their process efficiency and contain costs.

High priority

Developing and implementing an accurate mine plan is a critical factor in organising an operation that will run as smoothly and profitably as possible.

Almost 40 years ago, Mintec, Inc was one of the first mining software companies to pioneer innovative software for mine exploration, planning, and design – initially offering long term mine planning applications.

Now a leading mining software development firm with an international

presence and offices worldwide, Mintec has added a suite of integrated mine planning software programs that form the data management, planning tools and reporting core for the short and medium term mine planning process.

All of these tools are interconnected through a central database hub, enabling them to work together seamlessly.

Mintec offers the comprehensive MineSight mine planning system for all stages of mine evaluation and development, including exploration drilling analysis, feasibility studies and mine design.

Firstly there's MineSight Economic Planner (MSEP), which provides information needed to design pushbacks and pits accurately. Meanwhile, MineSight Strategic Planner (MSSP) schedules the benches in every pushback to be mined in each period. Finally, the MineSight Interactive Planner (MSIP), designs, cuts and calculates the reserves on the benches and pushbacks provided by the MSEP.

The MSIP then saves the cuts into the database shared by all the MineSight tools.

Recently, Mintec announced the new release of two software solutions that help the engineer produce the detailed, timely plans needed to deal with most operational considerations.

MineSight Schedule Optimiser (MSSO) is a new short and medium term production-scheduling tool considered unique in the industry.

It conducts schedule calculations by taking into account a comprehensive set of geometrical, mining processing and equipment constraints.

Meanwhile, MineSight Haulage (MSH) is used to manage detailed equipment and material routing requirements. The MSSO and MSH are designed to complement each other for maximum process planning effectiveness.

MSH defines destinations, builds haulage networks and calculates the cycle time from each cut to each destination, which is saved into the common database. It also creates material/routing reports, route profiles and cycle time files.

Smoother sailing

By utilising MSH in conjunction with MSIP, planning engineers can obtain immediate short term logistical requirements for trucks and shovels.

The MSSO finds the optimum operational cut mining sequence in each period that achieves the objective and satisfies the product quality and quantity as well as the technical, physical and marketing constraints.

It imports cuts and cycle time data from the databases, defines phase precedence, calculates cut precedence, sets up material mappings (based on cut off grades), defines destinations and equipment parameters, establishes objectives, constraints and economic parameters for each period and completes schedule calculations.

The engineer can adjust material mappings, constraints and/or economic parameters and run schedule calculations until optimum schedules are obtained.

The MSSO – in conjunction with MSH and the other components of the MineSight mine planning system – helps today's mining companies achieve the highest project profitability possible.

In a volatile global marketplace where cost management tops the list of priorities, planning is more important than ever.

Call (+61 08) 9436 0700 or visit [Mintec](http://Mintec.com) at www.minesight.com to contact a company representative or schedule a demonstration.



Achieving high levels of profitability is important, particularly in underground scenarios where operating costs are higher.