

Seamless data transmission in the steel industry

There is a thin line between success and failure in the highly competitive global steel market. Technical expertise and modern manufacturing plant are no longer enough. Monitoring and streamlining of all production processes is vital to survival. In response to this pressure, the sector began implementing high-tech IT many years ago. German steel manufacturer Salzgitter Flachstahl GmbH, for example, has a complex environment encompassing 3,000 systems for tasks such as production planning and control. IT solutions like this are the key to productivity, performance, and, ultimately, profitability. However, should this infrastructure fail, production can be seriously disrupted – or, worse still, brought to a standstill. Thanks to REALTECH, this danger is a thing of the past. TELCAT, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the steel manufacturer, now uses theGuard! NetworkManager to keep track of all mission-critical IT systems and network components. The solution enables Salzgitter Flachstahl to identify, and eliminate, faults and performance bottlenecks before they jeopardize production.

: success story

TELCAT Kommunikationstechnik GmbH



Jochen Ilgenstein
Network Manager
at TELCAT Kommunikationstechnik GmbH

“theGuard! NetworkManager closely monitors all network components. The REALTECH solution automatically identifies errors and performance fluctuations, alerting IT staff via a standard user interface. If employees complain of slow response times, we can immediately establish whether the problem lies with the network. If it does, we can pinpoint the fault in no time.”





Salzgitter Flachstahl is one of Europe's leading steel manufacturers, with a total workforce of 18,000. The company operates furnaces, rolling mills and surface-treatment plant at its headquarters in Salzgitter, Lower Saxony. It was quick to respond to price competition in the industry by investing in IT solutions for planning and controlling production.

By leveraging Web-based technologies, the company is now combining its many stand-alone systems for individual production processes to create a fully integrated, enterprise-wide environment. Salzgitter Flachstahl currently operates an Ethernet LAN to connect all desktop PCs and servers used for production-related tasks.

TELCHAT was founded in 1986 and is responsible for operating the steel giant's IT systems. *"In the manufacturing industry, data networks play a crucial role in day-to-day operations. Any failure or outage can cripple production. Salzgitter Flachstahl works around the clock, and it's up to us to make sure that the network is always available and running smoothly,"* says Heiko Bode, head of IT at TELCHAT.

Network manager Jochen Ilgenstein adds, *"We have to constantly monitor the performance of a huge number of components and connections, and to take corrective action in good time. Given the size of the network, this is a major challenge and one which simply cannot be carried out without sophisticated IT tools."*

Trouble-free troubleshooting

To meet these tough demands, TELCHAT has been employing a solution since 1996 that automatically monitors complex, heterogeneous networks. REALTECH's theGuard! Network Manager captures and

displays network performance statistics for production control systems and desktop PCs. *"As the world's only multi-vendor monitoring tool of its kind, theGuard! NetworkManager really does give you control over all components. What's more, it automatically recognizes errors or fluctuations in performance and displays the details via a central user interface. Given the size of the production site, this is a real blessing,"* explains Ilgenstein. *"If employees complain of slow response times, we can establish immediately whether the problem lies with the network. If it does, we can pinpoint the fault in no time."*

Data can now be monitored from any desktop via Internet Explorer without any additional software. Jochen Ilgenstein singles out the REALTECH solution's reporting capabilities for particular praise, *"We can only be sure of developing and expanding the network successfully with the support of the comprehensive statistics this tool provides for all areas of production."*

Heiko Bode, head of IT at TELCHAT, believes that the company is in the best possible shape to face tomorrow's challenges, *"Our aim is to strengthen the position of*



On-site network control

TELCHAT chose to implement the Terminal Server Edition of theGuard! NetworkManager. It enables specialists at each production unit at the Salzgitter plant to locate network problems and component failures for themselves. Since the implementation of release 5.0, complete with a Web browser interface, this task is even easier.

TELCHAT as the network service provider for the Salzgitter group. Long-term statistics provided by the REALTECH software enable us to define realistic Service Level Agreements, and to monitor compliance. theGuard! NetworkManager is also fully equipped to cope with our proposed migration to Gigabit technology."