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BIGmate is a nationally recognized fleet GPS and asset/vehicle tracking company with global reach based in Mackay, Queensland. The companyworks with some of Australia’s largest companies to provide tracking solutions for improved cost efficiencies, service delivery, and increasedthroughput and staff safety. BIGmate provides solutions to a wide range of industries including government, mining, delivery, and transportation.

Business Challenge

Founded in 2002, BIGmate initially provided data logging solutions for field service applications. At that time, real-time data access was a thing of thefuture. As BIGmate evolved with technology, so did the company’s asset tracking solutions, which help to identify and correct driver behavior (e.g.,seat belt usage, hand brake usage, average vehicle speed) and monitor engine health in order to improve personnel safety and preserve the life of the vehicle.

With the desire to expand connectivity options to cellular to enable real-time data transfer in their solutions, BIGmate knew they needed a platform thatwould allow a high level of customization to cover their customers in a wide range of industries and sizes.

“Our products are very customer-driven,” explained Mark Shield,

Managing Director of BIGmate. “Our development team builds custom applicationsto suit customer requirements, so we don’t really do one-size-fits-all. If a customer needs a specific level of reporting or integration, that’s our strength.”

BIGmate turned to M2M Connectivity, the distributor for Sierra Wireless in Australia, to help find the flexible, programmable connectivity platform theywere looking for, and so began a long-term relationship between the three innovative solution providers.

SIERRA WIRELESS AIRLIN K® SOLU TION

BIGmate selected the Sierra Wireless AirLink® FXT009 programmable modem as one of its platforms, which provided the open development platform they needed to continue advancing their GPS solutions. BIGmate has continued to migrate their applications to next generation FX Series modems, currently focusing on the latest model FX100.

“The open development platform and extended memory of the FX100 opened up a lot of other opportunities,” said Shield. “The design of the modem is very modular, with hardware expansion capabilities and support for multiple communications technologies that allow us to meet specific customer requirements.”

In BIGmate’s GPS tracking solutions, an FX Series modem offering real-time data transfer is mounted in-vehicle and interacts with a driver through a touchscreen display on the front-end, and BIGmate’s custom asset tracking applications on the back-end. In-vehicle applications include everything from dispatch to speed checks and fuel checks, and the addition of cameras adds another layer of safety monitoring.

The AirLink FX Series of programmable modems offer unparalleled expansion capabilities in a durable, aluminum form-factor that is ideal for industrial applications. The FX Series supports low-power mode and features an open standards expansion card interface, providing more flexibility and enabling customers to add additional I/O, fieldbus, LAN, or any wireless interface such as GPS or Wi-Fi. It comes standard with audio, digital I/O, Serial, USB, as well as an optional Ethernet interface. Some of the critical features of the FX Series programmable modem cited by BIGmate and M2M Connectivity include the serial port, which is used to easily integrate with displays and other systems, and the ability to add custom boards and expand capabilities through additional engine and safety parameters. The modem offers Sierra Wireless’ Open AT® Application Framework, a completesoftware package for developing embedded M2M applications in standard C/C++, to enable companies like BIGmate to bring their solutions to market faster and more cost-effectively.

M2M Connectivity assists BIGmate with testing and problem resolution, as well as delivering accessories and packagingcomplete solution kits used by installers to deploy BIGmate’s asset tracking solutions.

“BIGmate has an incredibly experienced solutions group,” said Sean Taylor, sales manager at M2M Connectivity. “They didn’twant to spend their time building hardware from the ground up, and we were able to introduce them to the FX Series platform and support their code migration with each upgrade.”

RESULTS

BIGmate has deployed more than 1000 FX Series programmable modems in field service vehicles across Australia and beyond. Their asset tracking solutions continue to help improve personnel safety and vehicle lifecycle, as well as provide increased business efficiencies to their customers through access to real-time data and analysis.

“BIGmate offers a wide range of solutions, and the one constant is demand for the user interface in the vehicle cab,” said Shield.“The AirLink FX Series is an important part of the suite of products that we can use for our customers, and we’re very impressedwith the way the modem is being developed and has continued to progress.”

Application

- Asset Tracking

Customer Critical Challenge

- In-vehicle communications solution for multiple industries including mining, transport and construction
- Required programmable hardware platform to accommodate a variety of custom applications

Solution

- AirLink FX Series of programmable modems with Open AT® Application Framework for unparalleled expansion possibilities in a durable, aluminum form-factor ideal for industrial applications

Benefits

- Variety of I/O interfaces, extended memory and additional slots for integrating devices and easily adding custom boards
- Complete software package for developing embedded M2M applications and speeding time-tomarket
- Rugged design for in-vehicle and industrial environments
- Strong partner ecosystem to establish and maintain long-term customer relationships