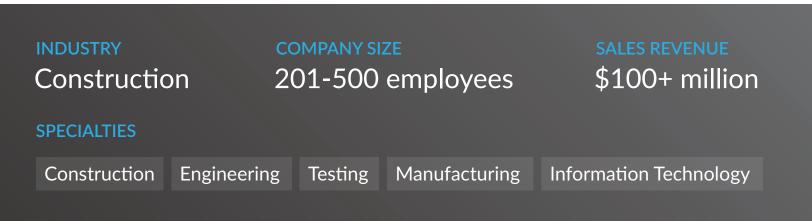# Large Construction Company Prevents Heavy Equipment Theft with Real-Time Asset Tracking

How a ThingTech customer came to rely on ThingTech's IoT technology as a strategic part of its daily operations.

INDUSTRY
Construction

COMPANY SIZE
201-500 employees

SALES REVENUE
$100+ million

SPECIALTIES

| Construction | Engineering | Testing | Manufacturing | Information Technology |

| Introduction

Before a suspect could escape with a $30,000 mini-excavator, he was met by county police officers and a team of construction workers who were the rightful owners of the equipment. The mini-ex was reported missing, and possibly stolen, from a nearby job site. It's not easy to tell mini-excavators apart, so perhaps this was a misunderstanding, with the mini-ex being taken by mistake. But by the time the thief had entrenched himself behind a bunker of lies, the fleet and asset manager of this large construction company had emailed police indisputable evidence leading to an arrest and recovery of the stolen property.

The construction company is a leader in substation construction and commissioning. Electrical substations transform high voltage power into low voltage power, distributing electricity to industrial, commercial, and residential customers. Similarly, the Internet of Things (IoT) can convert voluminous data sets into small pieces of intelligence for companies to act upon. This obscure thread connects the company and its IoT services provider, ThingTech. But, of course, that's not what drew them to the IoT.

| The Story

Heavy equipment is often left unattended on construction sites when the machines are not in use, workers leave, during periods of downtime on the job, and in between jobs.

OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) recognizes the danger that heavy equipment poses when both attended and unattended. So federal regulations were established to provide safe work environments in either case. Protection from loss or theft, however, is entirely in the hands of construction companies.

Theft costs the construction industry up to $1 billion a year, according to a 2016 study by CalAmp.[1] Now, add these costly write-offs to recovery fees, equipment replacement or rental fees, loss in productivity, customer dissatisfaction, and potential increases to insurance premiums. It's easy to see that stolen equipment isn't an acceptable cost of doing business.

Construction companies like this ThingTech customer are adopting IoT solutions to thwart theft, because a combination of alarm systems, around-the-clock video surveillance, and security guards doesn't have the efficiency, flexibility and mobility of real-time GPS asset tracking.

Construction equipment equipped with ThingTech's GPS asset tracking provides you with the exact location of your vehicles and assets in real time. Over half of the substations the company services are in remote locations. With their high-value assets spread across a wide geographical area, they needed better visibility into the location, movement and status of these assets. Once their ThingTech system was up and running, the company wasn't far away from seeing a return on investment (ROI).

1   Source: http://www.calamp.com/system/files/resources/corporate-information/2016theftstudy.pdf

Before workers leave a site, the fleet and asset manager sets up a geofence around his equipment using his ThingTech Real-Time application. The ROI for the company came in November 2015 when the fleet and asset manager received an automated notification that one of his mini-excavators had just crossed the boundaries of its geofence at a nearby energy plant. The mini-x was being used for digging foundations and trenching a ground grid. While monitoring the speed, direction and location of his equipment in real time, the fleet and asset manager contacted his superintendent, who lived nearby.

After a short time, the mini-ex came to a stop. Using Google Maps Street View on his ThingTech Real-Time application, the fleet and asset manager retrieved the residential address and street-level picture of where his mini-ex was taken to. This information was provided to his superintendent, who arrived with his team just as police were pulling up.

The suspect lived and worked near the area where the mini-ex was taken. He told police he had permission to use the mini-ex, but suggested that he must've taken the wrong machine. Only one problem—the fleet and asset manager pulled a report using his ThingTech Real-Time application, which showed the mini-excavator's activity during the week.

Law enforcement followed the breadcrumbs and discovered that the mini-ex had been taken an area of the job site where someone had later cut a hole through a chain-link fence. Officers were able to piece the story together from there.

THE RESULTS

Without a GPS asset tracking system, the company would've had to write off a $30k piece of construction equipment. And without access to historical data showing where the mini-ex had been, the suspect could have talked his way out of the crime.

Changing the future happens today. Contact us anytime to discuss your fleet tracking or asset tracking needs, or to schedule a free consultation.

Next Steps: Contact us and schedule a demo by visiting   www.thingtech.com/request-a-demo

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