

# Asset-tracking services are your 'Eye in the Sky'

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**It's an average day at the corporate office. As a fleet manager, two of your offshore drilling rigs are relocating from the Gulf of Mexico to offshore West Africa. Meanwhile, your logistics supervisor is coordinating when the new crew will come onboard once the rig has reached its new destination. Not to mention the workboats that have to be scheduled to bring in the critical supplies the new crew will depend on for the next few months.**

With so much happening in remote locations around the world, it can be difficult to keep track of when, and if, the shipments are being sent to their destinations at the right time, what bearings your drill ships en route are heading in and the countless other assets making moves. Perhaps a strong visual aid can help provide some insight to what's happening with your investments. Map-based tracking services monitor the position and movement of critical assets. It's an ideal solution for rig managers and fleet operators needing the capability to view real-time locations and historical paths of drilling rigs and maritime assets, including

supply boats, tankers, cargo ships and construction and repair vessels. Asset-tracking integrates with rigs or vessels using Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) communication services, enabling management to log onto a secure site at anytime, anywhere and access the location and progress of a global fleet in seconds. Map-based tracking services are some of the latest value-added solutions companies can integrate seamlessly into their operations.

Whether your fleet is concentrated in a region or spread out across the globe, an asset-tracking service can help provide you with peace-of-mind from an omniscient point-of-view. In addition to the standard services provided over VSAT, such as voice over IP (VoIP), video conferencing, e-mail, Internet connectivity and corporate networking capabilities, map-based tracking services increase control over a company's remote operations. Now, management back on shore can have instant visual connections with multiple assets. Fleet managers want to see a map on their computer screen with dots representing the locations of

every drilling rig or maritime vessel the company operates. It offers reassurance that each asset is in the right place at the right time without having to be frequently updated on the fleet's status. So when a crew member reports that his drill ship is 100 miles north of Australia, you'll be able to confirm the ship's position with your own eyes.

Map-based site tracking services don't just provide a blip on the radar; they offer definitive locations and travel details for your records. For example, if a tanker is making its way through the Caribbean Sea toward its South American destination, fleet managers have the ability to access its latitude and longitude coordinates in real-time. Also, managers can make sure the crew is steering the vessel in the right direction. Asset-tracking services enable the user to see the tanker's heading to ensure it's traveling on the appropriate path. In addition, you can compare the tanker's progress from the last time you logged in. The travel history shows you the vessel's nautical path and outlines its movements over the last 30 days.

Those using asset-tracking services are finding several unique benefits from implementing the solution in everyday operations. One company that manages construction and repair vessels uses the service to help manage its fleet located in the Gulf of Mexico. When an urgent situation arises, such as a customer calling in with a potential pipeline leak or marine emergency, the asset-tracking service allows fleet managers to quickly identify the vessel closest to the customer's site and dispatch it in a timely response, giving the company a competitive advantage in the repair industry. The service also benefits assets operating in potentially harsh environments. Another asset-tracking customer used the service to disburse its Gulf fleet to safe harbors during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. The company was able to view the fleet's positions across the Gulf and individually guide vessels out of harm's way.

Asset-tracking services provide you with a virtual globe that allows you to better manage your operations. Companies are finding that a visual aid is superior to simply relying on voice and Internet communications to correspond with their fleet. When management logs into the asset-tracking service, they see more than just some dots on a map. They're witnessing their investments in action, and with that comes serenity. ■