



Manufacturing

Daily Use

- Reliable radio coverage through dense wood panels
- Rugged handsets to withstand the rigors of the tough business environment
- Leverages the investment in the company's PBX and Wi-Fi network minimize cost and maximize performance

Solution

- Polycom® SpectraLink® 8000 Wireless Telephones

Results and Benefits

- Improved communications between managers and employees
- Saves expenses on recurring cellular telephone costs and maintenance on handheld radios and pagers
- The handsets have features to support noisy the environment, such as a large earpiece to provide comfort and seal out background noise, ring vibration capabilities for use in noisy environments, and a range of headsets and carrying cases

Voice Rises above the Noise in Manufacturing

Background

Voice communications in the manufacturing industry can be a challenge for workers managing daily tasks amid the constant whirl of machinery. Kaindl Flooring, a manufacturer of laminated floor products based in Salzburg, Austria, was on the lookout for a new voice communications system that would relieve employees of the time-consuming and difficult communications inherent in a demanding manufacturing environment.

Producing nearly 40 million square meters of laminated floors annually to command over a quarter of the market, Kaindl

Flooring was striving to make its new 15,000 square meter storage facility in Salzburg as efficient as possible to support its burgeoning business. To do so, Kaindl Flooring devised a list of hefty requirements to enable this new facility to work in tandem with its manufacturing plants. One of the key areas to improve was voice communications.

"Kaindl Flooring's decision to install Polycom® SpectraLink® 8000 Wireless Telephones for improved voice communications among managers and employees has been a boon for the manufacturing plant in multiple ways," says Andreas Schlager, project manager and network specialist at Kaindl Flooring.

Schlager says employees are delighted with the time saved by their newfound instant communications. Gone are the days when employees had to halt work and rush to a fixed telephone to discuss critical production issues. Warehouse managers no longer have to hunt people down in a facility where high-stacked rows of wood and the blast of loud machinery make it arduous to locate employees.

Hurdling Transmission Obstacles

Making the decision to install a wireless voice communications system to improve the storage facility's productivity was relatively simple, but finding the right solution capable of overcoming the many obstacles inherent the manufacturing environment was not. Incomplete radio coverage was one of the major obstacles Kaindl Flooring faced in establishing wireless communications in its new storage facility. Dense piles of warehoused wood

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Andreas Schlager, project manager and network specialist at Kaindl Flooring

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panels that are stacked four meters high and two meters wide throughout the facility create impenetrable blocks that dampen radio waves. This made it extremely difficult to find a solution with dependable coverage. Also, because of Kaindl Flooring's harsh industrial environment, a wireless solution needed to be extremely rugged to deal with day-to-day wear and tear on the handsets.

Kaindl Flooring ruled out cellular telephones as an option because external mobile networks could not penetrate the facility's walls and per minute airtime charges rendered them utterly cost prohibitive.

Nailing a Converged Solution

Kaindl Flooring had confronted similar reception problems when the company decided to install a Wi-Fi network to assist employees with scanning inventory. At first the stacks of cut wood and laminated flooring products created coverage issues for wireless scanning devices, so Kaindl Flooring worked with Wi-Fi network providers IBM Global Services and Cisco Systems to install a distributed antenna system and a network of Cisco Aironet access points to enhance coverage throughout the facility. It made sense to find a wireless voice solution that could leverage this infrastructure to minimize cost and maximize performance.

SpectraLink Wireless Telephones operate over Wi-Fi networks and were the most logical and cost effective way for Kaindl Flooring to equip employees with wireless voice capabilities. This was easily accomplished by integrating the SpectraLink Wireless Telephones with a Cisco CallManager that connects to Kaindl Flooring's Alcatel PBX.

“By using the SpectraLink Wireless Telephones to leverage our existing Wi-Fi network and bring voice services into our warehouse, we were able to avoid the expense of upgrading our PBX,” Schlager says.

SpectraLink Wireless Telephones have no moving parts, external antennas, or complex configuration menus. Instead, they offer features relevant to noisy and robust manufacturing and warehouse environments, such as a large earpiece to provide comfort and seal out background noise, ring vibration capabilities for use in noisy environments, and a range of headsets and carrying cases.

The lightweight, durable SpectraLink Wireless Telephones are easily worn on a belt and save workers from having to carry additional telephone equipment with them. The handsets are also designed to take the pounding typical of a tough workday.

Brawny Partners

Polycom has proven a strong technology partner for Kaindl Flooring, resolving the challenges inherent in the manufacturing industry and maximizing the Austrian company's investment in its Wi-Fi network. Not only does Kaindl Flooring now have a top-of-the-line communication system, it has a network built with expandible functionality for future voice and data applications.

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