



McConnell Dowell

Construction Company has Uninterrupted and Stable Connectivity with Cradlepoint Wireless Network Solution

Summary

Construction and engineering company McConnell Dowell won a contract to re-gauge 1000km of rail in Maryborough and western Victoria. As part of the project, the company has set up seven remote site offices along the stretch of the rail line. Each of these remote site offices require stable connectivity, so that its on-site designers and engineers are able to send large files and connect to the corporate cloud that runs on SharePoint Online. Following a proof of concept field test in Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, on a low-coverage site, McConnell Dowell selected Cradlepoint's solution for its stable and faster connectivity.

Company Profile

McConnell Dowell is a construction and engineering company that serves customers, including government, across Australia, New Zealand, Asia, and the Middle East.

SOLUTION:

AER2100 ROUTER,
RUGGEDISED IBR900 ROUTER
& EXTENSIBILITY DOCK

APPLICATION:

EDGE/BRANCH ROUTING,
PRIMARY NETWORK,
CLOUD MANAGEMENT

MARKET:

CONSTRUCTION
BRANCH

Business Needs

Key requirements included the ability to rapidly and reliably set up offices in remote locations, without reliance on traditional terrestrial-based links such as DSL or Fibre, and with minimal IT intervention. Dual-modem capability allowing users to access both internal and cloud-based resources, concurrently supporting private corporate APN and Internet access, was also key to McDonnell Dowell's device selection requirements.

Solution

McConnell Dowell opted to deploy Cradlepoint's AER2100, IBR900 routers with the extensibility dock, which allows for a second modem, and for secure, enterprise-grade networking across its remote site offices. McConnell Dowell also took advantage of Cradlepoint's NetCloud Manager to rapidly deploy and manage networks at its geographically distributed sites.

BENEFITS

STABILITY

During a separate 30-day pilot at the company's Tennant Creek site in the Northern Territory, where up to 1.5TB of data was exchanged over three devices, McConnell Dowell successfully recorded 99.9 percent 4GX WAN uptime.

"Achieving stable connectivity for the project office, which was managing 500km of gas piping from Tennant Creek in Northern Territory to Mt Isa in Queensland, was our number one goal. The success of this pilot deployment demonstrated to us that our remote site offices can now efficiently access corporate and cloud resources," Ball said.

The advantages of having carrier-agnostic devices means McConnell Dowell can now support carrier failover and maintain connectivity – which has been used on more than one occasion.

RUGGEDISATION

Given that McConnell Dowell operates in the construction market, it requires devices to be rugged and have a small footprint so they can be installed in difficult to access locations that were not previously possible with traditional communications devices.

"We tried many mobile 4G routers from the traditional enterprise providers right down to consumer kit, but because of where our remote site offices are located, those solutions just were not giving us the connectivity, durability and speed we needed."

*– Quinn Ball, McConnell Dowell
Group IT Infrastructure Manager*

EASY REMOTE MANAGEMENT & RAPID DEPLOYMENT

It's typical for McConnell Dowell's IT team to receive short notice before they need to deploy a new office and new network at a new site, and the process the team previously went through to do that was not ideal. It often required all of the hardware to be shipped back from its previous location to headquarters in Hawthorn, Victoria, to be reconfigured.

McConnell Dowell first learned about the possibilities of a rapid deployment during its Tennant Creek pilot. Traditional communications devices would have taken up to 12 weeks to procure. With Cradlepoint, the organisation was able to plug in the routers and have the network up and running within hours, with minimal IT intervention. Cradlepoint's NetCloud Manager also meant the units could stay on-site and be reconfigured remotely, and simply move with the site or from project to project.

NetCloud Manager also allows the company to review information about the router or connectivity remotely through a single dashboard. This is critical given the locations that McConnell Dowell operates in.

"Cradlepoint solved our need for a robust device. We had trialled many other devices that were either not feature rich or rugged enough."

— Quinn Ball, McConnell Dowell Group IT Infrastructure Manager

"This is typically useful especially because McConnell Dowell services customers globally, and it enables us to remotely switch to a second carrier and restore any interrupted services," Ball said.

EFFICIENT DATA MANAGEMENT

By leveraging Cradlepoint's SD-WAN and installing two 4G links into the modems at the Maryborough site, Ball said it allowed the company to assign different types of traffic to go over the different 4G links. This meant that McConnell Dowell had the elasticity to direct the traffic into the cloud instead of routing all traffic from the edge of the network back to the data centre.

At the same time, while McConnell Dowell does not often load balance on all of its sites, the organisation has been able to take advantage of Cradlepoint's dual-SIM modem capabilities to deploy multiple SIMs – a corporate WAN and Internet. According to Ball, this has been previously impossible on other devices.

FUTURE-PROOF

McConnell Dowell now has the flexibility to connect to Cradlepoint's Zscaler Internet Security integration, which is currently used by the company to secure its devices. Cradlepoint is also McConnell Dowell's solution of choice for upcoming projects throughout the region, including key growth markets, China and Middle East.

Learn more at [cradlepoint.com](https://www.cradlepoint.com).