



Software company's services prove popular in Canadian mining industry

By: Tracy Hancock
Published: 22nd July 2011

Canadian maintenance management software company Cogep has experienced a record number of sales in the past year, and has concluded ten contracts in the Canadian mining sector for the implementation of Guide Ti, its maintenance and procurement management software solution.

Signing gold exploration and development company Detour Gold, which owns the fourth-largest gold deposit in North America; Hammond Reef, development-stage gold mining company Osisko's mining project in Thunder Bay, Ontario; and gold miner Richmond Mines, with its Francoeur, Beaufor and Camflo mines, has enabled Cogep to pursue its growth strategy in the gold mining sector.

In fact, 53% of mining industry investments in Quebec are in gold mines, with Cogep's most recent large contract being Osisko's openpit gold mine at Malartic.

From Canada to West Africa

Further, the company has added mining and exploration company Canadian Royalties' Quebec-based Nunavik nickel mine, the British Columbia-based Quinsam thermal coal mine and two new gold mines in West Africa, owned by Canadian mining company Semafo, to its portfolio of clients.

"No other Canadian maintenance management software company has as many clients as we have," states Cogep president and CEO **Michel Fournier**.

The company believes its success has also provided it with credibility in many sectors. "Our clients are our best ambassadors. We have an extremely high customer satisfaction rate that is the direct result of increases in productivity observed wherever Guide Ti is used," he says.

New Opportunities

Most large mining companies use management software, such as SAP, JD Edwards and Oracle. These solutions offer maintenance modules, but none of them are as powerful or as flexible as software designed for that specific purpose, says Cogep.

Seizing the opportunity, the company designed Guide Ti to integrate completely and easily into systems already in place.

"There are opportunities now to increase our market share with regard to large mining corporations around the world," states Fournier.

Promising Sector for Investing

The mining sector is a particularly active one in Canada. Given the current metal prices, the economic conditions are optimal for investments in the mining sector.

This is the case particularly in Quebec where the Institut de la statistique du Québec announced in March this year that investments might reach a new high in 2011.

Total investments could amount to \$2.9-billion, an increase of 17% over the US\$2.5-billion invested in 2010, which, in turn, amounted to a 22% increase over 2009.

High Stakes

In spite of the current enthusiasm for natural resources, the mining industry faces a number of operational challenges resulting from the remoteness of sites, Cogep notes.

"Though the industry employs more than 35 000 workers in Quebec, the scarcity of skilled workers represents a significant challenge too. "With a software solution such as Guide Ti, which compiles a historical record of machinery maintenance, knowledge transfer is greatly improved," says the company. Further, it highlights that efficient exploitation of a mine always involves extracting more products with less equipment and doing this rapidly. Faster delivery times and lower transportation costs, with regard to parts

procurement and inventory, are central to the efficiency and profitability of a mine.

Production stoppages lead to higher mineral extraction costs; however, by relying on superior preventive maintenance management, procurement process management and parts inventory management, Canadian mines ensure that they remain competitive," concludes Cogep.

Copyright Creamer Media (Pty) Ltd. All rights reserved.

Tel: +27(0)11 622 3744 | Fax +27(0)11 622 9350 |
newsdesk@miningweekly.com
<http://www.miningweekly.com>