



M2M PUTS FARMERS IN CONTROL

THE PROBLEM

Gilgai Farms is a producer of quality grass-fed beef and sheep meats, located 35 kilometres east of Dubbo in Central Western NSW. Comprising seven adjoining properties with nearly 6000 head of stock on 2700 hectares, the business has 44km of pipeline linking 100 watering points.

The vital work of driving around to monitor and manage water resources was taking up to two hours a day, adding to an already hectic work schedule for the father and son farmers, Eric and Luke Harvey. They wanted a way to have less stress in their life and use the time required to measure water to build the business or spend it with their family.

THE SOLUTION

Gilgai Farms took on Observant® as a service and technology partner. Observant recommended a machine-to-machine solution (M2M) which incorporated its cloud-based Observant Global™ service and Telstra's Wireless M2M Control Centre.

Observant placed monitoring units at Gilgai to capture water usage and remote cameras to capture images of their stock movement. The images and data are then transferred to Observant Global's management application over the Telstra Next G Network® through the Wireless M2M Control Centre, which the Harvey's can then access online 24/7 via a web browser on their iPad, smartphone or PC.

The Observant Global platform and Telstra M2M Control Centre also sends alerts via the Next G® network to the Harvey's via SMS and email if trough water level falls below predetermined levels.

The Telstra Wireless Control Centre also allows Observant to order, provision and activate services remotely, oversee operation of the SIM (housed within the monitoring unit), undertake diagnosis in the event of any connectivity failure and simplify reporting.

THE RESULTS

Gilgai Farms immediately saved 14 hours a week on daily 30km water runs, allowing management to focus on other important areas of the business.

These dramatic reductions in travel have saved Gilgai Farms thousands of dollars in fuel and labour. Earlier detection of water leaks or damage is also now possible with the Observant Global solution.

The data collected is also being used in business planning; less time spent in the field means the \$19,000 investment Gilgai Farms made in remote monitoring and management paid for itself in 10 months.

The farm operators have peace of mind and more time to spend on growing the business and are enjoying better work-life balance.

IT'S HOW
WE CONNECT





AUTOMATED AND REMOTE 'MAGIC' PROVIDES RELIABLE AND AFFORDABLE SOLUTION

Raising the best grass-fed beef and sheep is all about taking stress out of their environment. Gilgai Farms has sustainability at the heart of its operation so delivering quality, tasty and nutrient dense meat direct to the consumer is a point of pride.

Reducing the hassle in managing the operations of a large farming spread can be a bigger challenge. Eric and Luke Harvey are the father-and-son operators of award-winning Gilgai Farms, a producer of quality grass-fed beef and sheep meats, located 35 kilometres east of Dubbo in Central Western NSW.

Managing Director Eric Harvey said: "We believe that our produce has more taste, better texture and is more tender because our livestock are stress-free," Gilgai Farms spans 2700 hectares over seven adjoining properties. Its 100 watering points support almost 6000 head of stock and are linked by 44km of pipes.

Ensuring stock are adequately watered is mandatory, but Eric and Operations Manager Luke were spending up to two hours a day monitoring and managing water levels in the troughs and rainfall in different catchments.

It was a 30km round trip just to fill troughs nightly and the Harveys wished their travel time could be used more productively.

"Our Board of Directors identified Observant as the technology partner with a machine-to-machine (M2M) solution to make our water monitoring and management more efficient," Eric said.

Observant recommended its Observant Global™ service to reduce the manual effort required to monitor and control watering points and the pipeline. The Observant Global service was supported by the Telstra Wireless M2M Control Centre.

The undulating local topography means any remote monitoring system needs great network connectivity.

Telstra's world class Next G® network links the Observant Global service units back to their operations.

Having 24/7 visibility of their SIM connections through the Telstra Wireless M2M Control Centre means Observant

can quickly identify network or connectivity issues. Their solution also gathers data about water management and efficiency, enabling Eric and Luke to plan ahead.

If a trough water level falls below predetermined levels, data is sent via Next G to Observant Global's cloud-based management platform. Observant in turns sends an alert to the property managers via email or SMS. Remote cameras send regularly updated images of stock to Observant Global so the managers can monitor their movements online via a web browser on their iPad, smartphone or PC.

It's this automated and remote 'magic' that Observant relies on to provide a solution that is reliable and affordable to its customers.

The Harveys save up to 14 hours a week on visits to watering sites. That time is being put back into the business so Eric and Luke can focus on the health of their land and livestock, diversify into new produce and be with their family.

Allowing for wages, fuel costs and wear and tear, the payback on Gilgai Farms' \$19,000 hardware investment was just 10 months. The system's operating costs come on one convenient bill.

"I now have the time to progress the business in new ways without working 18-20 hour days," says Eric. "It's not just

about cost savings - we have great peace of mind knowing M2M Control Centre, Next G and Observant Global will keep us on top of our business."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR
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