

PRESS



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Schenck Process delivers modern-day intelligence to mining

With market activity in mining on the rise, Schenck Process is evolving as a company to meet the needs of mining companies in Australia and internationally

Equipment manufacturer Schenck Process is focused on making its assets smarter to support the strategies of mining companies. Schenck Process, like most suppliers, has experienced a lift in activity from the mining industry in recent months following the improvement in commodity prices in late 2016. The materials handling specialist has also observed a change in approach from mining companies, which are increasing investment in both brownfields operations and new projects, while remaining focused on optimising productivity.

Schenck Process general manager Raja Ratnam said the “significant ramp up” in activity had been in both the Australian and international marketplace for the company. He said a common demand emerging from mining companies was for Schenck Process to help them identify ways they could lift productivity even further at their sites. “What we are seeing is miners wanting to generate more out of their assets. What that means for us is we need to identify what equipment we can uprate,” Ratnam told Australian Mining.

“Uprating increases the capacity of the machine for the same footprint, which is a major advantage on a brownfields operation.”

Another area where miners need improvement is maintenance, and in particular, lowering the frequency required on Schenck Process’ equipment, Ratnam added. This then increases production uptime availability. “There is more and more focus placed on reliability, being able to extend the intervals between maintenance and reduce the duration of each maintenance shut,” he explained.

This environment has provided Schenck Process with an opportunity to enhance its equipment portfolio, while also expanding the commercial and after-market services it offers these companies. Ratnam said this involved Schenck Process exploring ways it could “smarten up” to boost the performance of its assets.

“One of the areas we are looking at is how do we smarten up our assets so they become intelligent assets, which means applying artificial intelligence,” Ratnam explained.



The **vibe2know** app



Schenck Process is responding to improving mining market conditions

“We started by adding some rudimentary condition monitoring equipment, but now we are able to communicate cloud based for data collection. Mining companies are de-manning their equipment, so they don’t have all the knowledge on site like they used to. What they need in place is intellect that tells key personnel what is taking place on site and what needs to happen next.”

Schenck Process is adding this intelligence to its equipment through their future lab innovation division set up to expand traditional research and development further. Their latest innovative smart technology is the vibe2know app created to simply measure the performance of any vibrating machines through motion patterns to obtain data around the vibration amplitude, oscillating angle and operating speed. This technology provides meaningful data to the end user.

“The open platform will allow miners to import the data on to a common platform and put whatever smarts they want on it,” Ratnam said.

The next step for Schenck Process will be to add sophistication to the commercial options it has, and can offer, mining companies. “What we are finding now is that you have to provide more innovative commercial models for the miners,” Ratnam said. “So we are considering the options to package equipment with strategic partners, where we can provide several products in one agreement.

“We are also building our after-market service, which has become significant for us globally. We see this whole of asset life approach, essential for our customers. We are there for the long haul,” Ratnam reaffirmed.

Schenck Process is confident these developments will help extend the presence of its solutions around the world. With the company maintaining a strong footprint in the iron ore and gold industries, Schenck Process views the East Coast coal sector, as an area that could potentially deliver more growth.

Schenck Process Australia is the centre of competence for vibrating equipment and train load out systems globally, facilitating the supply of major projects into Panama, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Ghana, India and China. Schenck Process perceives this trend growing.



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