

WebSphere software

Hill streamlines parts pipeline, sees big savings with help from IBM



Overview

■ **The Challenge**

Hill Air Force Base needed to reduce delays in its repair parts pipeline by improving base communications

■ **The Solution**

IBM WebSphere® Everyplace Connection Manager, IBM WebSphere Everyplace™ Access

■ **The Benefits**

Reduces average parts turn around time by one day—which could result in a \$15 million dollar savings in inventory; helps avoid grounding multi-million dollar weapon systems needed by the war fighters; improves e-mail communications for officers and executives

A pipeline goes wireless

Hill Air Force Base is one of three Air Force depots worldwide, which comprise the US Air Force Material Command. Located in Ogden, Utah, Hill Air Force Base is responsible for worldwide logistical support, repair and maintenance of military aircraft. The base services the F-16 Fighting Falcon, A-10 Thunderbolt and C-130 Hercules aircraft, and the Minuteman III and Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missiles.

In today's dynamic global environment, the Air Force must keep its weapon systems operating at peak efficiency. While some maintenance can be performed on-site at remote bases around the world, failed parts are shipped to Hill for repair and return. The two-way "pipeline" between Hill and its far-flung customers is a critical link in the repair cycle, especially when aircraft are grounded, awaiting parts. In 2003 this pipeline will be streamlined, with a new IBM WebSphere-based wireless platform to reduce costs, shrink parts inventory and improve customer response time.

"IBM helped us fill this void by looking at our process and helping us fill the gaps. IBM helped us better serve our mission without throwing out the old system and starting all over again."

*Myron Anderson
Information Technology &
Systems Division Chief
Hill Air Force Base*



Supporting the war fighters

Myron Anderson is the Information Technology and Systems Division Chief at Hill, whose responsibilities include supporting aircraft repair. One of the key support systems is the Automated Manifest Tracking System (AMTS), which tracks parts from depot storage to Air Force repair facilities. Until recently, AMTS required the Defense Logistics Agency to manually acknowledge parts delivery as they moved between the depot, warehouses and maintenance facilities.

Each parts transfer was scheduled on a printed manifest. According to Anderson, "Under our old system, high-priority items would often wait at a drop-off point for pickup. On the average, delays of 14 hours were taking place between the ready and pickup times."

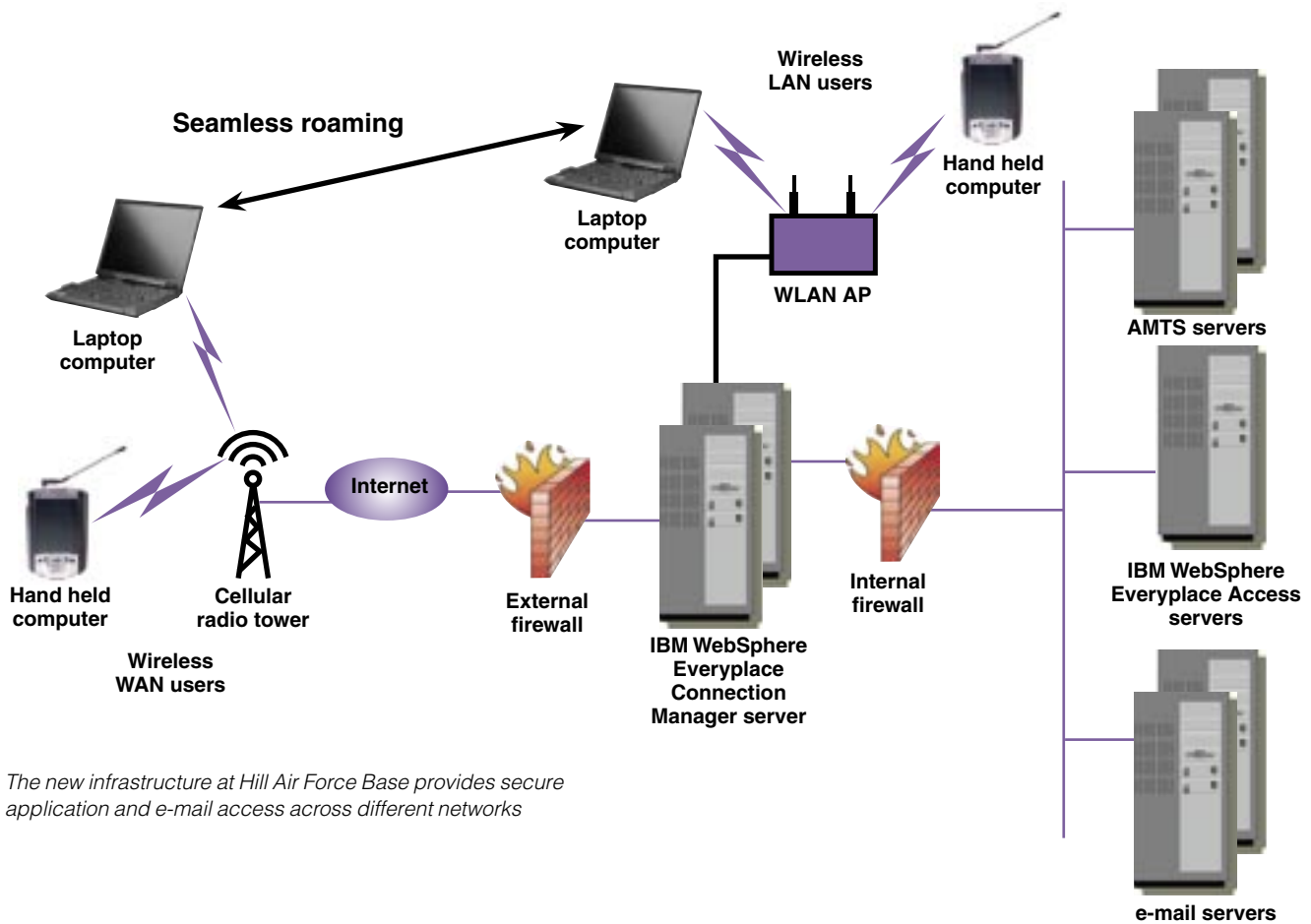
The new wireless AMTS system, based on IBM WebSphere Everyplace Connection Manager and IBM WebSphere Everyplace Access, is streamlining that. Under the new process, a driver will pass parts by the system without logging on. Verification is automatic and no data has to be manually entered. Best of all, the new system can immediately alert a driver when a critical repaired part is ready for pickup, reducing the

pipeline time. Using handheld and GPS devices in each truck, facility and drop-off point, the wireless AMTS knows where each truck on the base is located, allowing it to immediately alert the nearest driver to make an unscheduled pickup.

"Reducing our average parts turn-around time by one day could save us \$15 million dollars in inventory," estimates Anderson. "Not only are we becoming more responsive to our customers, we are saving big dollars for the Air Force and avoiding grounding multi-million dollar weapon systems needed by the war fighters."

Wireless added: Everyplace e-mail

Air Force officers and base executives around the country needed realtime access to priority e-mail messages, utilizing both existing and future technologies. So Anderson and his team sought a way to support a variety of wireless applications on a single, highly secure device platform. "With WebSphere Everyplace access, IBM also gave us the ability to run our AMTS application from wireless devices such as cell phones, PDAs, laptops or tablets, and in addition, gave our execs a secure personal



The new infrastructure at Hill Air Force Base provides secure application and e-mail access across different networks

system that handles e-mail, phone calls and PDA capabilities in a secure environment. That's what we needed around here, and that's what everyone is so excited about!"

"AMTS originally handled around 90 percent of our needs, but there was a missing void," says Anderson. "IBM helped us better serve our mission without throwing out the old system and starting all over again. That, to me, is how to operate in the new world we are living in."

Anderson continues, "When IBM put this new solution on the table, our technical network and firewall people along with our security people all liked it. We have a new process that is better than anything we have seen to date. With one infrastructure, we meet both the security and application needs of the Air Force."

For more information

For more information on IBM pervasive computing solutions, visit ibm.com/pvc or contact your local IBM representative.



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