

# JSS Value Stories

*Notes from the field.*



## ARGOS ROBERTA QUARRY SCOOPS UP PRODUCTION GAINS

Dave Bremer years ago learned the value of data while working at several highly-automated cement manufacturing plants. Once he became the Quarry Manager at the Argos Roberta quarry in Alabama, Bremer wanted an affordable data-based system that could accurately measure performance and identify site-specific inefficiencies. He got it with Caterpillar's Job Site Solutions' production optimization offering.

Argos Roberta mines limestone for three different companies. Production at the quarry was good, but Bremer knew the site could be more efficient. "We have an efficient operation here. We've got our own engineers. We've gone through a process of making the quarry more efficient over the last 7-8 years. . . I didn't know of anything real obvious that we could improve on, but there's always that opportunity to find something you didn't see," says Bremer. The Job Site Solutions' team did a thorough site-specific analysis, assessing every route in the quarry and the overall fleet design. Through this disciplined process, the team identified improvement opportunities in the operation.

Application experts within JSS develop high-performance plans for sites such as Argos Roberta by capturing critical data about the operation and collaborating with the customer and the local Cat dealer to implement solutions. After the initial site assessment, **Dan Kentner, Fleet Manager for JSS**, began working with the Argos team to implement a plan that would improve efficiency on specific routes. "The Argos team already had a good process in place for meeting production targets," according to Kentner. "But we knew by looking at data that we could maintain or even slightly increase their production while using fewer machine hours. **We continuously monitored the numbers, conducted regular site visits, and held weekly meetings to discuss data and action items.**"

Initial data indicated the trucks were **inconsistent in recording payload and in some cases the trucks may have been underloaded**. Technicians from Thompson Tractor, the local Cat dealer, serviced the trucks to ensure each truck was configured and setup correctly, while Dan and the Argos team reviewed best practices for loading. **"That's a major success story, just being confident in the numbers that we have on the scales," says Bremer.** Route analysis revealed where there were too many or too few trucks and where productive areas suddenly became less productive. After collecting the data, the JSS team established a baseline and Bremer started instituting changes. "We've done road work in a couple of areas to try to improve cycle times," says Bremer. "We've also made at least one change where we were running a three-truck route and we've started running two trucks now."



TRUCK PAYLOAD

5%

PRODUCTIVITY

>10%

359 HOURS  
SAVED  
OVER 6 MONTHS

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Bremer highlights the benefit of the weekly meetings at Argos Roberta, as well. These meetings introduce new production targets based on **industry best practices, expert application experience, and machine knowledge at Caterpillar**. All of this promotes continuous improvement at the customer site. "Getting information that's being sent to you every day at the end of every shift and being able to have someone like a Dan or similar that's concisely giving feedback that you'd never see or never hear is a huge benefit."

Bremer says the data also showcases the relationship between productivity and availability. "We're able to see the loss in productivity or the loss in opportunity because equipment wasn't available. That starts to put a dollar number to that. This is how much money it costs for that piece of equipment to be down. It's been a big value [to partner with Job Site Solutions]."

Kevin Moro, Thompson Tractor's Equipment Management Consultant, is also getting elite-level support from the JSS team that's helping to transform the dealer's relationship with customers. "Through production optimization, we've actually become ingrained in [Argos Roberta's] day-to-day business and their operations," says Moro. **"It gives us the unique capability to value sell. We can show where we've made efficiency gains, where we increased production or decreased man hours of the operation. We can target those and remind our customer 'this is why you buy Caterpillar.'"** Kentner agrees: "It's been a great collaboration between Caterpillar, Thompson Tractor, and Argos. The improvements we made wouldn't be possible without everyone's buy-in and involvement."

The total value of the JSS production optimization system is reflected in the numbers: During the first six months of targeting improvements at Argos Roberta, the truck payload average has increased 5% and overall productivity has increased more than 10%. The customer not only had this production improvement but also they benefited from the fleet utilizing 359 fewer machine hours, which is a direct impact to their bottom line. The site is now enhancing the partnership between JSS and Thompson Tractor by identifying additional opportunities for machine utilization, availability, and operator efficiencies. Dave Bremer believes the relationship with Job Site Solutions has only begun to pay dividends. **"It's really valuable. It's like having another engineer on staff," says Bremer. "We will be able to react smarter and faster to changes that are coming in the future with our operation, if it's cycles or haul distances or things like that. And we have real-time data now... and it's given to us on a silver platter."**

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SITE SPECIFIC ANALYSIS  
+  
RESOURCE DEDICATION FROM CATERPILLAR  
+  
MONITORING PRODUCTIVITY  
+  
FREQUENT MEETINGS  
=  
**WIN!**

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