



Industry: Manufacturing - Electrical Equipment

Revolutionizing Industrial Communication Across a 2.4 Million Square Foot Manufacturing Giant

“Walt Smart Radio is the next generation of push-to-talk. It’s not just push-to-talk—it’s smart push-to-talk. I put Walt Smart Radio above everybody else in the market.”



Mark Hammons
VP of IT, Howard Industries



Business Challenge

Howard Industries, America’s #1 producer of distribution transformers, faced critical communication challenges across their massive 2.4 million square foot manufacturing facility—approximately 40 acres under one roof. With 4,500 employees and dangerous machinery throughout the plant, the company struggled with:



Safety Risks in a Dangerous Environment:

Heavy machinery that could cause fatal injuries required absolute focus from workers, making distractions a serious safety concern.



Cumbersome Group Management:

Their previous system required manual updates when staff changed roles or departments, creating administrative overhead.



Physical Distance Challenges:

With a facility so large that walking from one end to the other takes 15 minutes, maintenance personnel faced significant delays responding to equipment issues.



Knowledge Loss:

High turnover in certain positions meant valuable knowledge about equipment operation and maintenance was frequently lost when experienced employees departed.



Limited Communication Capabilities:

Their previous Verizon push-to-talk flip phones had restricted functionality, and enabling texting created security concerns as employees could communicate outside the company.

Why They Chose Walt Smart Radio System

After Howard Industries' tech-savvy CEO discovered Walt Smart Radio, the IT department evaluated the platform and found it addressed their multiple communication challenges in one comprehensive solution.

The Walt Smart Radio system offered critical advantages over their previous solution:

- **Controlled Communication Environment:** Unlike their previous solution, Walt Smart Radio keeps all messaging within the company, eliminating external distractions that posed safety risks.
- **Visual Communication Capabilities:** The ability to share images and conduct video calls for remote troubleshooting eliminated countless hours previously spent walking across the enormous facility.
- **Safety-First Design:** Emergency features including the SOS button provided immediate security alerts for emergency situations.
- **Intelligent User Management:** The craft and flag system simplified group management by tying users to roles rather than devices.
- **Knowledge Preservation:** Message history retention created an accessible knowledge base for workers—especially valuable in environments with high turnover.

The Solution

Howard Industries implemented a one-to-one deployment of Walt Smart Radio, assigning devices to individual employees across all departments at their transformer facility.

Key Features Implemented:

- **Push-to-Talk & Push-to-Text:** Secure, contained communication preventing outside distractions
- **Visual Communication:** Photo and video capabilities for remote troubleshooting
- **SOS Button:** Immediate security alerts for emergency situations
- **Craft and Flag System:** Simplified group management tied to roles rather than devices
- **Message History Retention:** Preserved communication for knowledge management
- **Help Desk Channel:** Dedicated support communication during system outages



Department Coverage:

The Walt Smart Radio system was deployed across all departments at the transformer facility, including:

- **Production Teams**
- **Maintenance Personnel**
- **R&D and Electrical Teams**
- **Production Supervisors**
- **Transportation Staff**
- **Safety Personnel**
- **Security Teams**

The Results

Key Features Implemented:

By keeping communication contained within the company, the Walt Smart Radio system reduced dangerous distractions around heavy machinery while providing immediate emergency response capabilities through the SOS button.

Dramatic Time Savings

The visual communication capabilities eliminated countless hours previously spent walking across the enormous facility to inspect equipment issues.

Reduced Downtime

Maintenance teams can now respond promptly to issues through dedicated channels and visual troubleshooting, preserving production schedules and minimizing costly downtime.

Business Continuity During Crisis

When a cyber incident disabled Howard Industries' email system, Walt Smart Radio became their critical communication lifeline. The IT department established a help desk channel that continues to provide value.

Streamlined Communication Management

The person-centered approach to communication management significantly reduced administrative overhead when managing groups and users.

Improved Knowledge Sharing

The system enhanced knowledge transfer, particularly valuable in positions with high turnover rates.

Key Use Cases

- Internal communication across a massive 2.4 million square foot facility
- Maintenance troubleshooting via image sharing and video calls
- Emergency response through the SOS button feature
- IT help desk support for employees on the production floor
- Critical communication during network outages
- Controlled messaging for enhanced safety in dangerous environments
- Visual problem-solving without requiring long walks
- Knowledge retention through preserved message history

Future Plans

Howard Industries is gradually expanding their use of Walt Smart Radio's capabilities:

Immediate Horizon

- Deploying the system at a new manufacturing facility in Mexico with Spanish-English translation capabilities
- Implementing geofencing for better device tracking
- Testing the forms feature for maintenance work

Ready to transform communication at your facility? Contact the weavix team today to learn how Walt can enhance your operations. **Don't miss out, let's talk** hello@weavix.com