



■ Borinken Marine Group's tugs and barges



Learn more about how a Caribbean-based maritime business uses NeptuLink to maintain communications and operations with their fleet and provide added benefits for their crew.



NeptuLink has given us exactly what we need: It provides a secure, reliable and easy to use Internet connection on all our tugboats. It's the perfect solution for our short-range communications.

Victor Iglesias
BMG IT Manager



The Borinken Marine Group (BMG), a family-owned and operated tug and barge service provider in Puerto Rico was founded by Captain Ruben E. Iglesias and Captain Carlos X. Acosta in 2006. Knowing first hand of the importance of communications in the maritime industry, the company hired Victor F. Iglesias in 2010 to start, develop and manage the IT Department. Victor, with an extensive background in telecommunications, has been installing and testing different communication equipment to find the best and most cost-effective technology for the BMG fleet.

Since operations and fleet communication are two main areas dependent on a reliable Wi-Fi connection for BMG, they had tried a few marine internet solutions before discovering NeptuLink. These included using cellphones which were very expensive and not secure in addition to using another marine Wi-Fi provider that charged service fees. Both solutions were not sustainable or cost-effective.

During the past twelve years, BMG's fleet has grown from one to seven tugboats and two barges. The primary line of business for BMG is the docking and undocking of ships in the U.S. Virgin Islands. BMG is also active in salvage support, especially "rescue tows," in addition to participating in delivering aid for those affected by hurricanes in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.



Challenge:

Equip all tugs with high-speed Wi-Fi that is cost-effective and reliable, which would cover coastal work areas even in weak cellular coverage.

The Solution

After Charlie Iglesias, a BMG Engineering Manager, met the MVG team and learned about NeptuLink at the 2016 National Marine Electronics Association Show (NMEA), a leading nautical electronics tradeshow, the decision was discussed among BMG's senior management to consider switching to NeptuLink to have a more reliable and cost-effective Wi-Fi solution for their tugs.

Victor explained, "We started with one boat to test it and thought this might work for us." Following the successful test, BMG purchased five additional NeptuLink Systems in 2017. Reliable Wi-Fi connectivity on every tug is critical from an operations standpoint since BMG depends on Helm Connect, a cloud-based fleet management software, to manage and access remotely compliance certifications, maintenance records and inventory. With NeptuLink, Helm Connect is used consistently to successfully manage the BMG fleet activities. Additionally, being able to login with a password and monitor the usage history is also important to BMG and something that was not possible with previous marine Wi-Fi solutions.

"Secure. Reliable. Simple to use," Victor says about his experience with NeptuLink.

With NeptuLink BMG also provides added benefits to its employees.

"We were looking for a solution that the tugs could use in all our areas of operation that did not have a 'service fee' or a 'hidden cost' attached to it. NeptuLink was the only service we found that gave us that option".

"Employees are the biggest asset that we have and must be treated as such, because they will make the difference between providing just a good service or the excellent service that BMG wants to be known for," as quoted in the BMG Mission Statement.

On a BMG tugboat assigned to shipwork or nearby offshore work, there is usually a team of four. A former merchant mariner himself, Victor understands firsthand that the job can be strenuous and, at times, dangerous. Off-watch and relaxation periods are important to crew members. Thanks to NeptuLink, the crew members have access to streaming TV, movies and can also use the Wi-Fi on their cellphones to stay connected to loved ones while they are away.

When Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico in September 2017 and caused mass destruction and the longest, major U.S. power outage in history, BMG temporarily relocated their headquarters from Cayey, to Pier 15 in San Juan. *"We only had limited communications via mobile telephones for a while. NeptuLink cellular connectivity was a significant factor in our ability to communicate with the tugs,"* Victor said.

The Atlanta-based MVG team responded quickly to the needs of BMG and sent two new NeptuLink systems within days to help BMG restore Wi-Fi access. As a result, BMG did not lose business after Hurricane Maria and took on an emergency tow job with its tug Storm, expertly led by Captain Palma to assist drill ships to safety.

Next Steps

"The tug Helen, which is BMG's latest addition, was acquired in October 2018 and a NeptuLink was installed before it arrived in Puerto Rico. Since we have been satisfied with NeptuLink's performance, we decided to install it on all our new tugs in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands," Victor said.



KEY BENEFITS THAT NEPTULINK HAS PROVIDED:

- No Hidden Charges or Fees
- Coverage Throughout the Caribbean
- SIM Card Capabilities
- Log of all Usage
- Reliable Wi-Fi Connection to use Helm Connect
- Dedicated and Professional Customer Service Even During Natural Disasters



NeptuLink - Stay connected 4G at sea

NeptuLink by MVG satisfies the communication needs of maritime travelers by delivering continuous high-speed Internet connectivity (100 Mbps) up to 20 nautical miles offshore.



Contact your local sales representative for more information



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