BlueScope Steel use Panasonic DLP projectors for critical process control

BlueScope Steel has installed seven Panasonic DLP (digital light processing) projectors at its Port Kembla Steelworks, as large viewing screens for critical process control of manufacturing operations.

Three Panasonic PT-D5600E and four PT-D5500E XGA projectors are installed in control rooms for the BlueScope Steel Slabyards, Coke Ovens, Process Control Centre (PCC) and Blast Furnaces, and run video footage and graphical displays of the process lines from over 100 cameras. Operators monitor the footage and control the steel-making process via PCs next to the projectors.

BlueScope Steel is one of Australia and New Zealand's leading steel companies. The Port Kembla operation is an integrated steelworks where all three of the major phases of production (ironmaking, steelmaking and shaping) are undertaken on one site, making it Australia's biggest steelworks and capable of producing more than five million tones of steel per year.

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Panasonic projectors for critical process control

Such a large scale operation requires constant process control and Panasonic's reliable and high performance DLP projectors form part of that operation. "With the Port Kembla Steelworks in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week, we needed a high performance, reliable solution that could withstand continuous operation," said Chris Reid, Senior Automation Engineer, BlueScope Steel.

"Panasonic's projectors also delivered the most cost-effective large-screen solution for the high level of detail displayed, where the image is fairly static. We chose Panasonic because we knew their projectors would provide the longevity required," continued Reid.

The projectors are equipped for performance and reliability – with a high-contrast, one-chip DLP, a dual lamp system and Panasonic's completely sealed, dust-proof, liquid-cooled optics. The company's optical technologies ensure a contrast ratio of 2000:1 and high uniformity in colour and brightness.

"Whilst one lamp is more than sufficient in our operating environment, Panasonic's dual-lamp technology means that both lamps can be selected to operate simultaneously, or one lamp can be on with the other lamp as back-up," said Reid.

'Hands-off' maintenance for reduced operating costs

The maintenance officer can be instantly alerted to any potential problems, with temperature sensors that monitor the exhaust, air intake and DLP chip. The projector body is also equipped with temperature alarm and burnt lamp LEDs. The lamp and dust filter is easy to replace, making maintenance simple.

Connected to a wired LAN, the projectors are operated remotely and their status is checked using a web browser on a networked PC. This enables the projector to send e-mails to notify maintenance officers when a unit's operating condition changes or a lamp needs replacing. The wired LAN connection helps reduce support costs and minimises downtime.

"Thanks to the web-based interface, the projectors can be operated from one central remote location, rather than having to physically push buttons on the unit to operate," said Reid. "This streamlines maintenance operations, making the projectors time and labour-efficient."

For added convenience, the projectors are also supplied with multi-function wireless remote controls with mouse control.

The PT-D5600E has a high-brightness of 5000 lumens and an XGA (1024 x 768) resolution, so it can operate equally well in both light and dark rooms.

"The Slabyard control room is very bright, whereas the PCC room is dark and we don't notice any difference in screen brightness between the two," said Reid. "The ambient lighting conditions don't affect the brightness of the projectors."

For more information on Panasonic projectors visit, panasonic.com.au

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