

# TANDBERG CUSTOMER PROFILE

**BHP Billiton,  
Melbourne, Australia**



*Using TANDBERG systems, BHP Billiton's board controls a global resources empire*

- **GOAL: Improved collaboration and efficiency within a recently merged commodities powerhouse**
- **SOLUTION: TANDBERG 8000, 6000, 1000 and 880 video communication systems spread around the world**
- **RESULT: A stronger decentralized management structure, better operational coordination, less time lost in travel**

**"We're running 10 or 12 videoconferences a day here in Melbourne alone, and usage is on the way up."**

**CHRIS YOUNG  
BHP BILLITON**

## **USING VIDEO TO MOVE THE EARTH**

Many companies fancy themselves global operators. But few have a closer relationship with the earth itself than BHP Billiton, a mining and resources giant with 35,000 employees and operations in 100 locations around the world.

Aluminum, coal, copper, iron-ore, titanium, oil, diamonds – BHP Billiton's business is to extract from the earth what civilization needs to keep developing. The company owes its current size to a mega-merger in 2001 between Australian BHP and English Billiton. Knitting the organizations together was a major challenge. But when the merged company opened its sparkling new headquarters in Melbourne, Australia, in late 2003, BHP Billiton was a single, hearty organism. The success of the merger was in many ways a triumph of communications – and visual communications in particular.

"Videoconferencing was part of our work habit before the building opened, but we've dramatically increased the number of units," says Chris Young, the technology project manager for BHP Billiton's landmark new 28-story headquarters. "We have installed 28 VC units, including just about every model TANDBERG sells. They are a key element in our global strategy to improve collaboration throughout the company."

## **80 VIDEO SITES, 20 COUNTRIES**

Eighty BHP Billiton sites in some 20 countries are equipped with visual communication systems, and there is no hesitation about using them. Many executives have TANDBERG 1000's in their offices, and some have installed them in their homes, the better to direct operations that span all the world's time zones.

At the operational level, a typical videoconference might involve managers and mechanics at two BHP Billiton mines – one in Australia, the other in South Africa. At issue might be the breakdown of a specialized hydraulic device at one of the sites.

"Since the other site would be using equivalent equipment, they can exchange information on how to fix it or do a work-around to get back into production quickly," says Mr. Young. "We are very production-focused. Downtime costs millions of dollars, so resolving any operational issue is critical."

BHP Billiton's petroleum division is filled with avid videoconferencing users. Geophysicists in Perth and Houston meet often to discuss oil exploration and production

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data from Australia, the Gulf of Mexico, West Africa or South America. They see one another as they talk but often spend most of the time viewing detailed seismic data and 3-D reservoir models on the second screen in the room.

## "SIMPLE AND INTUITIVE"

The company has invested substantial sums in designing conference rooms to make videoconferencing as natural as possible. Lighting and acoustics are optimized, and cameras are positioned to transmit life-size images of meeting participants. BHP Billiton tends to run videoconferences at high bandwidth, especially in the executive suite, with peripherals ranging from PCs, VCRs and document cameras. IP is the favored environment, and most functions are controlled by AMX touch panels.

"Our intention with the touch panels was to provide plain-English controls in addition to the hand remote," says Bryan Adams, the company's audio visual consultant. "TANDBERG's infrastructure allowed us to seamlessly integrate front-end acoustic cancellation units and a multitude of other devices. There are other brands out there, but it's hard to integrate them into a control system that's so simple and intuitive to use."

The new BHP Billiton Board Room features a horseshoe-shaped table for up to 24 people and a TANDBERG 6000 with multiple zoom cameras.

"Some of the overseas directors now participate by VC instead of flying to Melbourne or wherever we plan to hold the board meeting," says Mr. Young. "The role of boards everywhere has come under a lot of scrutiny recently, and VC makes it easier for them to live up to the new expectations."



*A BHP Billiton oil platform design*

## ENCRYPTION A PRIORITY

One reason BHP Billiton had shied away from widespread videoconferencing in the past was a concern about security. That concern evaporated with TANDBERG's introduction of high-level embedded encryption for ISDN, IP and mixed IP/ISDN conferences.

"The board is security-conscious about its international connections, and security is also critical in the petroleum group," says Mr. Young. "When they analyze the test results for potential new oil acreage, there is a point in the process when land suddenly goes from being worthless to being worth millions of dollars. We have to ensure security in those discussions."

BHP Billiton's diversity is one of its strengths. When oil revenue is down, revenue from other commodities is likely to be up. But to get the most out of its complex relationship with the earth, all arms of the company must work together. That requires vision – and, more than ever, videoconferencing.

## ABOUT TANDBERG

TANDBERG is a leading global provider of visual communication products and services. The Company has dual headquarters in New York and Norway. TANDBERG designs, develops and markets systems and software for video, voice and data. The Company provides sales, support and value-added services in more than 90 countries worldwide. TANDBERG trades publicly on the Oslo Stock Exchange under the ticker TAA.OL. Please visit [www.tandberg.net](http://www.tandberg.net) for more information.

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