

Hitachi CP-WU8461 Helps Utilities Company Give Back to Its Community

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Product Case Study

Benton Public Utilities, Kennewick, WA

Benton Public Utilities believes that, as a non-profit city utility company, it should give back to its community as much as possible. With that in mind, IT Support Specialist III Lowell Fuher set out to find the best projector for the auditorium the company shares with the community. With the help of Ed Goldman from Projector Team (www.projectorteam.com) and a few others, Fuher decided on Hitachi's CP-WU8461 for its brightness, ease of use and installation possibilities.

Benton Public Utilities District (Benton PUD) is an electrical utility company serving the cities of Kennewick, Benton City and parts of Prosser Washington. As a non-profit publically owned company, Benton PUD opens its doors to the public as often as it can. It has a small sports facility with basketball and volleyball courts the public can use anytime. The team at Benton PUD provides free electrical training at the schools and hosts an extensive training course on electrical safety for the five fire departments around town at no cost. The 200-seat auditorium is open to the public as well and is often used by local clubs. As an organization that works for zero revenue, Benton PUD provides these services cost-free.

There were a few challenges Fuher faced when shopping for the right projector. The first was the installation options for the auditorium. Benton PUD has projectors with permanent installations in all of its meeting rooms throughout the facility, but, in the auditorium, the projector was continuously set up and taken down as needed. The new projector was intended for permanent installation. Because of the many different types of activities that take place in the auditorium, the versatility of Hitachi projectors was a real selling point. Hitachi projectors could be used for any activity taking place in the auditorium without requiring manual adjustment.

The auditorium of the Benton PUD Kennewick office is large, and it's both difficult and unsafe to completely dim the lights in the room while using the projector. "We found ourselves watching the general manager's PowerPoint presentation in a partially dimmed room," says Fuher. "That's when I knew I was on a mission to find a projector that could be used in any occasion while keeping the room safely illuminated."

Because Benton PUD employees do their best to save as much money for the city as possible, Fuher was conscious about the price of the projector as well. Through his research, he recognized that he needed to find a balance between price and performance. "One of our new co-workers came from an industry working on display equipment so I asked his opinion on Hitachi projectors," says Fuher. "He said most projectors always have some sort of glitch with their menus or setups, but with Hitachi, they just always work, and they stay working. I was sold."

The installation was carefully prepared and orchestrated to ensure a one-time setup with a lift bringing in both the projector and cables. Benton PUD contacted Hitachi to verify the mounting and a Hitachi engineer quickly answered all of the questions. The setup was complete in one day and once Fuher saw the reaction from his team he knew the extra time in preparation was well worth the wait.

Since buying the projector Fuher has had no regrets about his decision to go with Hitachi. "We were worried about vibrations from the air conditioning units that are mounted on the same framework, but the special mount we used eliminated any movement," says Fuher. "I was thinking to myself, this projector is permanently flown 18 feet in the air and we get to keep the lights on during meetings and talks? I'm really excited about this project because it's really the crowning glory to the auditorium and it reflects the pride we have in the work we do for our community."

Product and Sales Info

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