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with



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A remote-cum-local multi-point level measurement and monitoring system supplied by Hycontrol is playing a crucial role at Bendicks of Mayfair's factory in Winnall near Winchester. The system, fitted to stainless steel chocolate tanks, has been designed to meet Bendicks' requirements for local contents displays in the area where the tanks are filled, together with the capability to view contents and usage trend information remotely throughout the plant.



Bendicks of Mayfair have been making luxury chocolates for over 75 years and likes to describe its confections as "the chocolates with a touch more thought." Accurate monitoring of the contents of the tanks is vitally important to ensure uninterrupted production, but awkward operational factors, which could potentially affect accuracy, include changing temperatures within the vessels and the presence of slow moving stirrers.

Each of the nine tanks has been fitted with Hycontrol's versatile Microflex CER self-contained ultrasonic transmitters. These high accuracy, two wire loop powered instruments can be easily configured to display distance, percentage level, weight and volume. Unlike conventional loop powered ultrasonic transmitters, the Microflex can react rapidly to level changes. The unit has a measuring range up to 11 metres and an accuracy of 0.25% of measured distance. The integral 2" BSP process connection facilitates installation into standard process connections commonly present on the top of tanks.

The Microflex's advanced echo processing software ensures that spurious signals from the vessels' stirrers are ignored and the instrument tracks the true level of chocolate to the bottom of the tanks. In parallel, the integral temperature compensated ultrasonic transducer makes sure that changes in temperature of the heated chocolate within the vessel do not adversely affect measuring accuracy.



Panel mount HYC3420 digital displays, which show each tank's contents in kg, are installed adjacent to the filling points, enabling delivery drivers to view the tank contents as they are being filled. Outputs from these units are then transmitted to the engineering offices via two of Hycontrol's innovative Webflex units

connected to Bendicks' local area network (LAN). If required data can also be accessed by any department within the factory from accounts and purchasing through to production and maintenance.



The Webflex system provides a number of key operational benefits and, because it runs on standard Internet Explorer, does not require any specialist software or expensive licenses. Each Webflex unit can take up to six 4-20 mA analogue inputs and six digital inputs. For Bendicks

this offers excellent future proof flexibility, making it very straightforward to fit additional tanks when required. Additional remote Ethernet access options are available.

The innovative system provides alarms and reports sent via email in html or Excel compatible formats. The alert and report formats are completely user-configurable and can be scheduled hourly, daily, weekly or monthly. In addition to this the Webflex acts as a powerful data logger, recording up to one month's data at two minute intervals. The online trending feature allows rapid data analysis, providing management with an historic record of raw material usage. This allows them to track seasonal peaks and troughs, delivery patterns and the effects of shutdown periods to facilitate forward order planning optimisation. The system can also be configured to provide secure remote access for Bendicks' chocolate suppliers providing valuable data to optimise their own production and delivery schedules.

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