

## Partnering your way to improved **PRODUCTIVITY**

Minimising the unit cost of production has always been a key issue for plant managers. Today, it's more important than ever. It's also harder than ever. Energy efficiency is just one element of the equation – others such as inventory reduction and preventative maintenance can also play a major role. Here, we look briefly at how the right choice of support partner can help you make significant savings.

***“A specialist partner can help you implement the very latest innovations, such as steam traps which have no moving parts – and therefore require no maintenance”***

**David Bolwell**, Business Development Director – Valves & Instrumentation – ERIKS UK

Within the typical plant, there will be a number of ways to reduce production costs. Each significant in themselves, they are likely to add up to a very large amount. The trick, of course, is to locate these areas and remedy any identified problems – all with minimum investment. One way of doing this is to work with a specialist partner with the capability to provide input across every aspect of your operation.

Take energy consumption, for example. Few would deny that, in recent years, this has become one of the most important areas of concern for organisations in all sectors of industry. It is particularly true in the process

sector. In fact, many plants run at much less than optimum levels of energy efficiency, therefore wasting considerable sums of money. Yet this inefficiency is almost always due to easily identified and remedied problems. A specialist in advanced thermographic techniques can assess and analyse every part of a plant, from ventilation systems to electromechanical equipment, to determine – quickly and cost-effectively

– where problems may lie. The savings can be enormous. Coors brewery in Burton, for example, identified potential savings of around £60,000 per annum with a survey costing less than £1,000 (see page 24). Other techniques, such as air leak surveys and steam traps can save large sums, too.

Preventative maintenance is another area where you can make very significant gains. As unplanned downtime can seriously disrupt production and prove very expensive in terms of overall cost (repair, re-work, overtime etc.), it makes sense to ensure that it's kept to a minimum. That's why it can be extremely cost-effective to consider condition

monitoring as a strategic maintenance tool. An expert in advanced condition monitoring techniques can help you make real savings across your operation. A properly qualified maintenance partner can help you get to the real root of problems and eliminate them – thus eliminating the breakdowns that result.

Of course, while monitoring equipment is important, having the most appropriate equipment in the first place is also key. But what is the most appropriate equipment? Again, a specialist partner can help, by advising you on which equipment and products best meet your application requirements. If you take this route, remember that it's best to work with a partner able to supply unbiased advice.

For most plants today, compliance with legislation is another major issue. In areas such as emissions control, for example, it is not merely atmospheric pollutants which must be monitored, but other land-based discharges, too. Today, plants must operate fail-safe systems which are designed to shut down if

discharges reach hazardous levels. A properly qualified partner can work with you or other specialist partners to build and maintain such systems. But there's much more legislation that demands compliance – and it's increasing every year. While most companies have developed their systems for regulatory compliance in recent years,

**FOCUS  
ON  
PROCESS**

it may be worth working with a specialist who can ensure you are always up to date with your obligations.

By working with a partner – especially one which can act as a single-source supplier – you can add

real value and subtract real cost. By working with one single, uniquely qualified supplier, you'll not only see improved productivity and higher operational efficiency, you'll see lower administrative costs, too, and better stock management. In short, the right partner can mean more productivity.

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