

In this newsletter, we describe an interesting project that completely satisfied a major steel producer, Benxi Iron and Steel in China.

We would also like to take this opportunity to inform you about recent IRM group results and developments :

- During the first half of 2005, 19 gauges were successfully commissioned for 11 customers.
- As announced previously, the manufacturing capacity of IRM group has been doubled. This investment allows us to meet the continuously increasing demand for our products and to reduce our delivery time.
- Several technical developments were finalized which will provide our customers the best products and technologies in the market. These developments include higher resolution cameras for the best accuracy in optical gauging, new low voltage X-ray sources, and the unique detection of very small longitudinal ridges in zinc coatings. Other major developments are under way and will be available soon.

The IRM group team remains at your disposal for further information. Please send an e-mail to info@irmgroup.info or visit our website www.irmgroup.info.

Worldwide service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Have a great summer.

Yours faithfully,

Jean-Marc Philippet
Managing Director

A challenging project: the modernization of hot strip mill # 1 of Benxi

In 2000, Chinese steel company Benxi asked General Electric (G.E.) to modernize the hot strip mill (HSM) # 1 in order to reach the highest performance and competitiveness. Therefore, Benxi together with G.E. looked for a top quality flatness measurement gauge.

Mr Zhang Chunhui, Benxi electrical and automation senior engineer, explains : *"Flatness measurement has become a major target for product quality. The modern hot rolling technology needs AFC (Automatic Flatness Control). The equipment that we were looking for had to be able to supply reliable flatness measurement even under difficult conditions."*

IRM group offered the Rometer, a "3 planes" gauge for measuring strip flatness. The Rometer offers the unique advantage of measuring the true flatness, independent of any kind of destabilizing causes such as strip bouncing, flying and rotating movements.

After comparing various flatness gauges in the market, Benxi and G.E. chose the IRM group Rometer.

When asked the reason for this choice, Mr Zhang replies : *"The performance of the Rometer is superior. Moreover, it requires only a narrow sighting field (150 mm) in the rolling direction which can be easily kept free from steam and water. This is a significant advantage compared with the competition."*



From left to right:
Zhao YONG, gauge inspector
Zhang CHUNHUI, instrumentation project engineer
Zhang JIANGUO, gauge maintenance personnel
Gao LIANXIANG, gauge operator.

Successful commissioning and reliable operation since 2001



From left to right:
Vincent WEYNAND, engineer field services
Frank ROTHEUDT, project manager
Luc LEFÈBVRE, project manager

Luc Lefèbvre, IRM group project manager, comments : "There are 2 steps during the commissioning of such a gauge : the so called "cold" (stand alone) and "hot" (together with the line) start-ups. For both of these steps and during the entire project, we consistently met our deadlines and technical specifications."

In September 2001, the Rometer was installed on time and commissioned successfully.

Mr Zhang says : "To my opinion, the project management for the delivery and commissioning of that equipment is much better than others. If the equipment is required very urgently, the IRM group team is ready to overwork so that the equipment is manufactured and assembled on time."

improved the flatness control and subsequently the product quality. Moreover, since start-up it has required little or no maintenance thanks to its integrated design and long-life components.

Mr Zhang concludes : "***I am very satisfied with the IRM group flatness gauge. It provides accurate measurement with fast response, and requests low maintenance. The IRM group team always keeps in touch with us for field support. I think IRM group is a very reliable and competitive gauge supplier.***"

In January 2004, as a testament to the excellent performance of the Rometer on HSM #1, another Rometer was ordered from IRM group for the new Benxi HSM # 2.



Characteristics of Rometer

- **A true flatness measurement** without errors caused by strip movements.
- **A very fast strip head-end response** : the gauge output can be consistently used by the mill Automatic Flatness Control after only 1 meter strip has passed below the gauge. Moreover, the flatness output signal is updated every 50mm of strip, no matter what the strip speed (up to 25 m/s).
- The possibility to locate the gauge **very close to the finishing stand** (5 meters), with the advantage to minimize the uncontrolled portion of the strip head end down to 6 meters.
- **A very narrow sighting field** : 150 mm in the rolling direction (no need to keep large areas free from steam and water).
- **A very compact sensor box** integrating industrial ruggedness (stainless steel housing, dust and steam tight, controlled water cooling...) and easy maintenance.
- **Simple installation and low commissioning costs** : stand-alone sensor box may be installed on an open platform.
- **Highly reliable components** : integrated design, long life.
- **Low maintenance costs.**
- **On-line remote access** via integrated modem.
- **Optional W100 strip width measurement** using front lighting technology and multi-stereoscopic corrections.

IRM group in some words

IRM group specializes in the Research, Design, Manufacture and Service of industrial measurement systems for all flat rolled metals, combining extensive industry experience and the latest technology. IRM group products can be used in all processing steps of steel, aluminium or other non-ferrous metals to improve production and product quality.

IRM group's product list includes :

- X-ray/Isotope Thickness
- Metallic Coating Weight
- % Iron (Galvanneal)
- Speed
- Laser Thickness
- Width
- Flatness

To better serve its customers, the IRM group provides local support in every part of the world. IRM group has currently 1600 various sensors in operation in more than 40 countries worldwide.

If you know of anyone else who would like to receive this newsletter, please send us an e-mail at info@irmgroup.info

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www.irmgroup.info

Europe	USA	China	Canada	For local agent contact information, please visit our website.
Tel: +32 (4) 239.90.10	Tel: +1 (614) 277.4810	Tel: +86 (21) 644.77.058	Tel: +1 (905) 522.5119	www.irmgroup.info
Fax: +32 (4) 263.40.97	Fax: +1 (614) 277.4811	Fax: +86 (21) 644.77.058	Fax: +1 (905) 522.2094	
E-mail: info@irmgroup.info	E-mail: admin@irmus.com	E-mail: chen@irmgroup.cn	E-mail: irmsltd@execulink.com	