

# Hamburger Hochbahn AG, Germany

Barco helps HOCHBAHN to keep Hamburg moving

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Rainer Schwentke, project manager,  
HOCHBAHN



In February 1912, after six years of hard work, the German city of Hamburg proudly opened its “U-Bahn” (Metro) - an advanced railway system that ran partly below and partly above the ground. Public company Hamburger Hochbahn AG (HOCHBAHN) was established the year before to manage the U-Bahn services. Today, HOCHBAHN is the second largest public transport operator in Germany. It manages three U-Bahn lines and well over 100 bus routes from a state-of-the-art new control center, installed on the roof of the historical HOCHBAHN building.

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"In 2000, HOCHBAHN set off on a crucial modernization project," Rainer Schwentke, project manager, started off, "to centralize the management of our U-Bahn, the bus services and our security services, called HOCHBAHN-WACHE. Bringing together all three services would enhance communications, decisions and interventions and, as a result, customer services."

### Long-term partner

As the plans for the control center had been taking form since 2000, Rainer Schwentke and his colleagues had had occasional contact with suppliers of visualization solutions, including Barco, to keep pulse of the latest developments in visualization. They were therefore quite familiar with the possibilities available on today's market. Based on that knowledge, they determined the lay-out of the new control room and specified the requirements for the visualization solution. A European call for tenders was issued in 2007. Barco's proposal best met HOCHBAHN's high quality and functionality demands. Indeed, the video wall presents a uniform image over time and across the entire screen, and offers many possibilities for easily managing large amounts of data and sources. A further major argument for choosing Barco was its market leadership. HOCHBAHN wanted a long-term partner that could guarantee continuity of operations. As a long-established company, Barco would help them out in case of problems and deliver spare parts 24/7, for many years to come.

### Six large Barco walls

In late 2007, an expert team of Barco and HOCHBAHN engineers took care of phase one of the video wall installation and software integration. When HOCHBAHN's new control center went live in November 2007, the main control room featured three large Barco rear-projection video walls with DLP technology, consisting of six cubes (50") each, and an extra wall of 4x2 cubes had been set up in Bus Control Center. In May 2009, two extra Barco video walls were added with the same 3x2 dimensions.



### Overview of U-Bahn and bus network

"At the start of the project, we had considered installing one big wall," Schwentke recalled. "But a few trials and surveys had shown that a super-sized wall would hamper the visibility for those people sitting in the corners of the room. Instead, we chose to work with five different walls, with three operators viewing the data per wall." The content on four of every wall's six cubes is preconfigured, giving an overview of the real-time situation on the entire U-Bahn and bus networks (trains and stations). On the other two cubes, operators can visualize images of HOCHBAHN's 950 CCTV camera network, information on the power supply, slides, presentations or even TV channels – an option that might be useful in the case of an incident or disaster. In addition, every operator has access to six desktop displays with details on operations control, the radio system, the SAP EPR system, MS Office, etc.

### Enhanced decision-making and efficiency

Schwentke: "The objective of consolidating our U-Bahn, bus and security services was to improve communications between the different teams and take better, faster decisions. The Barco video walls support us in this process, as they provide a crystal-clear overview of the U-Bahn and bus situations. The moment a line breaks down or another incident

occurs, operators can spot the problem, identify it and decide with their colleagues what action to take. This prompt decision-making helps our people to inform the passengers faster, to coordinate more efficiently with technical, medical or security support services and to quickly take any other step needed to ensure the comfort and safety of our customers."

### Setting the standard

Upon the opening of the new HOCHBAHN control center, Ole von Beust, the mayor of Hamburg, was impressed with the high-tech features and underlined how the technology helps HOCHBAHN set a new standard in public transport control: "We can never put enough effort in ensuring safe, efficient public transport services for our city. HOCHBAHN is definitely leading the way in the field of public transport control." Schwentke confirmed that the new center and the Barco video walls will help HOCHBAHN achieve its objective of delivering highly reliable, comfortable and safe underground and bus services. "Right now, construction works are underway to build the new U4 underground line, which will expand the U-Bahn network to meet future demand. With the new line, we will also employ more operators in the control room. We are confident that Barco will support HOCHBAHN during these and many other expansion phases," he concluded.

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Barco is an ISO 9001 registered company.  
The information and data given are typical for the equipment described.  
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