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BUSINESS

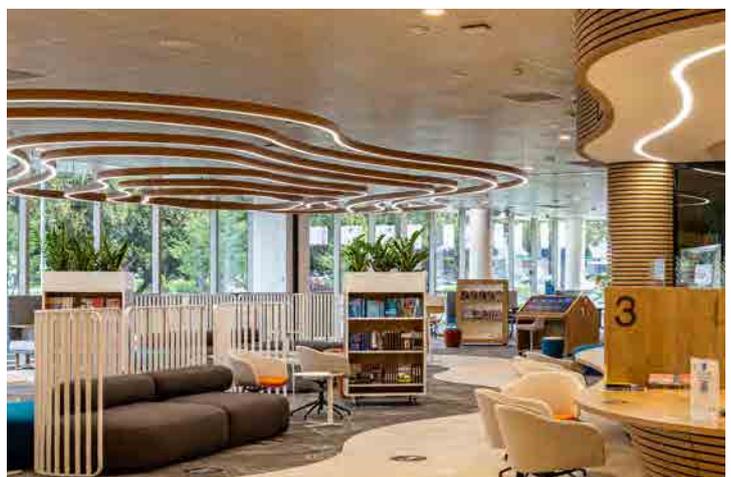


## PTZ CAMERAS FOR CITY OF NEWCASTLE

A MULTI-PURPOSE SPACE USED FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS IN NEWCASTLE'S CITY ADMINISTRATION CENTRE BENEFITS FROM PANASONIC'S FLEXIBLE PTZ CAMERAS

The City of Newcastle's impressive City Administration Centre is home to a lot more than office spaces. The multi-storey building contains a large interactive digital library, automation-driven council chambers, collaboration-friendly workspaces, a hireable podcast studio, and a large staff kitchen with adjoining outdoor eating area.

Uniquely, the interactive library and council chambers actually occupy the same space on the building's ground floor. What is a busy library during the week, seamlessly transforms into a fully-fledged, state-of-the-art council chamber on Wednesday nights.



## DUAL DESIGN

Supporting this multi-purpose space is a meticulously designed AV system installed by Star AV. The project's consultants, Pereira Projects, drew up the plans for the all-important transition process between Library and Council modes.

Director Jack Wilson explains: "All the technology is designed to effectively disappear in its 'off' state. This includes custom motorised lifters for ceiling-mounted preview monitors and cameras. The conferencing system is all battery powered (up to 10 hours charge time) and can easily be stored when in Library mode. Multiple floor boxes with I/O connectivity are provided at several locations across the room. This not only provides inputs when in Council mode for local users, but provides outputs for the digital library. Press readers, digital bookshelves and digital signage are integrated into joinery on wheels which can simply patch into the floor box locations."

Capturing the council chambers meetings are three Panasonic AW-HE38 PTZ cameras deployed in strategic ceiling positions. These powerful cameras feature a 1/2.3-type MOS sensor, 22x optical zoom, PoE+ support, and multiple mounting and finish options.

"Three Panasonic AW-HE38 cameras were selected," says Jack. "One we put on a custom Ultralift motorised lifter which in its 'off' state disappears into the ceiling. During council chamber meetings this drops down to a position to avoid the low-hanging feature pendants and provide a fantastic view of

the Lord Mayor/CEO podium position. The other two cameras are positioned left and right of the main gallery/seated users and zoom on to pre-defined presets when certain speakers speak. All cameras are white to blend seamlessly into the white finished ceilings."

## ALL ANGLES

Council meetings are now required to be recorded and live streamed. The challenge was to make this possible with minimal operator involvement. Automation became a central piece of the AV design, especially when it comes to camera selection and angles following the position of the active speaker. The council chambers is configured with a number of portable podiums arranged in a horse-shoe around the Lord Mayor's position at the front of the room. Camera presets are selected according to the audio received from the Shure microphones.

"The Shure conferencing units are geotagged with secure labels underneath and set up in the same seat positions every time," says Jack. "This ensures that, when a microphone is active, the camera's preset would always be correct for that speaker – a simple yet effective solution." "We set up a few presets. We had a wide angle that captures everyone from the back-of-the-room audience view. Then there is a tighter shot to capture all three of the front speakers looking across the one side. We have four presets: wide with everyone, then three different angles depending on what side of the room's working."

The Panasonic AW-HE38 is designed to function seamlessly with this type of integration. "Excellent picture quality, excellent optics, and a stable camera platform are all a given," says Matthew Alexander, Product Marketing Manager for Broadcast at Panasonic Australia. "But our AW-HE38 PTZ cameras are also very automation-friendly because the commands structure is very easy for programmers to work with."



The City of Newcastle's digital library and council chambers space is a stellar example of what's possible with creative and discreet AV design. Jack had good reasons for choosing Panasonic cameras in this project. "For me when considering cost, quality and ease of use, Panasonic cameras are 'best in class', not to mention the support from Panasonic technical team which has always been second to none."

**Pereira Projects:**  
[www.pereiraprojects.com.au](http://www.pereiraprojects.com.au)  
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