



A camera is used to livestream a BRANZ fire test to clients watching remotely.

TESTING TIMES SEE PRODUCT TESTS MOVE ONLINE

BRANZ is an established market leader with a reputation for excellence and independence in testing building materials, products and systems for fire safety, durability and performance. When COVID-19 restrictions prevented clients from visiting BRANZ to observe product testing, we began livestreaming fire tests online. Virtual test observation proved so successful it is now part of an enhanced product offering that is a particularly popular option for some offshore clients.

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Not being able to travel due to COVID-19 restrictions meant we had to find a way to stay connected to our projects. Videoconferencing meant we could observe fire tests and ask questions in real time. Together with BRANZ, we learned to adapt to the new normal along the way. In the end, it was a great experience, given the challenging environment.”

THANH HUYNH, R&D ENGINEERING SERVICES DIRECTOR,
KNAUF GYPSUM (MELBOURNE)

Fire testing represents a significant investment for clients, and many choose to observe tests in person to see for themselves how their building product or system performs when exposed to fire.

When the pandemic hit, BRANZ had to find new ways of working with clients, particularly those based offshore.

Accordingly, like many businesses adapting to remote working during the pandemic, our fire testing team began offering services online. The team found that videoconferencing enabled it to provide clients with an excellent level of service. This involved sharing streaming video from multiple camera angles as well as close-up photos of test specimens and key test data with clients.

By sharing photographs showing information such as temperature readings at regular intervals, the BRANZ team could keep clients fully informed throughout the duration of a product test. The team could then discuss

developments of note with clients live by using the audio or text chat function.

Feedback from clients has been positive. While most say they would prefer to observe a test in person, videoconferencing is enabling them to be present from the comfort of their own surroundings.

For our offshore clients who need to conduct multiple tests across a product line, videoconferencing offers a cost-effective convenient alternative to in-person test observation. It can also help reduce travel costs, save time and avoid carbon emissions associated with flying.