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ABB Motor Service Partner cuts noise on the set of "The Mummy Returns"

Motors from ABB Motor Service Partner EMR Silverthorn in Wembley have helped Shepperton Studios to keep the noise level down during filming of The Mummy Returns, the blockbuster sequel to The Mummy, which grossed over £294 million worldwide.

A moving backdrop, constructed by Pennicott Payne, a leading manufacturer of special effects props for the film industry, was being tested, when it was discovered that the electric motors fitted produced high electrical and mechanical noise, making filming impossible. The backdrop was one of four units, to which Pennicott Payne had fitted a motor, controlled by a variable speed drive to synchronise all units during filming.

The solution was provided by EMR Silverthorn, a company used to working with the film industry, who supplied four ABB 7.5 kW motors, which were fitted, tested and delivered superior performance.

"ABB's motors run cooler due to their high efficiency, which means less heat needs to be dissipated and a smaller fan can be used, reducing noise" explains Chris Fletcher, managing director of EMR Silverthorn. "In addition, the winding is optimised to reduce magnetic noise, while a solid construction reduces vibrations."

The moving backdrop was fixed to a conveyor belt on its side, connected to two vertical rollers, 25ft apart and 11ft high. The motor was then connected to drive the rollers, which in turn moved the background left or right.

The moving backdrop was used during a key sequence in the film where characters Rick O'Connell and Evelyn Carnahan-O'Connell, played by Brendan Fraser and Rachel Weisz, are on a speeding bus chased by mummified corpses from the vaults of the British Museum.

"We needed the motors to be as quiet as possible," explains Dave Hunter, Special Effects Workshop Supervisor, Neil Corbould Special Effects. "We have been using EMR Silverthorn for over 15 years; they are very reliable and highly efficient. The original motors generated a high level of noise, making the dialogue on set inaudible. The ABB motor solved the problem effectively, and ABB motors have also been used during the filming of 102 Dalmatians, Tomb Raider, and Black Hawk Down."

John Pennicott, Director of Pennicott Payne Ltd, commented: "We found EMR Silverthorn very prompt, extremely helpful, and able to meet our stringent deadlines. We would definitely use them again, and have since purchased a soft starter pack for a hydraulics unit that we are building."

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Caption: Grave silence... When The Mummy recently returned to our screens low noise levels on the set had been aided by ABB motors.

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