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BizWareDirect
Improving Automation
Through Innovation

Industrial Data
The Latest News in Industrial Automation

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BizWareDirect offers affordable, easy-to-use data-management software solutions that increase efficiency in automated facilities. BizWareDirect's software applications make data more useful and more accessible throughout all organizational systems, from the plant floor to the front office.

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News from BizWareDirect

Attend a Live DataNet OPC Software Demonstration

You are invited to join us for an online software demonstration on Wednesday, September 21, at 2 p.m. (EST). We have teamed up with AutomationDirect to bring you this short online seminar, which will show you how you can use DataNet OPC software to display real-time industrial data from PLCs and other devices on a live Web page. During this demonstration you will also have the opportunity to pose your own questions during a live Q and A chat session.

DataNet OPC is a Web-based data monitoring and logging software application created by BizWareDirect and sold through AutomationDirect, a BizWareDirect partner and leading supplier of industrial control products. DataNet OPC provides a simple, reliable way to make data available throughout all organizational systems, improving connectivity between the plant floor and business operations. The application's browser-based interface and use of OPC increases availability of data, decreases development and maintenance costs, and increases flexibility in the number and types of devices with which it is compatible.

To register for the DataNet OPC demonstration, visit AutomationDirect's Web Seminar homepage at <http://automationdirect.raindance.com/iccdocs/index.shtml>. To learn about specially developed training sessions for other BizWareDirect software products, visit www.bizwaredirect.com/training.htm.



In the Headlines

Get More Practical Plant Management for Less

Recent surges in technology have provided a sea of choices when it comes to the management of industrial facilities. There are endless data-management software solutions now available to those looking to solve basic problems associated with productivity, efficiency, loss prevention, quality control and maintenance effectiveness. The problem with many of these systems, though, is that they are too advanced to be practical. A large number of today's data-management software solutions come with a \$1 million price tag – and an even loftier cost when it comes to their practical implementation.

Complex software solutions can deliver their promises of increased productivity, efficiency and effectiveness, but they often take years to install and configure. Once they are finally in place, processes often have to be changed to fit the software, unless you want to spend another small fortune modifying the software to fit your process. Most facilities cannot afford the multi-million dollar investment required by advanced data-management software packages. More importantly, they cannot afford to put off solving their problems in order to develop an overly-complicated system, especially when there are less expensive, more simplistic alternatives available to do the same basic job.

To get more for less, start small. Look for inexpensive and simple data-management tools that are easy for everyone in the plant to configure and use. Buy an application that allows you to start basic and add more advanced features at your own discretion. This allows you to rapidly pilot and implement a system that delivers the information you need today, so that immediate needs do not go unfulfilled. It also gives you the ability to tackle more complex problems, once basic needs have been met. Finally, plan ahead – the trend in manufacturing and industry is toward integrated management, so find a solution that will empower others. Look for a solution that is capable of delivering data in a format that is useful to other members of the management team as they strive to achieve their own business goals. After all, you are all playing for the same team.

From "The Practical Side of MES," By Martin W. Michael, ISA's In-Tech magazine, June 2005. For full-text article, please visit ISA at:

<http://www.isa.org/InTechTemplate.cfm?Section=InTech&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=44482>

Making OPC Technology a Success

When it comes to selecting a supplier, standards, reliability, price and interoperability are the keys to successful use of OPC technology, according to a recent survey of industrial manufacturers and software developers. The survey, conducted by *Automation World* magazine and the OPC Foundation, found that issues such as security, Web-based technologies and redundancy were of much lesser importance to users of OPC technology.

Of those surveyed, 77 percent use the OPC standard in their operations and an additional 17 percent plan to use OPC in the future. Who is responsible for making decisions about OPC usage and standards in these companies? The decision authority varies by organization. The majority of respondents – 46 percent – said that OPC standards and usage decisions were made at the individual project level. Twenty-four percent said decisions were made at the corporate level, and 22 percent credited the site or plant level.

From "Standards, Reliability Critical to OPC Success," Automation World magazine, July 2005. For full-text article, please visit Automation World at: http://www.automationworld.com/cds_print.html?rec_id=1422

Joey's Tech Tips



A Little Maintenance Goes a Long Way

After years of trying out different industrial control products, I have found a handful of trusty tools that I have come to depend on. When something goes wrong with one of these favorites, I replace it almost immediately. Sometimes I swap the old one out for a new replica; other times I try something completely different and hope for the best. I always replace the device before I start to really miss it, though. Everything has a lifespan and let's face it – industrial environments are harsh. They can take years off the life of even the most resilient tools.

One of my most treasured tools is my Toshiba Satellite laptop. I like to take it along for all of my control projects because of its rugged design and full-size keys. Recently, the laptop started shutting down randomly, often when I was in the middle of a project in a hot factory. Although I cringed at the thought of saying goodbye to such a great tool, I figured we had reached the inevitable end. I was so attached to this particular piece of equipment, though, that I decided to take a chance and do something out of character. I took it into a nearby repair center. To my surprise, the technician fixed the problem in five minutes! Apparently, Toshiba adds a film of gel that is used to help transfer heat away from the processor. Over time, though, this gel can harden, preventing the heat from moving easily through it. This causes the processor to overheat and the computer will shut down. The technician said he's serviced many Toshibas with this same problem. He simply replaced the old gel with a new, softer gel, and I was on my way, having saved the hassle and expense of replacing one of my favorite tools.

A little maintenance can go a long way when it comes to keeping your most valued industrial tools sharp. My advice is this: Don't give up hope at the onset of a problem. Technology is constantly improving and defects are repaired as they are detected. If you cringe at the thought of throwing away your favorite equipment, take your chances on an authorized repair center. Your solution might be as simple as a new coat of gel.

Have a tech-related question? Send it to Joey at enewsletter@bizwaredirect.com.

On the Lighter Side ...

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**"It's the latest innovation in office safety.
When your computer crashes, an air bag is activated
so you won't bang your head in frustration."**