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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 that increases efficiency in automated facilities. BizWareDirect's products make data more useful and more accessible to those who need it.

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Welcome!

Industrial Data, a newsletter brought to you by BizWareDirect, is sent on a monthly basis. Its goal is to keep you informed of what is going on in the world of automation, to provide useful tips to make your job easier and to occasionally find humor in the work we do. We hope that you enjoy this newsletter, but if you wish to unsubscribe, or would like to receive a text-only version, please send your request to enewsletter@bizwaredirect.com or simply "reply" to this message. To download a printable PDF or text-only version of this issue, or to view archived issues, go to: www.bizwaredirect.com/newsletter.htm.

Happy reading!



News from BizWareDirect

BizWareDirect Releases DataNet OPC™ Web-Presentation Software

BizWareDirect recently announced the release of DataNet OPC™, a new software product that keeps people connected to industrial operations, without binding them to the confines of their facility. DataNet OPC uses OPC technology to display real-time data on a live Web page, with no HTML programming required. Data is then available for viewing, printing or archiving on any computer, anywhere the Internet or company intranet is accessible.

DataNet OPC makes industrial data available to those who need it to make organizational decisions – from anywhere business might lead them. It empowers employees to stay in-sync with operations, and gives management unlimited access to important figures. DataNet OPC increases flexibility and decreases costs by offering a unified approach to data display and logging for plants that use multiple PLC brands.

To learn more about DataNet OPC, or to download product literature, visit BizWareDirect's product page: www.bizwaredirect.com/all_products.htm.



In the Headlines

OPC Becomes Widely Accepted as an Industry Standard

In the 10 years since its launch into the world of industrial automation, OPC (OLE for Process Control, or Open Connectivity) has become the preferred method for plant connectivity, according to a recent survey by ARC Advisory Group. The survey shows that manufacturing companies prefer OPC over other connective methods in plant environments, especially among PLCs, SCADAs and MESSs. Survey results also show clear growth plans for OPC over the next five years.

System integrators, suppliers, manufacturers and end users alike have benefited from the growth of this innovative technology. Before OPC's widespread acceptance, it was common for suppliers to have an entire team or department of specialists that was dedicated solely to writing custom interfaces. This cost was passed down the chain of supply – and eventually handed to the consumer.

OPC has decreased the cost and time involved in system development by reducing the number of interfaces used between systems. It has increased industrial efficiency by improving plant-floor connectivity and allowing the exchange of data between the plant floor, enterprise system and beyond. OPC has the ability to provide a high degree of interoperability among different suppliers' parts and systems. This increases flexibility and often results in more efficient, less costly operations.

From "Many Devices, One Solution," By Jane Gerold, Automation World magazine, December 2004, p. 47. For the complete story, go to:
http://www.automationworld.com/articles/Features/1026.html?ppr_key=12.2004&sky_key=12.2004&term=12.2004

Is it Time for a Control System Upgrade?

Implementing new technology takes a great deal of time and resources, and it can often present many risks. However, an upgrade in control-system machines also can increase efficiency, performance, quality, safety and more. So, how does one know if and when an upgrade to system technologies is justified for them?

There are many reasons to justify the move to new controls. Reasons vary from one situation to the next – as does the timing for such an overhaul. There are some circumstances, however, when the benefits of a new system will almost always outweigh the costs and the risks of upgrading. Outlined below are a set of instances when upgrades are not only justified – but necessary for sustainability:

- 1) Consistency of production and product quality are suffering – Consistency and quality are the cornerstone factors contributing to a loyal customer base.
- 2) Repetitious mechanical setups are being conducted manually – Make the transition to a more automated process and a large ROI will be seen in a matter of months, through reduced setup time and elimination of human inaccuracies.
- 3) Proprietary controls are outdated – Some equipment, although reliable, is limited in its functional capabilities. An upgrade that includes recipe-driven setup and a more simplified interface can increase efficiency and lower operator training costs. This is especially true for small and midsize facilities,

which tend to house more limited controls than do the large production giants.

From "Go All In," by Dan Hebert, Control Design magazine, September 2004, p. 28. For the complete story, go to:

<http://www.controldesign.com/ME2/dirmod.asp?sid=1218F7327AAB4DB0B414187B67215E0D&nm=Issue+Archive&type=Publishing&mod=Publications%3A%3AArticle&mid=8F3A7027421841978F18BE895F87F791&tier=4&id=CA2A41FBDFBA4BD88A96B087BE2213A1>



Technology Tips

By Joseph Kulakowski

What is 802.11b?

802.11b establishes a standard for wireless Internet connections. It allows devices such as PDAs, laptops and barcode scanners to utilize Internet services without the need for cables. Most 802.11b networks will cover a 50-foot span. However, there are extensions available, which allow expanded wireless ranges and coverage areas. 802.11b is quickly gaining popularity as a wireless connection standard among plant managers and personnel, because of its low cost and ease of installation. It also provides secure Internet connections, which prevents the leakage of confidential data to parties outside of the plant network.

To learn more about 802.11b wireless technology, visit

http://www.pulsewan.com/data101/802_11_b_basics.htm. If you would like to submit a question for Technology Tips, please send it to enewsletter@bizwaredirect.com.

On the Lighter Side ...

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"Watch where you're going, Larry — you walked right through my wireless data stream!"