



CC-Link opens gateway to China for device suppliers at SPS

A gateway for European device suppliers and manufacturers to penetrate China's vast manufacturing base is being promoted by a consortium of leading robot, automation, network and hardware companies. Full information on the new Gateway to China (G2C) programme is available on the CLPA booth 6-136 at SPS/IPC/DRIVES, Europe's leading exhibition for industrial automation, running in Nuremberg from 22 - 24 November 2011.

China's ongoing industrial development is expected to remain one of the main driving forces behind global growth for decades to come. Market accessibility is therefore vital to automation companies' growth prospects. The CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) has put together the "Gateway to China" (G2C) programme using its strong presence in the region to support and enable greater European participation.

The G2C programme is being supported by fourteen key European CLPA partners (3M, ABB Robotics, Balluff GmbH, Bihl+Wiedemann GmbH, Cognex, Datalogic S.p.A., Hilscher Gesellschaft für Systemautomation mbH, HMS Industrial Networks, IDEC Corporation, Mitsubishi Electric Europe B.V., Pepperl + Fuchs GmbH, Pro-face Europe B.V, WAGO Kontakttechnik GmbH & Co. KG and Weidmüller's Ethernet infrastructure business unit).

The CLPA is also using the SPS Fair to highlight how CC-Link has solutions for a number of key industries, including food & beverage, water, energy management and consumer packaged goods. The booth will highlight a number of displays that show how products from key European CC-Link partners complete a solution tailored to the needs of that industry. The aim is to show that CC-Link supports a wide range of applications across many industries using devices from established European vendors.

John Browett, CLPA Acting General Manager explains further.

'CC-Link has become a de-facto standard in many Asian industries, with the majority of the flat panel display industry using CC-Link for example. The CLPA is using its strength in Asia to help European device manufacturers develop and promote CC-link enabled products that will find far greater market acceptance in China. As a well supported open-standard it also has a far higher potential for growth in the future, as many partner companies have already recognised.'

Twenty years from now global manufacturing will be unrecognisable. Technology, particularly control engineering, will have advanced massively, and just as significantly; its geographic distribution will be completely reordered. The long term result is that manufacturing will become truly global in terms of distribution and connectivity. And the focus of this globalization is China.

Why is CC-Link so widespread in China and Asia in general?

Since the late 1970s, China has risen to become the world's second largest economy and the world's leading marketplace for many of the consumer products we take for granted as well being one of the largest producers. It has achieved in around 30 years much of what it took the West over 100 years to do.

In the beginning, much of this growth was based on largely manual, labour intensive processes; even industries traditionally known for their high levels of automation in the West, such as automotive manufacturing, were largely un-automated in China. However, in recent years, the cost penalties of this approach have become clear and China's industries have been racing to automate in order to maintain their leading position in world manufacturing.

In addition, many of the world's leading Asian manufacturing companies – many of them household names – have also joined the rush to set up plants in China. Since CC-Link was already a standard for many of these companies, it was natural for them to take the network with them. This trend, combined with the rise in automation, has led the CLPA to launch the G2C campaign in order for European companies to catch this wave of opportunity.

Initially G2C is being targeted at European device manufacturers who are seen as strategic importantly on a global scale. The campaign divides into two key areas of assistance. The first is to help get a CC-Link product ready for the Chinese market To do this, the CLPA will provide free of charge assistance with development, free kits of sample components



and cable from partner 3M. Further, CLPA partners Hilscher and HMS are offering special deals on their netX and Anybus solutions for companies wanting to implement CC-Link in this way. Also Weidmüller provides a Starter Kit for a 10 gigabit field attachable RJ45 connector for the CC-Link IE-Field infrastructure.

Once a product or system is ready for the market, the second step is to assist with promotion. CLPA will provide free advertising in leading Chinese automation journals and web sites, along with further promotion at road shows, webinars and fairs. Finally, partner Mitsubishi Electric has also offered the chance to tour key Asian facilities as a promotional tool. Even for companies already active in the market, this will extend their coverage and provide the added credibility of third party endorsement.

The activities in China will also be supported by CLPA's extensive network of offices in the country, with over 20 locations operated either directly by CLPA or its partners. All that is required in return for this comprehensive programme of benefits is regular membership of the CLPA, at a nominal annual fee that is far outweighed by the value of what is on offer.

The programme was launched in October 2011, it is expected to run for at least one year initially and is planned to roll out globally in the long term. The key details can be found at the URL www.cc-link-g2c.com.

The end goal is twofold. Firstly, CLPA plans to have significantly helped European companies with their success in the Chinese market. Secondly, it is hoped that increased uptake of the network in the European automation community will therefore also lead to an ever increasing list of new industries in Europe also discovering the many benefits of The Non-Stop Open Network™.

About the CLPA

The CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) is an international organisation with over 1,500 member companies worldwide. The partners' common objective is promotion and technical development of the family of CC-Link open network technologies. Over 1,100 certified products are now available from over 240 manufacturers. CC-Link is the leading industrial fieldbus in Asia and is becoming increasingly popular in Europe and the Americas. The European headquarters is in Germany, with offices throughout the continent.

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