



## CC-Link Conformance Test Centre opens to serve Europe

A conformance test centre has opened in Düsseldorf, Germany to serve European manufacturers making products compatible with the open CC-Link automation network technology.

The centre adds to the group of existing facilities already established in North America and Asia. It is run by key partner Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV in cooperation with the CC-Link Partners Association (CLPA). The CLPA is responsible for supporting manufacturers and users of the technology, overseeing, developing and managing the CC-Link specifications and promoting the worldwide adoption of the network. The Düsseldorf centre gives European manufacturers a convenient location for conformance testing, avoiding the need to send products overseas as in the past.

"This new facility is testament to the increasing popularity of CC-Link in Europe," says John Browett, of the CLPA. "CC-Link was originally developed in Japan and quickly became the de facto standard for automation networking throughout Asia. Its take up in Europe and America has been growing steadily for 10 years, with a particular increase in Europe over the last few years as OEMs have come to realise that they must provide CC-Link if they are to compete effectively in the booming Asian markets."

CC-Link is an open network with a global installed base of approx 8 million nodes. It allows many different devices from many different manufacturers (currently over 1,100 products are available) to communicate freely over a single cable. Conformance testing ensures that all devices will be fully interoperable with all other devices used on any CC-Link network. The centre uses a comprehensive array of tests that ensure CC-Link products can be used with confidence. Any approved product will be capable of joining a network and communicating with all other devices regardless of their manufacture.

"At CLPA, we sum up the network's benefits with the brand of the "Non-Stop Open Network". Knowing devices will operate together is an important productivity benefit for system design and maintenance, and hence helps maintain "non-stop" service." explains Browett.

CC-Link conformance testing covers three main areas; connectability, noise immunity and ageing. Connectability verifies the correct hardware and software operation for communication on the network. Noise immunity ensures that the device meets the required standard for rejection of electrical interference (a key strength of CC-Link), and finally, ageing insures that the device will perform as expected over its operating lifetime. For all tests, standardised equipment is used, ensuring that all tests conducted around the world are uniform.

"Open comms is the default choice of most automation systems engineers; the cost reductions, productivity gains and simple maintenance of single wire communications are becoming increasingly attractive as plant operators seek increased uptime and production," says Browett.

## 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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