



CC-Link communications gives Cognex a clear view of Asian opportunities



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In a recent video made with the CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA), Cognex, the world's leading machine vision company, explains how it has developed universal plug-and-play communications capabilities. Called Cognex Connect, it allows its technologies to be brought online easily and efficiently. CC-Link, with its predominance throughout the fast-growing Asian market, is a key element of the Connect suite.

Whether the vision system is connecting directly to a PLC or robot controller, or is managed remotely from a networked PC or HMI, Cognex Connect assures a seamless and reliable communications link with all other equipment on the factory floor.

Traditionally, vision systems produce a lot of data, so the need for fast and reliable communications is paramount. The Cognex In-Sight range of cameras is able to process data internally, so that higher level information is transmitted rather than raw data. Cognex Connect helps ensure that vision and automation control are fully connected, ensuring that critical control decisions can be made in real time.

Cognex Connect includes support for the most commonly used open-standard Industrial Ethernet and Fieldbus communications protocols for trouble-free connection to PLCs and other automation devices from a wide range of hardware manufacturers. (Discrete I/O and serial protocols are also available to support older PLCs and devices without network connectivity.)

As a global player, Cognex recognizes that the best future growth potential currently lies in Asia, where CC-Link is far and away the first choice for open communications. For this reason, CC-Link is the most-often specified network in the Cognex Connect suite of communications capabilities. As a further sign of their support for CC-Link, Cognex is also a board member of the CLPA, meaning that they are involved with the strategy and direction of the technology at the highest level. Cognex is also involved with the CLPA's "Gateway to Asia" (G2A) programme, which helps Western companies develop their business in Asia when they develop CC-Link products.



Currently, China is the main market in the region for Cognex; but other nations including India, Vietnam and Korea, are also rapidly industrialising and also providing opportunities. To be globally competitive, manufacturers in these countries are installing world-class automation systems, whose productivity at least matches, and often better, current industry expectations.

Open automation networks allow engineers to mix and match control devices and equipment from different manufacturers, safe in the knowledge that they will be able to pass data to one another. Without this, plant owners or machine builders may find themselves "locked in" to a single supplier with a consequent lack of options.

CC-Link was originally developed in Japan by world leader in automation Mitsubishi Electric. It was subsequently transferred to the CLPA to be developed and promoted worldwide as an open network technology. It is offered in a number of formats including a fieldbus and the world's first and only open gigabit Ethernet for automation, CC-Link IE.

To aid CC-Link's further development and to support users, the CLPA has offices around the world including several throughout Asia and others in Europe and North America. The installed base of CC-Link is around 12,000,000 devices worldwide. and today, more than 1,300 CC-Link compatible products are made by over 280 different manufacturers. The CLPA has over 2,100 member companies, making it one of the largest organisations of its type.

To watch the video on the CLPA YouTube Channel, click [here](#).

Learn more about the [Cognex Connect Communications Suite](#).

Image Captions:

Picture 1: When it comes to vision systems, the need for fast and reliable communications is paramount. Cognex, the world's leading machine vision company, has developed universal plug-and-play communications capabilities.

Picture 2: The Cognex In-Sight range of cameras is able to process data internally, so that higher level information is transmitted rather than raw data.

Picture 3: Frank Weigel, Senior Technical Manager for Cognex in Europe, explains how Cognex Connect with CC-Link support helps ensure that vision and automation control are fully connected.

About the CLPA

The CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) is an international organisation with over 2,100 member companies worldwide. The partners' common objective is promotion and technical development of the family of CC-Link open network technologies. Over 1,300 certified products are now available from over 280 manufacturers. CC-Link is the leading open industrial automation network technology in Asia and is becoming increasingly popular in Europe and the Americas. The European headquarters is in Germany, with offices throughout the continent. The key details for CLPA's Gateway to Asia (G2A) can be found at the URL www.cc-link-g2a.com.

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