



POLAND PREPARES ITS HIGH TECH FUTURE WITH CC-LINK

The biggest automation and robotics training centre in Poland has just been opened in Łódź. It will train over 10,000 students and teachers a year as the country races to modernise its manufacturing and production infrastructure.

Users of the centre will include practicing engineers from industry and students from the local university and Łódź Teachers Training and Education Centre. The centre is fully equipped with the latest automation products and systems from a number of internationally recognised suppliers, including Mitsubishi Electric and Festo. Much of the communications within the systems is based on CC-Link, the open protocol that allows equipment from many different manufacturers to be freely interconnected within a system.

"2010 saw CC-Link celebrate its 10th Anniversary as an open network. This means it has become well established in Poland and Central Europe, so it was a natural choice for the centre," says John Browett, Acting General Manager of the CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) Europe.

"When Poland started the post-Soviet modernisation of its manufacturing industries, it realised that exports to the Far East were likely to become its life blood. The take up of CC-Link was therefore encouraged because it is the dominant open comms protocol throughout Asia and therefore a passport to export success."

Łódź is just about the dead centre of Poland, so is strategically located to offer its facilities and services to the whole country. Demographically, Poland's population is young, and the resources and infrastructure put it in a strong position to become a major manufacturing and technology centre serving the EU, Central and Eastern Europe. Culturally and economically it is natural for Poland to look further east for its main export markets.

CC-Link was initially developed in Japan and quickly spread throughout Asia before becoming established in Europe and America. There are at over 240 companies making compatible products, and with 8 million CC-Link devices installed globally, it is setting a global standard for open networks.

"At CLPA, our brand is the "Non-Stop Open Network™". The key technical benefits of CC-Link translate directly to business benefits by maintaining high productivity even in the face of adverse operating conditions. Knowing devices will operate together is also an important productivity benefit for system design and maintenance." explains Browett. "We assure this by means of conformance testing, available in all key regions of the world via our global network of conformance test centres.

"We are now seeing open networks emerge as the default choice of control engineers in every industry. In the EU, US and Japan they are replacing older systems where every field device is individually wired back to its controller. In emerging economies, the movement is often straight from manual labour or mechanical systems to CC-Link, missing out the old stage of cable trays and looms with enough wiring to keep an army of technicians employed."

"Young engineers – that is anybody less than 30 – were largely trained on open technology, so think anything else is painfully old fashioned. It would be like going back to living without mobile phones, laptops and the Internet!"

"There is no doubt that Poland and its neighbours are set to become major forces in world manufacturing. Their choice of CC-Link open networks means they will have state-of-the-art production capabilities that can be constantly updated as industry and technology develops."

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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