

Growing vendor partners is key objective for new General Manager

The CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) has appointed Steve Jones to replace Malcolm Robins, who retired recently, as General Manager for its European operations.

In taking up his new position Jones is returning to the UK after a four year posting to Germany, where he led Mitsubishi's advance into Central and Eastern Europe and Russia. Previously he had been Divisional Manager for the company's Automation Systems Division. His breadth and depth of experience will be put to great use as he develops the Association and the technology in Europe and internationally.

"Fieldbuses have gone through some distinct stages," he says. "First there was the development stage, with many protocols being produced by different bodies; then there was the 'Fieldbus Wars' of the 1990s when everybody went tooth and nail to establish a significant presence. Inevitably many protocols fell by the wayside and the big three rose to dominance.



"We've been in calmer waters for a few years, but advances in the global market mean we can't be too cosy for too long. There is still a lot of territory to fight for, and technical and commercial advantages leveraged."

For some years anybody wanting to sell machines or systems to the new economies of Asia or the Pacific has had to offer CC-Link. It is also popular in Europe, particularly on systems based around Japanese-originated control hardware. CC-Link's advances into the Americas are echoing the increased penetration of Asian hardware and systems into this once-isolated market.

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From his recent experiences Jones puts CC-Link in a strong position in New Europe and further east.

“Manufacturing companies there are leaping several generations of technology as they modernise their production capabilities, he observes. “Twenty years ago they would have followed a Soviet lead; ten years ago it seemed that Germany would naturally dominate in the region.

“But a culture has developed based on a complete break with the past and the adoption of best in class technology. This puts CC-Link in a very strong position. Further English has been recognised as the best language for international trade, resulting in the region is becoming more Anglophile.”

CC-Link is a field or device level network that provides high speed deterministic communications, linking a wide range of automation technologies over a single cable. It is ideal for machine, cell or process control in manufacturing and production industries, and is also widely used in facilities management and building automation.

“As a multi-vendor organisation, the CLPA is adding new CC-Link compatible equipment to its portfolio rapidly,” says Jones. CLPA supports a family of integrated network technologies consisting of CC-Link, CC-Link/LT, and CC-Link Safety. These three technologies are based on the same core network design and can be easily used in combination with each other in a single, integrated automation scheme.

“We are also working on some very advanced developments which will lead to major technical developments in the very near future.”



CC-Link Showcases Global Strengths at SPS Show

Following the very successful attendance at last year's SPS/IPC/DRIVES show at Nuremberg, the CLPA (CC-Link Partner Association) will be exhibiting again this year using the largest stand ever used by CLPA-Europe. They are planning to make a big announcement at this year's show that's certain to create a lot of interest in the industry.

The stand size will be increased to 49m² due to demand. On the stand there will be an increased display of CC-Link compatible products from worldwide CLPA members as well as an increased number of working demonstrations, including normal CC-Link and CC-Link Safety.



Services offered on the stand will be consultancy and advice on all aspects of CC-Link connectivity, software configuration tools, optimising network performance and general installation advice. Free parts kits can be made available to assist regular members with the development of compatible products.

CC-Link is the third most widely accepted open fieldbus network in the world, and in the Japanese automation marketplace (which is the third largest after the USA and Europe), CC-Link is the clear market leader with over 45% share. This large market share in Japan is also a major influence on most Asian and Chinese companies' fieldbus networking choice.

Any company operating globally that is serious about selling into the Asian automation market place and that does not have a CC-Link interface is not accessing a large percentage of the potential available worldwide automation business.

Visit the CLPA on stand number 323 in hall 6 on the 27th of November until the 29th of November 2007, at the Exhibition Centre, Nuremberg, Germany.

Polish universities benefit from CC-Link technology

Continuing its expansion programme in Europe, the CLPA has recently enhanced the open Fieldbus technical training capability at three of Poland's most prestigious universities by helping to provide the latest in automation technology for use as training equipment.

Donated mainly by Mitsubishi Electric the CC-Link compatible equipment will be used to train students in their normal engineering degrees with CC-Link networks being an integral part of the normal study curriculum.



On the 11 June 2007 David Folley of CLPA-Europe and our local CC-Link Promotion Partner MPL Technologies visited Warsaw University. Here they handed over €7000 worth of CC-Link equipment for the university to use to train its students. Representing Warsaw University at this important handover were Professor Jan M. Koscielny and Dr Michal Bartys. So influential to Polish industry is Warsaw University that Control Engineering (the most popular industrial Automation magazine in Poland) sent their reporter to cover the event.

Following on from the success of the Warsaw University visit David Folley again with MPL visited Gliwice University on the 12 June. Here another €7000 worth of CC-Link training equipment was handed over by CLPA-Europe. At Gliwice University Professor Jerzy Swider officially received the equipment and again showing the stature of Polish universities to Polish industry NiS magazine sent their reporter Ewa Osiecka to report on the handover.

Also on the 12 of June Krakow University was visited. Here CLPA presented CC-Link compatible equipment to the value of €11,500. Receiving the equipment on behalf of Krakow University was Dr Piotr Micek, and again Control Engineering sent a reporter to cover the handover.

In Krakow alone there are some 150 students undertaking full-time general automation studies and another 30 extramural students of Automatics and Robotics who will all use this equipment as the prime fieldbus for teaching automation networks every year. Typical classes at the University of Krakow are groups of 15, with each student averaging around 30 hours of hands-on fieldbus network training per semester

Dr Piotr Micek of Krakow University comments "When we started to teach PLCs about 15 years ago almost nobody knew of Mitsubishi PLCs or the other automation products they produced. Now almost two thousands engineers who have graduated from courses in our department over the last 15 years promote Mitsubishi products in Poland because they have got to know them in our training laboratories. We think that it will be similar with the CC-Link network"

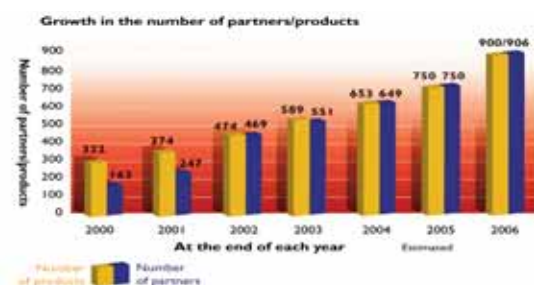
CLPA membership keeps growing

CC-Link is the fastest expanding open network worldwide. Latest figures show that CLPA membership has exceeded the 900 mark with now 906 companies being members.

What is also very encouraging is that over 500 of these companies are non-Japanese manufacturers, which previously were the dominant members.

As an indication the openness of CC-Link, there are now 7 different manufacturers making 17 different CC-Link master stations, with 21 manufacturers making I/O devices, 21 different Variable Speed Drive (VSD) manufacturers making interfaces and many more making other compatible products.

The success of CC-Link in being recognised as one of the major global "open" networks has prompted many companies to recognise that failing to develop a CC-Link interface is bad for their global business. CC-Link interfaced products, are now becoming a prerequisite on many end-user checklists, and without CC-Link connectivity, manufacturers risk failing before they can even get onto the list of preferred suppliers.



New CC-Link approved compatible products

Hilscher GmbH The COM-CA-CCS and COM-CN-CCS Integrated Communication Slave Modules

These CLPA certified modules are designed for integration into field devices or programmable controllers. The modules can be integrated directly into the application program via a Dual-port-memory access.



They have been developed to enable OEMs to integrate CC-Link communication protocols into their products with a minimum of cost or development time

Features:

- Compact, robust structure (size: 70 x 30 x 16 mm)
- Common to dimensions for network interfaces
- Field bus connector/LED are on top of module or host board
- Cost-effective for small and also for large quantity
- No software maintenance costs
- Reduction of company development costs
- Simple configuration

For further information visit:

www.hilscher.com/products_bus_cclink.html

Mitsubishi Electric Corporation Model FX3UC-32MT-LT micro sequencer

Equipped with a master function for CC-Link/LT as a standard item, this high-speed, high performance sequencer is far beyond the established image of micro sequencers.



Features:

- The basic performance has been significantly improved. The basic and applied commands are refined. The calculation performance has been accelerated. Additionally, 64-k step RAM memory is incorporated as a standard item to deal with large programs
- A series of functions of the highest level in the industry have been integrated with independent positioning of three axes at up to 100 kHz and six-point simultaneous high-speed counting at 100 kHz
- A Chinese character display module SW has been included for the first time as a standard item
- The analogue functions have been upgraded

For further information visit:

www.mitsubishi-automation.com

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SWEDEN

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HMS INDUSTRIAL NETWORKS AB

SWITZERLAND

CONTRINEX AG

ECONOTEC AG

VAT VAKUUM VENTILE AG

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GTS

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BARWIT CONTROL SYSTEMS
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BETECH 2000 LTD

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IDEC UK LTD

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N D METERS

NEWTON TESLA
(ELECTRONIC DRIVES) LTD

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