

## Double link strengthens approach to Asian automation



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In a recent video made with the CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA), Balluff explained how their line-up of rugged IP67 CC-Link I/O blocks also provides easy connectivity to the popular point to point wiring system, "IO-Link". IO-Link provides a number of wiring benefits to machine builders and end-users, the main one being only a single cable type is required to connect all devices.



Balluff is already a strong partner of the CLPA worldwide, having taken the significant step of joining the board of the CLPA at the end of 2013. This made them the first European company to take this step, and was a strong demonstration of the increasing importance of the network technology to companies in Europe. They are also a key supporter of the IO-Link movement, so it was a natural step for them to integrate both technologies into their product lines. IO-Link provides an easy way for a number of different device types to be connected to a controller with only a single type of cable. This means that machine builders reap a number of benefits, including simplified designs, faster time to market and reduced costs. IO-Link also offers a number of diagnostic and set-up benefits, meaning that machines are also easier to maintain and downtime is reduced.

As a global company with significant business in Asia, Balluff expects the combination of CC-Link and IO-Link will prove to be a winning one when it comes to expanding their various businesses in this critical market. A key market for them is the automotive industry, and the benefits of IP67 style devices are well understood by OEMs in this rapidly expanding Asian market. Many companies are rushing to automate their facilities as local costs increase along with the demand for automobiles. IP67 provides a cost effective method to mount critical control devices directly on a machine, reducing the cost of installations and making parts more readily accessible for maintenance.

Balluff expects that IO-Link will become the USB stick of industrial automation – simple, powerful and ubiquitous. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential to achieve a critical mass of usage, which is why Balluff has also produced a CC-Link-compatible IO-Link device. Hence they are well placed to drive this combination of technologies into the vast Asian market place, where many companies are hungry for the kind of business advantages they can deliver, as they rush to increase output and quality with widespread automation. This trend has been confirmed by leading third party market research companies such as ARC and IHS, who have estimated that almost half the world's total spending on automation will take place in Asia from now on.

As Balluff understands, CC-Link is a key part of the solution for business success in Asia. It is a high-performance open industrial network technology, which enables automation equipment such as sensors, switches and gauges from numerous manufacturers to communicate with one another, resulting in a fast, deterministic control system. Originally developed in Japan by world leader Mitsubishi Electric, it is now an open technology with the support of 290 manufacturers offering over 1,400 products.

CC-Link was an immediate success when launched in Japan and rapidly penetrated deep into the rest of the Asian market as well. It is now the leading open network used throughout Asia and is also well-represented in Europe and North America. The CLPA is helping European companies to strengthen their business in Asia with initiatives like the "Gateway to Asia" (G2A) programme. This assists with the promotion of CC-Link compatible products in the Asian market after a company joins the CLPA and passes conformance testing for their product.

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

**Image captions:**



**Picture 1:** Balluff's line-up of rugged IP67 CC-Link I/O blocks also provides easy connectivity to the popular point to point wiring system, "IO-Link".

**Picture 2:** As a global company, Balluff expects the combination of CC-Link and IO-Link will prove to be a winning one when it comes to expanding their various businesses.

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## About the CLPA

The CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) is an international organisation with over 2,200 member companies worldwide. The partners' common objective is promotion and technical development of the family of CC-Link open automation network technologies. Over 1,400 certified products are now available from 290 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 CLPA's main initiative for Europe is the Gateway to Asia (G2A) programme, which helps European businesses develop their Asian business further. More details are at [www.cc-link-g2a.com](http://www.cc-link-g2a.com).



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