

SPS/IPC/Drives Italia 2018: CC-Link IE high-speed network is key to Italian industrial automation



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SPS/IPC/Drives Italia has become a must-attend event for industrial automation network specialists like the CLPA. The eighth edition of the fair hosted over 800 exhibitors and 35,000 visitors. "This is our third year at SPS/IPC/Drives Italia and we are proud to have been part of this event. It has grown tremendously over the past few years to the point that it has become our second most important fair in Europe. This shows the importance of Italy for the European automation market," John Browett, General Manager of CLPA Europe, commented.

By attending SPS Italia, the CLPA is growing together with the Italian industrial automation community to show it how CC-Link IE's technology can help improve its efficiency and competitiveness.



Hence a key highlight at the CLPA booth was CC-Link IE, the world's only open gigabit Industrial Ethernet. This is a key technology in digital manufacturing: as Industry 4.0 develops, the importance of the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) is going to increase. Therefore, the ability to have a large bandwidth in a system will become essential to allow different devices to communicate with each other and deal with the volumes of data being generated.

The CLPA also showcased the constantly increasing range of development options for CC-Link IE. For example, the recently developed CC-Link IE Field Basic (IEFB), which allows users to implement the CC-Link IE technology on a wider variety of systems, including backward compatibility with 100 Mbit Ethernet devices.

In addition, the CLPA presented some of its recent achievements based on key partnerships. These included the results of collaborations with the OPC Foundation (OPCF) and PROFINET & PROFIBUS International (PI).

The work between the CLPA and the OPCF resulted in the development of a companion specification for the popular OPC UA communication technology. This is based on the CLPA's 'CSP+ for Machine' concept, which let users handle a whole machine as a single device. Browett explained: "This will make the configuration and maintenance of networks and hence production lines much simpler. The new specification will make the extraction of data from machines simpler. It will also be easier to share them with other parts of the customers' enterprise."

As a result of the interoperability specification completed by the CLPA and PI, Hilscher, a CLPA partner, developed the first coupler device that works as a standardised interface to enable communication between CC-Link IE and PROFINET networks. This is particularly important for end users with facilities both in Asia and in Europe, where, respectively, CC-Link IE and PROFINET are predominant. Thanks to the coupler device, it is now possible to increase transparency across the enterprise.

Visitors to the fair also noted the broad variety of the CLPA's industry standard development platforms and partner products. "One of the key points determining whether an open network is successful or not is how broad the catalogue of products is. When people are designing systems or machines, they want to know there is a sufficient variety of different devices available to meet the different needs of their systems or machine," Browett explained. "With over 1700 products available from more than 300 manufacturers, the CLPA can offer solutions that meet any application requirements, no matter what they are."

With sustained double-digit growth year-on-year over the last few years, the installed base of CC-Link IE and CC-Link devices worldwide has now exceeded 22 million. John Browett concluded: "We hope this success will help persuade more Italian machine builders and end users to adopt CC-Link IE in their systems."

To hear more news from CLPA, watch the video here: https://youtu.be/Fn0PBGuG_j4



Image 1: SPS/IPC/Drives Italia has become a must-attend event for industrial automation network specialists like the CLPA.

Image 2: The CLPA also showcased the constantly increasing range of development options for CC-Link IE.

Image 3: By attending SPS Italia, the CLPA is growing together with the Italian industrial automation community to show it how CC-Link IE's technology can help improve its efficiency and competitiveness.

About the CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA)

The CLPA is an international organisation founded in 2000 dedicated to the technical development and promotion of the CC-Link family of open automation networks. The CLPA's key technology is CC-Link IE, the world's first and only open gigabit Ethernet for automation and an ideal solution for Industry 4.0 applications due to its unmatched bandwidth. Currently the CLPA has over 2,900 member companies worldwide, with more than 1,600 certified products available from over 300 manufacturers. CC-Link is the leading open industrial automation network technology in Asia and is becoming increasingly popular in Europe and the Americas.

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