

# Is Automation the Key to Competitiveness?

Siemens thinks so. How can the SIMATIC PCS 7 process control system from Siemens help manufacturers to achieve competitive advantage – and stay one step ahead of the game? Anthony Mayall explains...

## ***“Totally Integrated Automation is an enabler for the seamless linking from instrument to management systems”***

There are many reasons why companies decide to automate part, or all, of their process control. Let's face it; automation is a key factor in increasing productivity and shortening the time to market. For some industry sectors, such as power generation or oil and gas exploration and production, high levels of automation have always been required. Plants in these sectors, usually covering a large physical area, rely on process automation for the safe monitoring and accurate control of the process. Elsewhere, in industries such as brewing or food manufacturing, traditional manual operations have also been rapidly replaced by automated control systems. Increasingly though, the answer is a simple one: implementing higher levels of automation is the only way production levels can be improved – and competitive advantage achieved.

### **SIMATIC PCS 7 - A Process Automation platform for the future**

Because there is growing pressure for manufacturers to remain competitive, both locally and globally companies need to adopt an integrated approach to plant management. Being able to respond flexibly and quickly to new market demands without

having to halt plant operations is a major prerequisite for success in the process industry. The SIMATIC PCS 7 process control system - a significant component of Siemens' Totally Integrated Automation (TIA) concept - can help companies do just that. SIMATIC PCS 7 not only handles process engineering tasks in the primary production process, but also the automation of all secondary, upstream and downstream processes, such as wastewater treatment, the distribution of power to a production location and even control of critical building management.

### **Reduced Life Cycle Costs**

SIMATIC PCS 7 offers modular, open architecture, making it possible to operate a plant cost-effectively and efficiently over the entire life cycle, from planning, engineering, commissioning and training to operation, service and maintenance right up to expansion and retrofitting. In addition, users benefit from the application of standard SIMATIC components, such as: low hardware and engineering costs; low spare parts costs; reduced logistics, maintenance and training costs; and worldwide availability.

### **Truly Scalable**

SIMATIC PCS 7 is completely flexible and scaleable. It can be used to control small applications as well as extremely large plant configurations or groups of larger plants, helping manufacturers to protect their investment and profit from future developments.

### **Open Architecture**

Companies that implement a SIMATIC PCS 7 process control system will benefit from all the advantages of a really flexible and universal system. It can be easily integrated into a company's existing infrastructure (from IT level to sensor technology), thereby protecting existing investments. Moreover, because PCS 7 is based on the latest, standard technologies, such as Windows, OPC, PROFIBUS and Fast Ethernet it is possible to integrate devices and systems from other manufacturers.

### **The Advantages**

For anyone involved in running process plant operations, the benefits of implementing SIMATIC PCS 7 are hard to ignore. It exceeds all the demands placed on a typical process control system: Uncompromising compliance with international industrial standards; easy, fast integration of other software packages at the plant control level; flexible solutions for batch processes; direct interfacing to the IT layer; failsafe automation solutions; and asset management (diagnostics, preventative maintenance and repairs). ARC, the independent thought leaders in manufacturing, state *“Two of Siemens' key differentiators are its ability to bring together process and discrete automation under a single control environment, as well as its philosophy for ownership of core system technologies.”* When competitive advantage is at stake, there is only one solution – SIMATIC PCS 7.

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