



Phoenix Contact drives Industry 4.0 with CC-Link IE network switches and plans TSN support





Addressing the communications and connectivity needs of Industry 4.0, such as openness and interconnectivity, is a must for Phoenix Contact, a global market leader and innovator in the field of electrical engineering and automation. This is why the company chooses to rely on the widely adopted open Industrial Ethernet technology CC-Link IE.

Jan Aulenberg, Product Manager – Industrial Network Technology at Phoenix Contact, explains: "The biggest advantage of CC-Link IE is that it is based on the Industrial Ethernet technology standard that is accepted worldwide. Therefore, this solution can be used universally. In addition to that, the CLPA offers detailed information about CC-Link IE networks and certified products on its website."

Leveraging this opportunity, Phoenix Contact not only develops CC-Link IE compatible devices, but also submits its CC-link IE products to conduct CLPA conformance testing. "Thanks to the possibility of certifying CC-Link IE products, we can ensure that these will fulfill all the requirements of any CC-Link IE system," says Aulenberg.

Network switches are particularly important to ensure connectivity for automation components, therefore it is highly advantageous for Phoenix Contact to ensure CLPA conformance for its CC-Link IE network switches. Of particular interest is the recently certified FL SWITCH 2000 family of managed switches. These are intelligent systems designed to maximise flexibility, robustness and stability of industrial automation networks. Jan Aulenberg adds: "Firstly, we certified three FL SWITCH 2000 switches with up to 8 ports according to CLPA specifications. Now, we are planning for our switches with up to 16 ports and fibre ports to undergo CLPA conformance testing soon."

When thinking about future developments and innovative technologies to embed in its products, Phoenix Contact strongly believes that TSN will be one of them. Aulenberg notes that "TSN is so important because – together with other big digital communications innovations, like 5G or 2-wire Ethernet – it will have a big impact on the automation systems of the future. With them, it will be possible to set up a system that will outperform today's systems.

"TSN is intended to bring real-time capabilities into standard Ethernet. The main advantages of TSN are time synchronisation opportunities and the prioritisation of time-critical data traffic." These two elements are the foundation of CLPA's latest open Industrial Ethernet technology, CC-Link IE TSN. This implements the IEEE 802.1 TSN standards on precision clock synchronisation and scheduled traffic in order to deliver a key tool for Smart Manufacturing.

As a technology leader with more than 30 years of experience in the field of industrial communication technology, TSN will also be an important future technology for Phoenix Contact. "We are involved in all the relevant working groups and standardisation committees to develop TSN solutions to continue benefitting our customers in the future."

Image Captions:

Images 1 & 2: Phoenix Contact drives Industry 4.0 with CC-Link IE network switches.



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 TSN, the world's first open industrial Ethernet to combine gigabit bandwidth with Time Sensitive Networking (TSN), making it an ideal solution for Industry 4.0 applications. Currently the CLPA has over 3,600 member companies worldwide, with more than 1,900 certified products available from over 300 manufacturers.

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