



Subject: First results of the CLPA/PI industry leading cooperation announced at the SPS/IPC/Drives 2017 fair

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Byline: Robert Miller, CLPA-Americas Director
Vernon Hills, IL United States; December 18, 2018

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SPS/IPC/Drives 2017 sees the first results of the cooperation between the CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) and PROFIBUS & PROFINET International (PI), as CLPA unveils the first working coupler device that implements the CC-Link IE/PROFINET interoperability specification. This will enable easy transmission of information between the two protocols, leading to end users and machine builders benefiting from total transparency between CC-Link IE and PROFINET, the two most prevalent networking protocols in Asia and Europe respectively.

Developed by CLPA and PI partner Hilscher, the unveiling of the device marks another milestone in the on-going cooperation between the two associations. The announcement of the first working coupler on the CLPA stand at SPS/IPC/Drives 2017 less than a year after the completion of the specification underlines the importance that the market ascribes to the cooperation between CLPA and PI. CLPA-Americas Director

Robert Miller comments: "The 2015 fair saw the announcement of the cooperation between CLPA and PI, and at the 2016 fair we announced the completion of the specification to enable seamless integration between the two protocols. Now we have the first operating coupler, demonstrating that CLPA and PI, working with their partners, have delivered on the promise to produce working solutions. Hence the promise of increasing transparency and offering maximum flexibility to end users and machine builders as they operate globally has been realized."

With the new Hilscher coupler, users can effectively achieve communication between different parts of a line on separate networks, hugely increasing transparency and integration. Hilscher's NT 151-CCIE-RE coupler transmits data bi-directionally between CC-Link IE and PROFINET, offering simple network integration. The NT 151 works as a CC-Link IE Field Intelligent Device on one side and as a PROFINET IO-Device on the other, allowing both network controllers to communicate with each other. Fundamental mechanisms include a mapping model to map data from both sides, diagnostics for coupler and networks, and a SyCon-based DTM which works as the coupler configuration tool.

Hilscher Business Development Manager Armin Pühringer comments: "The simple bridge between the two networks will dramatically reduce the engineering work that has traditionally been necessary to achieve integration across the heterogeneous network architectures that are a fact of life in numerous plants around the world."

Pühringer adds: "Hilscher has a long relationship with CC-Link based technologies and PROFINET technologies, and going forward both of these will be essential for our business on a global scale. And by facilitating transparency and ease of integration between these two global leaders we are addressing a primary goal of the transition to Industry 4.0: allowing ever greater connectivity by providing end users with a simple method of achieving interoperability in brownfield applications. And all of this without the effort, cost and complexity of requiring communication architectures to support additional technologies or protocols."

PI Chairman Karsten Schneider comments: "What CLPA and PI have proven here is that two competing organizations can work together for the good of our users. If you really mean what you say about Industry 4.0 and the Industrial Internet of Things, then we will need to see more of this sort of collaboration. CLPA and PI are paving the way, with a level of cooperation that has not been seen before."

Miller concludes: "The cooperation between CLPA and PI really can help many companies make their vision of Industry 4.0 a reality. The introduction of this first coupler from Hilscher gives machine builders and end users the hardware they need to achieve seamless integration. We are also in discussions with other CLPA partners, so we hope the NT 151 marks the start of the arrival of other products onto the market. The delivery of such solutions to meet end user requirements shows just how committed CLPA and PI have been to deliver tangible results from their cooperation, and how partners such as Hilscher have recognized the market opportunity this represents. They also provide ample evidence of the benefits that can be gained when supposedly competing organizations work together to address their users' needs."

■ CC-Link Partner Association

Founded in 2000, the CC-Link Partner Association (CLPA) is an international open network organization dedicated to the technical development and promotion of the CC-Link family of open automation networks.

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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. Its main activities include the development of CC-Link IE and CC-Link technical specifications, conducting of conformance tests, development support, and promotion of the CC-Link technologies. The CLPA boasts more than 3,000 members. CC-Link is the leading open industrial automation network technology in Asia and is becoming increasingly popular in the Americas and Europe.

■ **Captions**

Image 1: Hilscher's NT 151-CCIE-RE coupler transmits data bi-directionally between CC-Link IE and PROFINET, offering simple network integration.

Image 2: Developed by CLPA and PI partner Hilscher, the unveiling of the device marks another milestone in the on-going cooperation between the two associations.

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