

XE product release

New era in automation control for southern Africa begins at Xperience Efficiency: Schneider Electric launches Modicon M580, world's first ePAC, locally

JOHANNESBURG – August 26, 2014 – Schneider Electric, a global specialist in energy management, today launched the new Modicon M580, a pioneering automation controller, at its first South African Xperience Efficiency event held in Johannesburg from 26 to 27 August 2014. The event tackles the demand drivers that are forcing change: economic and government rebalancing, urbanisation, digitisation, and sustainable resources.

M580 is the world's first ePAC, the next generation PAC (Programmable Automation Controller) based entirely on Ethernet, and is a key component of the company's integrated automation architecture: PlantStruxure. It gives industrial plant teams the power to design, implement and run a process that actively employs all the benefits of open networking, such as increased visibility to key process data and events, enhanced transparency and consistency of information, and large capacity for data traffic.

The core of the new cutting-edge Modicon M580 is the SPEAr microprocessor that embeds inside the controller standard unmodified deterministic Ethernet and applies it to all communications, including all the way to the backplane.

According to Steve Gerber, Southern African business development manager for the Industry Business at Schneider Electric, the result is an outstanding level of transparency and performance, without any need for manual configuration of each connected device.

The SPEAr technology applies Ethernet communications to the field bus, control bus, and internal backplane bus and, consequently, to all the connected equipment and modules. Ethernet is also automatically applied to every device in the network, such as electrical distribution, low-voltage boards, and energy management functions to form a complete and open system.

As a result, many types of data are aggregated seamlessly and made available to the operators to help them:

- rapidly diagnose and identify root causes of issues;
- access consistent and accurate data for timely decisions;
- make informed decisions about energy management; and
- reduce downtime with detailed insight into alarms and events.

Marc Lafont, marketing director for Modicon M580 at Schneider Electric, adds, “The ultra-powerful 600MHz ARM dual-core processor is the digital engine inside the M580. It delivers an extremely high level of computing power and connectivity, enabling us to build safety features right into the controller and enhance its resistance to cyber threats. In addition, with integrated change

configuration on the fly, plant teams no longer need to stop their process to add a drop or module, change architecture or even modify the application.”

Upgrading to Modicon M580 is possible without additional investment in wiring, software development or training. Based on the proven Modicon X80 range that includes the widely acclaimed on Modicon M340 controllers, M580 extends processing and architecture capabilities. It also allows compliancy with Xbus communications of Modicon Premium, meaning that depending on the current system needs, users can easily switch between the different controller sizes in the Modicon range without changing their I/O racks and cabling. Developed applications are preserved in the Unity Pro configuration software and remain fully operable with only minimum adjustment.

“Modicon M580 is the controller of choice for PlantStruxure, the collaborative and integrated automation architecture from Schneider Electric. PlantStruxure brings together the Telemetry, PLC/ SCADA and DCS offerings with complete life cycle services to help make operations more efficient. From initial design to modernisation, PlantStruxure transparently connects control, operation and enterprise levels of the business,” says Gerber.

About Xperience Efficiency

Schneider Electric’s Xperience Efficiency event, takes place for the first time in South Africa at the Birchwood Conference Centre from 26-27 August 2014, tackling the demand drivers that are forcing change: economic and government rebalancing, urbanisation, digitisation, and sustainable resources. The prestigious event brings

together industry- and government leaders, international and local delegates, as well as academics, partners and customers, to share knowledge about how to solve critical energy and sustainability challenges. By looking at the latest integrated energy trends and sustainability solutions that will transform how we all work, learn and play, Schneider Electric's event aims to create the ideal platform to discuss and demonstrate efficient energy opportunities. The discussion is, in particular, tailored to the southern African energy landscape, and focus is given to energy strategies, challenges and solutions.

About Schneider Electric

As a global specialist in energy management with operations in more than 100 countries, Schneider Electric offers integrated solutions across multiple market segments, including leadership positions in Utilities & Infrastructure, Industries & Machines Manufacturers, Non-residential Building, Data Centres & Networks and in Residential. Focused on making energy safe, reliable, efficient, productive and green, the Group's 140,000 plus employees achieved sales of 24 billion euros in 2012, through an active commitment to help individuals and organisations make the most of their energy.

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