

Fifty years of powering the world

- **Modern industrial automation rests on this technology**
- **Future only limited by imagination**
- **Upgrades available for older systems**

Johannesburg South Africa, 25 May 2018 – Schneider Electric is celebrating 50 years of automation transformation, with its invention in 1968 of the first PLC (Programmable Logic Controller). Prior to the introduction of the PLC, the level of real-time measurement and control was limited to the most basic levels due to technology constraints.

“On the 50th anniversary of the invention of the first PLC, it would be hard to imagine where our industry would be today without the PLC system. It is used in transportation, manufacturing, energy management and so many other industries. I am proud to have such a legacy be part of Schneider Electric’s DNA,” says Schneider Electric chairman & CEO, Jean-Pascal Tricoire.

The invention initiated the effective use of digital computer technologies in industrial automation, which triggered a massive transformation to the pervasive use of digital technology to deliver industrial measurements, controls and real-time information management.

The use of digital technology introduced capability well beyond basic measurement and control to expand control system functionality by utilising the compute power of the innovative technology. Today the use of digital technology is so pervasive that new engineers find it almost impossible to imagine an industrial automation world without it. However, it is important to take a step back every occasionally, to remember the achievements that made our current capabilities possible and this is one of those times.

Throughout the fifty years following the invention of the PLC, the capability expansion delivered by automation systems appears only to be limited by human imagination.

The results have been the introduction and common use of capabilities and functions that were not previously even considered to be possible, such as advanced process control, process optimisation, manufacturing execution systems, inferential measurement systems, safety control, condition management, process historians, workflow control, batch management, real-time accounting, real-time profitability control and so many other.

Industrial automation is a relatively recent technology field, which continues to undergo major transitions and advancements. It is exciting to look at new inventions that drive new levels of operational and business value.

Customers can start their journey to new levels of productivity, safety and cyber security by upgrading their PLC automation systems to the latest Modicon EcoStruxure Control Expert (formerly known as Unity Pro) based platforms.

The PLC upgrade and migration solutions preserve customers' automation hardware and software investment, whether they are starting from the legacy Modicon, SquareD, Telemecanique PLCs or from many other third-party platforms. Software conversion solutions preserve the look and feel of the original application to streamline investment and promote staff familiarity.

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About Schneider Electric

Schneider Electric is leading the digital transformation of energy management and automation in homes, buildings, data centres, infrastructure and industries. With global presence in over 100 countries, Schneider is the undisputable leader in Power Management – Medium Voltage, Low Voltage and Secure Power, and in Automation Systems. We provide integrated efficiency solutions, combining energy, automation and software. In our global Ecosystem, we collaborate with the largest partner, integrator and developer community on our open platform to deliver real-time control and operational efficiency. We believe that great people and partners make Schneider a great company and that our commitment to innovation, diversity and sustainability ensures that Life Is On everywhere, for everyone and at every moment.

For more information, go to www.schneider-electric.co.za.

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Schneider Electric

Luthando Makiwane

Industry Marketing Manager

Tel: +27- 11- 254 6400

Email: luthando.makiwane@schneider-electric.com

Litha Communications

Philisiwe Kobeli

PR Account Manager

Tel: +27 -11-484-7663

media@lithacommunications.co.za

philisiwe@lithacommunications.co.za