

PRESS RELEASE

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Making bakery production future-ready thanks to data transparency

At this year's trade press days in Karlsruhe, Mitsubishi Electric switched the focus to the bakery industry with its presentation "Increasing Productivity through Automation Technology in the Food Industry". Stefan Knauf, Corporate Account Manager Food & Beverage, CPG, at Mitsubishi Electric's Factory Automation – European Business Group, looked at options for improving efficiency and productivity in production by small and medium-sized companies and also offered a view at future automation concepts. The focus of these is the enhanced data transparency, which can be simply achieved with the use of special technologies.

Opportunities for increasing efficiency while at the same time reducing energy consumption are a frequently discussed topic, not least in the food industry, where productivity and profit margins tend to be low compared with other manufacturing industries. Pressure is also growing on prices in the bakery market, driven primarily by direct competition with discount retailers.

"Meaningful key performance indicators, like the collection and correct evaluation of process- and production-relevant data, and efficient production are the determining factors for long-term corporate success. A fundamental basis for continuous improvement is data transparency," explained Stefan Knauf. The embracing of automation technology is a key factor to enable a sustainable future business. "The intelligent use of automation technology can make a significant contribution to ensuring a company's competitiveness. Automation suppliers and machinery manufacturers need to promote a certain level of technical understanding and an

open-minded attitude to technological innovations among customers," the expert advised

As a longstanding partner for bakery technology, Mitsubishi Electric offers a comprehensive portfolio of automation components for bakeries. The range extends from the automation of inverter-controlled dough mixer applications to increasing the effectiveness of the overall system (Overall Equipment Effectiveness, OEE) up to production-enhancing robot technology.

For example, using the MES-IT interface module, continuous communication can be realised simply even in a heterogeneous, historically grown application structure – a so-called "brownfield" production plant – by interconnecting island solutions. Fully in line with Industry 4.0, the module acquires production data and test results at each stage of production and transmits them in real time to higher-level systems. These enable the systems to produce clear, meaningful evaluations by using Excel, SAP or pre-prepared reports. The link to existing systems can be



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established quickly without interrupting machine sequences.

“Preventive maintenance is a big issue in the food industry. If a machine fails without prior warning, the complete batch normally has to be disposed of. That’s expensive,” explained Stefan Knauf. Flexible maintenance and service concepts like FAG SmartCheck or the life-cycle software tool MAPS offer a remedy. FAG SmartCheck, for example, detects and reports the first vibrations in a drive long before any noise is emitted. As a result, the reaction time up to machine failure is considerably greater and the maintenance cycle can be adapted to production at a suitably early stage.

To increase plant flexibility and availability, it often makes sense to use robots. If several products are manufactured, packaged or removed on one line, the timing can be configured to be significantly faster and more cost-efficient by using space-saving robots and camera systems. At the same time the high hygiene standards of the food industry are met.

The fully integrated automation concept iQ Platform ultimately combines all components up to robot control on one single platform and ensures seamless communication within the plant. The iQ Platform is especially suitable for completely new “greenfield” plants.

About Mitsubishi Electric

With over 90 years of experience in providing reliable, high-quality products to both corporate clients and general consumers all over the world, Mitsubishi Electric Corporation is a recognized world leader in the manufacture, marketing and sales of electrical and electronic equipment used in information processing and communications, space development and satellite communications, consumer electronics, industrial technology, as well as in products for the energy sector, water and waste water, transportation and building equipment.

With around 121.000 employees the company recorded consolidated group sales of 29,5 billion Euro* in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2013.

Our sales offices, research & development centres and manufacturing plants are located in over 30 countries.

Mitsubishi Electric Europe, Industrial Automation – UK Branch is located in Hatfield, United Kingdom. It is a part of the European Factory Automation Business Group based in Ratingen, Germany which in turn is part of Mitsubishi Electric Europe B.V., a wholly owned subsidiary of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation, Japan.

The role of Industrial Automation – UK Branch is to manage sales, service and support across its network of local branches and distributors throughout United Kingdom.

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