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Rockwell Automation takes a holistic approach to safety

Machine Safety Services identify how manufacturers can help boost productivity whilst meeting safety requirements

For manufacturers across every industry, the pressure to comply with increasing safety legislation is acute, adding to a company's costs yet often delivering compliance to the detriment of productivity. However, in dramatic contrast to this picture, the message from Rockwell Automation is that a holistic approach to machinery safety can actually help to increase productivity, and so deliver a defined return on investment while contributing to the safety of operators and the plant in general.

Demonstrating the close links between safety and efficiency, Rockwell Automation has introduced a complete suite of Machinery Safety Services that can help manufacturers carry out risk assessments, identify hazards, optimise guarding design and performance, improve productivity, and integrate standard and safety control systems.

Rockwell Automation EMEA safety consultant Tim Hall comments: “A general perception in industry is that fast, efficient production and safe production don’t mix. Increased production targets invariably leads to safety systems being overridden, and that is the road to disaster. But what we are saying at Rockwell Automation with our Machine Safety Services is that if manufacturers take a more rounded approach to safety rather than simply doing the minimum needed to achieve compliance, there can be huge benefits in operational efficiency.”

With overall equipment efficiency (OEE) now the primary measure of productivity for many manufacturers, the holistic approach to safety promoted by Rockwell Automation can help to increase uptime and availability. This is done by taking into account the different modes of operation of machinery, by developing integrated safety systems that can decide if and when to stop or only stop the parts of the machine that represent a hazard, by identifying areas where greater efficiencies can be built into machine systems, and by building in vastly improved diagnostics capabilities.

The full suite of Machine Safety Services from Rockwell Automation includes hazard assessment, risk assessment, safety circuit analysis, safety systems and integration services, guarding solutions, safety system validation, production floor safety system support, product training and custom training.

Hazard assessment

Through effective hazard assessment, Rockwell Automation safety consultants can evaluate a manufacturer's equipment, identify guarding deficiencies and recommend machine guarding solutions that are compliant with current safety standards and design to help meet production and maintenance needs.

Risk assessment

A thorough risk assessment can lead a manufacturer's safety team through the globally recognised risk assessment process and offer guidance on a wide range of risk reduction techniques that encompass process redesign, guarding awareness, training, administrative requirements and personal protection equipment.

Safety circuit analysis

Safety circuit analysis covers verification of the design against the applicable standards, including EN-954, IEC62061 and EN ISO13849. This service provides a documented review of the safety circuit and a letter of compliance.



Safety systems and integration services

Safety systems and integration services deliver effective safety systems that are tightly integrated with the standard control system to provide a seamless transfer of control information and diagnostic data throughout the enterprise. The close links between the Machine Safety Services and the standard control design services within Rockwell Automation allow the company to help meet a wide range of customer needs, from a few individual components up to complete turnkey solutions.

Guarding solutions

As part of its safety product offering, Rockwell Automation has the capability to evaluate machine guarding requirements and manufacture tailored guarding solutions, encompassing all the mechanical and control related aspects of the project.

Safety system validation

Safety system validation is a service for developing the validation protocol and performing the validation to document that the safety system is installed and functioning properly. This is a key step in any safeguarding project. The protocol can be used to revalidate the system if any changes or repairs are made to it throughout its lifecycle.

Production floor safety system support

When support is required for production floor product troubleshooting, Rockwell Automation field engineers are trained to help diagnose the issues relating to the

system problems, and can also assist in safety PLC troubleshooting and programming.

Component training

Rockwell Automation safety consultants are specialists in providing training for maintenance, safety component application, and safety and standard PLC programming.

Custom training

Machine safety training can cover a variety of topics relating to machine safety and circuit design, and can be customised based on a manufacturer's individual requirements. Training can encompass relevant machinery safety standards, risk assessment, hazard assessment and safety system validation.

“The Machine Safety Services have a major overall impact of the machine, its uses, its maintenance, and the management of all those functions,” concludes Hall. “They help deliver safety in compliance with all national and international standards (i. e. EN, ISO, & IEC safety standards), yet boost manufacturing efficiency at the same time.”

A typical example is a safe motion system, which can slow the machine to a safe level in the event of a problem instead of stopping it completely. The result is increased uptime and reduced material wastage that is often associated with a complete shutdown. As a further example, by closely integrating the safety control and standard control aspects, diagnostics information generated by the safety control

system are available across the enterprise, allowing engineers to help pinpoint faults. At the same time, a zoned approach to safety means that only the area of the plant where the hazard exist need be affected – all other zones can maintain production.

Ends

Notes to editors

Rockwell Automation, Inc. (NYSE: ROK), is a leading global provider of industrial automation power, control and information solutions that help manufacturers achieve a competitive advantage for their businesses. The company brings together leading global brands in industrial automation that include Allen-Bradley® controls and services and Rockwell Software® factory management software. Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisc., the company employs about 20,000 people serving customers in more than 80 countries.

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