

Industrial Automation no longer a nice-to-have but a necessity when it comes to retaining the competitive edge

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While the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) continues to bring about exciting opportunities in many business sectors, it is within the manufacturing sector that it continues to revolutionise and streamline complex industrial operations.

Speaking at the Rockwell Automation University in Johannesburg, Richard Sharod, Africa & Middle East Regional Director at Stratus Technologies says, that when it comes to industrial automation (IA), a growing number of organisations are realising the importance of looking beyond their legacy automation systems and embracing IIoT in an effort to maximise productivity.

“The beauty of going the IIoT route is the move away from a complex, IT heavy and largely reactive production environment to one that is both seamless and proactive.

“Here organisations can easily take advantage of new technologies that protect their entire technology stack. Solutions that not only detect issues before they become bigger problems but also keep SCADA, Historian, HMI, MES and MOM systems running,” he explains

However, Sharod says to fully leverage the numerous benefits presented by IIoT it is critical to not overlook the importance of continuous availability as well as opting for solutions that are able to provide proactive notification of potential problems.

“Minimising downtime is particularly important in an interconnected IIoT infrastructure where data is central to manufacturing operations and where any lost data can have a huge impact on the accuracy and reliability of the

analytics.

“In addition, when looking to virtualise into a single system, it becomes critical to get built-in hardware redundancy with that single system and thus become less reliant on IT by automating hardware remediation. By using a single pane of glass so to speak, for all of your OT and IT applications also means purchasing and managing fewer software licenses,” he adds.

And although opting for the right solution is of prime importance when it comes to IA, for Sharod the right service provider is another key element in determining and maintaining productivity.

“Ultimately organisations need to look at the track-record of the service provider within the IA space. Due to the severity of the nature of the consequences when things go wrong no cost can be put to the peace of mind of knowing you have instant access to IA IT specialists. That is why it is essential that end users work with partners who are accredited with the key independent software vendors.

“In addition to our three decades providing partners with trusted always-on solutions, Stratus is also a Global Rockwell Automation Encompass Partner and has been deeply embedded in industrial automation for over 35-years. In an ever-changing industry-sector fraught with its own unique set of risks, nothing quite surpasses experience and longevity,” he concludes.

About Stratus Technologies

Stratus takes the complexity out of keeping business critical applications running 24/7. Stratus’ technologies proactively prevent instances of unplanned downtime both in the data center and at the edge, and our services ensure any issues are addressed before customers need to. Global Fortune 500 companies and small medium sized businesses in a wide range of industries across the globe have been relying on Stratus for operationally simple, continuous availability for more than 35 years. For more information, please visit www.stratus.com or follow on Twitter [@StratusAlwaysOn](https://twitter.com/StratusAlwaysOn).

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