

Network Insight improves OEE data reliability

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Industrial Automation Hardware

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Andy McKinney, Process Maintenance Engineer

Client

Huhtamaki

Industry sector

Packaging

Challenge

Reliable OEE data, and easier network management

Solution

Insight through IntraVUE

Implementation

Undertaken by the client with no training required

Huhtamaki, Lurgan, Northern Ireland, manufactures a range of egg packaging and cup carriers made from moulded fibre. This is a highly automated factory with dependency upon manufacturing information to sustain high levels of OEE. High integrity data transmission is required to ensure that the historised data and subsequent reported information is complete and reliable. To do this Huhtamaki's process engineer deployed IntraVUE networking monitoring and management from HardwarePT.

Huhtamaki is a global consumer and specialty packaging company with a leading position in smooth and rough moulded fibre products, release films, flexible packaging, foodservice paper cups and other products based on paper forming technology. In these operations they have a strong know how, technology platforms and business concepts that allow continued competitive advantage. Huhtamaki employs approximately 13,000 employees in 54 manufacturing units and several sales offices in 33 countries worldwide. Their moulded fibre products are compostable and very environmentally friendly.

At Lurgan the factory equipment is under constant renewal to ensure productivity and efficiency. Their key measurement is OEE which is captured to Wonderware's Historian and then analysed

by a series of template spreadsheets. The data capture is from diverse programmable logic controllers via Ethernet. However, there was a developing nuisance problem of missing data and sluggish network performance, this problem was self compounding as more equipment nodes were added to the system. It was time not only for a network overhaul but also to deploy network monitoring and management tools that were particularly designed for process control engineer's use.

The network was physically upgraded to backbone gigabit technology with fully managed switches, the equipment being connected to this Ethernet ring at appropriate points on the production floor. Industrial, screw-in connections were used at the switches.



The industrial network is separate from the factory's commercial network apart from a data gathering connection which is firewalled. There are currently 48 nodes in the system. The gigabit upgrade considerably helped to alleviate problems but more insight was needed as to actual events on the network to find a reason for this data loss.

Huhtamaki approached HardwarePT and purchased IntraVUE LE, an excellent way of cost-effectively obtaining insight into an industrial Ethernet network. The product was installed and configured (which to a high degree is automatic) by Huhtamaki themselves. This quickly revealed, through its threshold throughput display, augmented by a dynamic connection colour change display, that some of the older equipment was not as reliable as thought and was strangling network performance with legacy 10Mb connections.

This could have been assumed, but through IntraVUE the company had direct and measured evidence to justify an equipment upgrade programme at the controller level.

An interesting further use of IntraVUE is its interface with IP CCTV cameras. The cameras are set up at strategic points to monitor robotic and other unmanned highly automated processes; these can be scanned and viewed at any time through IntraVUE to spot any mal-operation – without having to physically visit the production floor, or remember an obscure IP address.

IntraVUE can access any device that serves its own web pages, such as printers, PLC's and inverter drives, to monitor status and prioritise maintenance tasks.

IntraVUE offers many other useful features that the company has deployed; a ready to use engineer's tool to ensure that the network, operating in an industrial EMC environment has no problems or developing problems at any time. This protects the completeness and integrity of their OEE reports, which are vital to the measured business value of the site.

Andy McKinney, Huhtamaki's Process maintenance Engineer, said, "IntraVUE is invaluable, it would be otherwise impossible to keep track of our network development and its real-time performance." Andy went on to say that he has customised the dynamic interface so that each node has a thumbnail image of the actual equipment connected – easing fast recognition of problems when alarms are generated. He also is aware that the inherent security provided by the system allows him to immediately detect new connections – and disable them if not authorised.

To make full use of IntraVUE, Andy is currently upgrading to IntraVUE Enterprise, which allows multiple network monitoring and SMS alarms, which is useful for the busy mobile engineer.

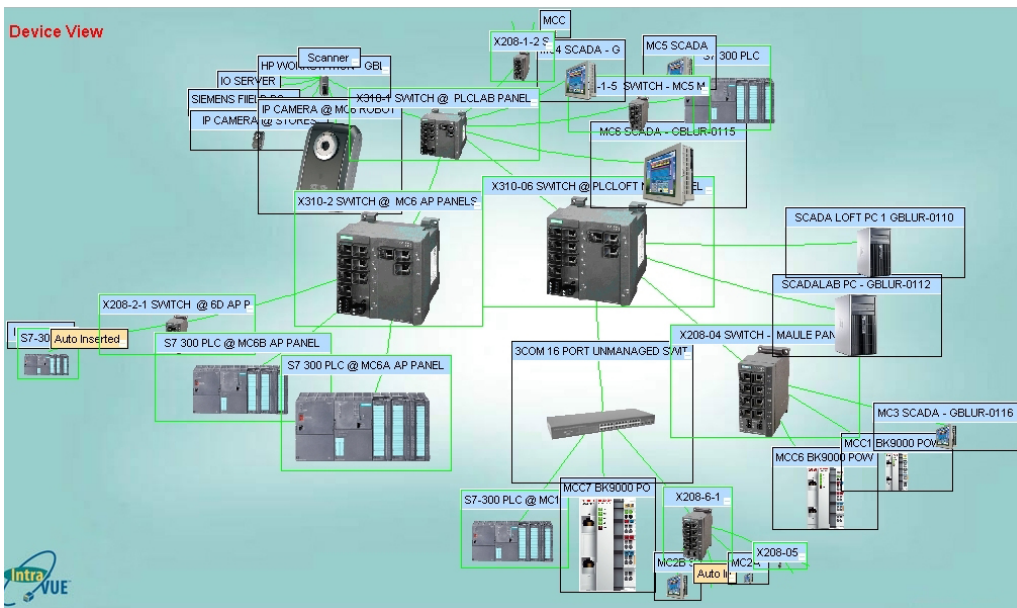
IntraVUE makes a measurable contribution to uptime and the quality of reporting at Huhtamaki at Lurgan – another problem ticked off the list, with a tool that will deliver benefits for a long time!

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