



Real Time Automation delivers world's first EtherNet/IP certified product design

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In the race to bring Industrial Ethernet products to market, Real Time Automation has designed the first lab-certified EtherNet/IP device. A high performance barcode scanner from RVSI Acuity was enabled with the EtherNet/IP protocol by RTA and validated at the ODVA conformance test lab at the University of Michigan.

The barcode scanner, the CIMax 7500, is an intelligent networked scanner and decoder, designed for high speed sortation systems. The scanner allows the user to manipulate the barcode data at will, prior to its transmission on the network, with a custom C programming environment. EtherNet/IP greatly expands its ability to communicate with other devices.

John Rinaldi, President of RTA, has been pushing for industry adoption of Ethernet/IP since ODVA released the first specification in 2000. He says, "The fieldbus wars are over and a handful of winners have survived. But if you look at all the available networks, Ethernet is the most popular. EtherNet/IP promises interoperability between automation devices, and people have been talking about it for two years. Now that new designs are passing the test with flying colors, it's time to get the show on the road."

RTA, which provides control vendors and ODVA members with product development assistance, says that most products can be EtherNet/IP enabled – with all hardware and software – in less than 90 days. "Our stack conforms to the Level 1 EtherNet/IP specification, written by ODVA and ControlNet International. It works well with Rockwell's ControlLogix platform, and other compliant devices. We can implement it through gateways, daughter boards or IC's. And if the product already has an Ethernet port, we can get the job done with no hardware changes at all."

Industrial Ethernet's rising popularity means product developers whose plans don't include Ethernet could find themselves in a tight spot. "If your biggest customer calls and says "10 weeks from now we need 100 units that support EtherNet/IP, what are you going to do? Most companies don't want to say "no" so they agree to do the project. They throw an engineer on it, but he gets bogged down in the complexity of the protocol. Dates get pushed back as last minute problems are ironed out, and the end result is an unhappy customer.

"We saw the need for turn-key EtherNet/IP solutions, and the certification shows that our system works," says Rinaldi. "It doesn't matter whether it's a barcode reader, HMI, PLC or motor drive, it can be EtherNet/IP enabled."

Rinaldi offers a free white paper: "**EtherNet/IP in 90 Days or Less: A Plan for Product Developers**" which is available from RTA upon request. Email info@rtaautomation.com or call (414)453-5100 to receive a copy.

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