

Easy rewiring encourages constant evolution of automated manufacturing plants

Until recently, rewiring automated plants as production requirements change and evolve could be a daunting prospect. Each change to the plant was likely to make the wiring a little more complicated and a little less efficient, with the danger that after a number of changes it comes to resemble an explosion in a spaghetti factory.

Electrical enclosure innovator, Spelsberg, has developed a solution that means wiring layouts can be kept neat through any number of changes, making both reconfiguring and fault tracing easy and efficient.

Automated factories and robotic production lines are becoming increasingly common as production engineers and senior managers come to realise their advantages. Perhaps most importantly, they allow manufacturing to remain viable in developed economies, rather than having it lost to low-wage economies. They can also virtually guarantee product quality by removing human error from the production equation; work non-stop for extended periods; and connect with distant sister plants via the Internet of Things to provide real-time intelligent, adaptive manufacturing on a global basis.

However, anyone with experience of such high tech set ups will know that one of the key requirements is a very high level of flexibility. Automated plants must be easy to adapt so that they can meet the ever-changing needs of the markets they serve.

Typical changes are likely to include: addition of extra processes; changes to product specification; new variants on the basic product; a need to increase throughput; the addition of completely new products to be made on the line; changes in working practise, etc.

Each change is almost certain to require some degree of rewiring of the machinery, control system and/or power supply. It does not take many changes for a once-neat and rational cable layout to be compromised into an untidiness that makes it difficult to trace faults and generally be dispiriting to any rationally-minded engineer.

Spelsberg has considered this natural evolution of wiring and redesigned its GTi range of electrical enclosures to provide a simple but effective solution that should help keep wiring lay-outs neat, efficient and easy to follow. Like most Spelsberg enclosures these are non-metallic; they are also self-assembly and modular in design.

The result is that they can easily be expanded by removing the side walls and adding another module - or in fact several more modules if required. Their design is such that adjacent modules fit together using interchangeable parts and always provide an IP65 rated seal. The GTi range is available in a number of sizes and can be supplied as both individual parts or in pre-assembled and populated sub-systems.

The GTi electrical enclosures are therefore designed to easily adapt to the ever-changing switchgear and cabling requirement of a busy factory as it responds to changing market requirements. Very importantly installations can be expanded and changed without having to remove or re-wire the original enclosure, meaning the whole engineering effort can be concentrated on new elements of the system.

Spelsberg can further help with rapid installation by supplying enclosures that they have factory assembled and populated to the exact specification of the customer. This service can include pre-wired meter housings, socket housings, switch-disconnect enclosures, circuit breaker housings, DIN rail, bus bars etc.

Chris Lloyd, Managing Director for Spelsberg UK, comments: "GTi users can meet their current cabling, switchgear and enclosures needs, yet be confident that future changes will be so straightforward that they can be accomplished rapidly and efficiently with only the very minimum disruption to production schedules.

"When expanding a GTi installation, new enclosures can be added as easily as building with Lego. Further, pre-assembled systems can remove the need to deal with multiple suppliers, save significant installation time and make commissioning a one-step process."

Spelsberg GTi enclosures are manufactured from corrosion resistant polycarbonate and are able to withstand all the rigours of life on the factory floor. Three lid options are available including grey, transparent and hinged transparent. Associated software makes initial designing and subsequent changes fast and simple.

“Space for you”

Spelsberg's company philosophy is based around the idea of providing flexibility and freedom to its customers. The space provided within each junction box; the large distribution and warehousing space; and the freedom to customise almost any product, irrespective of quantity, all equates to “Space for you”.

About Spelsberg

Spelsberg is one of the largest manufacturers of electrical enclosures in the world. With over 4,000 enclosures available as standard and further customisation possible, it offers solutions for almost any application.

With the largest supply of non-metallic enclosures, ex-stock in the UK, its products are often available for delivery within 24 hours; customisation is possible on any product, including bespoke entries, engraved corporate logos or fitted terminals, within 48 hours. Products can be ordered direct from Spelsberg or from most leading supply specialists including RS, Rapid, Farnell and CPC.

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