msl News

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Millennium Compliance

Are you ready?

It is now only weeks before the millennium.

We have been working hard on all our products and can state that all our Datascan products are compliant and the latest version 1.4.7 of Orchestrator is also compliant.

However if there is anyone still using Magus, DM2 or Orchestrator versions up to 1.4.6 RTE you ought to be aware of the fact that these products are not compliant with Y2K.

MSL of course offers an attractive upgrade path for those who wish to continue using their equipment.

New product range launched

Datascan Solo™

MSL has launched a new range of network based data acquisition products called Solo.

These products complement the 7000 range with a low cost and varied module line up specifically applications

in which there is a need for a low number of channels at each node on the network.

These modules are for analog inputs / outputs, digital inputs / outputs, counters and for converting RS-232 to RS-485/422 as well as an embedded controller module.

The extensive module range includes..

- S-7011 Thermocouple Input
- S-7013 RTD Input
- S-7017 8 Channel Analog Input
- S-7050 Digital I/O
- S-7021 Analog Output
- S-7188 Embedded controller
- S-7520 RS-232 to RS485
- S-7510 Isolated RS485 repeater
- S-7520A RS232 to RS422/RS485
- S-7510A RS422 repeater
- S-7080 offers counter/timer

For the full range and more detail see www.msl-datascan.com

(Datascan solo continued)

Software support for Datascan solo

In addition drivers are available for the following popular software packages:

- DASYLab
- National Instruments - Labview.
- Intellutions - Fix 32 Driver

In addition for customers interested in object based software (internet and intranet applications) and developing new interfaces the following software is available for Datascan Solo

- OPC server – OLE for Process Control
- Active X driver.
- DDE Server
- Win32 DLL for use with Visual Basic, C++ etc.

New High-speed product launched

Acqiris™

Another product being launched in England by MSL is a new range of high-speed waveform digitizer products.

This product line opens up a new market niche for MSL. These products have been developed and are being manufactured by a Swiss company called Acqiris.

Some of this products main features:

- 500 MS/s and 1 GS/s sampling rate
- Up to 2M points Acquisition Memory/channel

- 100 Mbytes/s Data Transfer rate to a PC via memory
- Plug and Play installation with Acquiris Live software for Windows 95/98/NT

Detail of Acquiris board

Orchestrator™ ODBC Interface

Move that data!

The Orchestrator ODBC interface (Open Data Base Connectivity) Provides a means by which data from Orchestrator can be transferred directly to any ODBC compliant database.

What does the Orchestrator ODBC Driver Do?

All of the information within Orchestrator is stored as proprietary binary or text information.

As such, this information is only usable by certain applications and the user may not be able or permitted to access this information.

The Orchestrator ODBC Driver is designed to provide the user with a way of uniformly accessing this information without having to know what format is used or where the information is stored.

What Information Can You Access?

Using the Orchestrator ODBC Driver, you can access the current channel configuration, current data values, header text, logged text, logged alarms and the information stored in the log files.

How Does it Work?

Structured Query Language (SQL) is used to allow users to query a variety of different data sources in the database management system.

All of the Orchestrator data files are non-SQL compliant so SQL can not be used to read this information. The ODBC Driver provides an SQL compliant interface between SQL Query Applications and Orchestrator.

In basic terms, an application like MS Access or MS Query, can process information from a database source, which is stored in a format it knows how to read.

The ODBC driver receives the SQL query from one of these applications, it then knows how to read the information held in the Orchestrator data files and builds up a result list for the query and returns the information to the calling application.

What Applications can I use?

MS Access, MS Query, Excel or other ODBC compliant applications can be used to view the data returned.

Pricing - ODBC Interface: £1,250

Technical Support

For technical support by phone on any of our solutions please call:

Jeff Farnell – Systems and Software

Rob Farley – Datascan and Software

Orchestrator OPC

What is OPC?

OLE for Process Control (OPC) is a new technology designed to bridge Windows based applications and process control hardware.

It is an open standard that permits a consistent method of accessing field data from plant floor devices.

This method remains the same regardless of the type and source of data. Therefore, end users are free to choose the software and hardware that meets their primary production needs, without having to consider the availability of proprietary drivers.

It is designed to provide business applications with easy and common access to industrial plant floor data.

Traditionally, each software or application developer was required to write a custom interface, or server/driver, to exchange data with hardware field devices.

OPC eliminates this requirement by defining a common, high performance interface that permits this work to be done once, and then easily reused by HMI, SCADA, Control and custom applications.

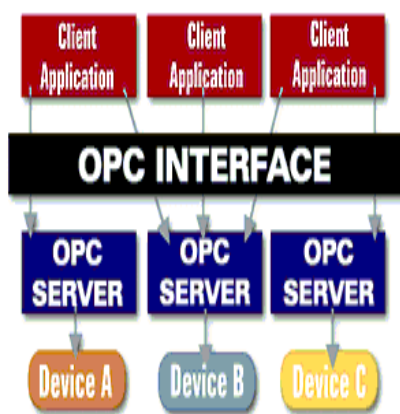A new facility for Orchestrator is the OPC Server and Client.

The OPC Server enables data collected using Orchestrator, from any device for which there is an Orchestrator driver, to be broadcast locally or over the network and received by any OPC client.

When Orchestrator works as a client it can collect data from any OPC compliant device or server.

This means that in the future manufacturers of I/O devices will supply OPC servers with their devices making them fully compliant with any OPC client.

Pricing

OPC Client:	: £950
OPC Server	: £950

Datascan 7000 - OPC Server

Free OPC Server

One of the problems of connecting I/O products to software has been the availability of drivers.

The development of OPC technology provides a means by which standard hardware can now communicate to a range of software products through a standard interface.

The Datascan OPC Server is available and will operate with OPC clients from all the major software suppliers.

More details plus full manual available.

Main features

- Compliant with current version 2.0 of the OPC specification
- Provides configuration of all Datascan modules
- Configuration stored in a standard *.mdb Access Database Format
- Support multiple networks
- Supports Datascan Master/ Slave operation.

World Wide Web

Surfers welcomed

Please have a look at our new and updated web pages.

These include details of items included in this newsletter as well as datasheets and manuals and a new download section of utilities and files

You can find us at
www.msl-datascan.com

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Forthcoming articles & events

Next Newsletter

- ❑ **Datascan 8000 preview**
- ❑ **Datascan Solo – more detail**
- ❑ **Update on Dalite**
- ❑ **More on Acqiris**
- ❑ **National Instruments Lookout™ driver for Datascan**

Events

**26th to 28th November 1999
NEC - Birmingham**
CIM'99 - Computing & Automation
UK's biggest applications event, focuses on Industrial Applications

**8th and 9th March 2000
GMEX Manchester**
Lab show North
Science & Laboratory based Instrumentation and Measurement

Datascan 7000 - Labview Driver

by popular demand

As a result of customer requests we have developed a Labview Driver for the Datascan 7000 range

LabView Basic Driver Functions

- Initialize Communication
- Set up Datascan
- Read channels from Datascan
- Set Digital and Analog Outputs
- Command Line Input

COM Port Parameters

The COM-port parameters are held as global variables and do not need to be set in each VI.

LabView Driver - Datascan Setup

The definition of Datascan setup parameters are offered in a selection list, which can be used by the LabView programmer in their own application.

- Type
- Range
- Resolution
- Module Type
- Others **….**

LabView driver - Benchmark Test

- Driver is capable of supporting 16 channels with 10Hz each.
- Higher channel counts provide a high bandwidth due to block handling of the scans
- Potential to increase the speed of the driver

The Labview driver is available FOC from Measurement Systems.

And finally

What a drag!

One of the MSL team namely John Munday from our skilled production department, races Dragsters in the UK and has agreed to let this machine be named officially 'msl-datascan' reflecting our new Web site address.

At UK Drag events, staged at the Avon Park raceway, this machine can be seen cutting up the Tarmac and being announced in our namesake.

Thanks go to John for this, maybe you'll see this parked in the MSL car park if you visit !

Feedback or new reader subscription

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter or if you would like any further information on any of our products or articles featured please Email us or alternatively fill in your details and fax back to us on

Fax +(44) 01635 31023

Newsletter by Email

We also intend to use e-mail services for this for of publication in the future.

If you are interested in this service please fill in your e-mail address below or e-mail us at

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