Building and Industrial Automation Industry Focus Launched By Ethernet Alliance

With Single-Pair Ethernet (SPE) creating opportunities for Operational Technology (OT) network innovation, Ethernet Alliance seeks to tap into building- and industrial-automation expertise

BEAVERTON, OR, AUGUST 11, 2020 – The Ethernet Alliance, a global consortium dedicated to the continued success and advancement of Ethernet technologies, today announced the launch of an industry focus around Operational Technology (OT) networks found in building and industrial automation. With development of Single-Pair Ethernet (SPE) creating new opportunities for solving challenges in OT networks, the Ethernet Alliance is seeking to connect with more expertise in the building- and industrial-automation industries.

"As the building- and industrial-automation industries come to rely more on SPE, there is a clear need to bring together the people creating and using the technologies so they can better understand one another," said Peter Jones, chair, Ethernet Alliance. "We are well positioned as a bridge between the OT experts in building and industrial automation and the IT (Information Technology) expertise that we have traditionally served across the Ethernet ecosystem. This new Ethernet Alliance industry focus will work to align the many disparate stakeholders and, in turn, help the building- and industrial-automation industries get to where they want to go with Ethernet."

One of the key roles that the Ethernet Alliance plays is supporting the deployment of Ethernet technologies into markets not traditionally served by Ethernet. OT networks, which control manufacturing processes or provide occupant comfort and safety in a building, historically have been siloed from Ethernet-based IT networks. Legacy, built-for-purpose protocols have instead dominated OT networking. In recent years, however, cybersecurity issues related to those protocols have grown more glaring, and generational transition in the workforce is creating a shortage of expertise to manage and maintain OT networks based on the legacy protocols.

SPE is a crucial technology development for allowing OT networks to become part of a seamless, Ethernet-based network. Defined in IEEE 802.3cg™, *IEEE Standard for Ethernet—Amendment 5: Physical Layer Specifications and Management Parameters for 10 Mb/s Operation and Associated Power Delivery over a Single Balanced Pair of Conductors*, which was published in May 2020, SPE substantially boosts the performance, security, flexibility and manageability of the OT networks on which the building- and industrial-automation industries depend.

"We are excited about the Ethernet Alliance's launch of an industry focus around building and industrial automation," said Ron Zimmer, president and chief executive officer, Continental Automated Buildings Association (CABA). "SPE is a promising technology for our industry, and CABA's membership of leaders in advancing integrated home systems and building automation worldwide are committed to innovation that empowers connectivity among people, spaces and technology for a better tomorrow."

Added Brett Lane, chief technical officer, Panduit: “The benefits SPE can bring to building and industrial automation are exciting. SPE is a vital next-generation technology which stands to help industry achieve better business outcomes through the continuation of convergence across the enterprise, and the Ethernet Alliance’s launch of this industry focus around OT networks is well timed.”

To learn more about and engage in the Ethernet Alliance’s new industry focus on building and industrial automation, please visit: https://bit.ly/EASPEAug20 andview the Ethernet Alliance SPE infographic here: https://bit.ly/EA-SPE-Infographic. For more information about the Ethernet Alliance, please visit http://www.ethernetalliance.org, follow @EthernetAllianc on Twitter, visit its Facebook page, or follow its LinkedIn company page.

About the Ethernet Alliance

The Ethernet Alliance is a global consortium that includes system and component vendors, industry experts, and university and government professionals who are committed to the continued success and expansion of Ethernet technology. The Ethernet Alliance takes Ethernet standards to market by supporting activities that span from incubation of new Ethernet technologies to interoperability demonstrations and education. The organization’s plans for 2020 may be found on the Events page of its website.

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