



A wide range of ancillary equipment – from dryers and cleaners, to conveyors and mixers – is vital to the plastics extrusion process, and all these and more can be seen at K2016

K2016: Ancillaries add extra value to extrusion

Walk around this year's K2016 and you will see a common theme emerging, especially in the machinery halls: that of 'Industry 4.0'. This is an emerging industry standard that will allow greater connectivity and interoperability between machinery, and it's no surprise that ancillary manufacturers – whose kit must hook up to core machinery – are in on the act.

Piovan has updated its Winfactory supervision software by incorporating 'Industry 4.0' protocols – which will allow greater interoperability between devices in future.

Winfactory 4.0 uses OPC - UA (Open Platform Communication - Unified Architecture), the protocol selected by Industrie 4.0 before issuing the Smart Factory specifications: developed by the OPC Foundation in 2015, it defines the communication rules and data exchange between the various entities that make up the system.

Using this protocol means that Winfactory 4.0 can supervise and ensure dialogue between Piovan machines and machines of other manufacturers. There is no longer the need for an interface that 'translates' the data into a common format, says Piovan – and the information exchange becomes

immediate and the systems can interact independently.

Industry 4.0 is based on the adoption of four basic principles, which are implemented in the Smart Factory: Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS) – which guarantees interoperability of devices; integration of data to the context; digital interconnection; and decentralisation of decisions.

Winfactory 4.0 can be configured in several ways. Piovan developed different modules to manage each situation, from the production of PET to flexible film preforms. It is available in 11 languages (with the option to add more) and includes a new customisable graphic interface, barcode reader, touchscreen support, email notification function in case of alarms and log reporting.

Piovan's latest version of Winfactory incorporates 'Industry 4.0' protocols, which will improve interoperability