

Piovan's key focus for K2016 was on Smart Manufacturing, with four new products on display that allow customers to make the move into Industry 4.0 production.

The first, and perhaps the most immediately significant, is its Winfactory 4.0 production supervision system. This is designed to allow processors with existing equipment to make the move into the Industry 4.0 environment without the need to reinvest. It uses OPC-UA interfacing to allow connection between Piovan and third party equipment, whether it be a moulding machine, robot or a smartphone.

Winfactory 4.0 is built on the expertise gained from the existing Winfactory software, Piovan Chief Marketing Officer Giorgio Santella says the company has 1,500 systems in operation, but extended and shaped for Industry 4.0 application. It supports up to 800 inputs, for instance, compared to 80. However, he emphasises that it is industrial – and hence affordable – software.

The system is available in four basic configurations tailored to specific industry requirements: automotive, medical, PET and film. These can be supplemented with additional modules such as energy management and mobile reporting.

The company also introduced three new items of equipment with fully integrated OPC-UA interfacing and enhanced on-board process evaluation and auto-adapt capabilities. These include a Digttemp EVO thermochiller, Genesys high efficiency PET dryer, and Quantum E blender.

"These are our first cyber-physical models," said Santella. "To turn any equipment into a cyber-physical system is not easy. We have to rethink them and decide what is the benefit. These first three systems have a real benefit."

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