AUTOMOTIVE FACILITY –

Controllogix Upgrade

The Challenge

The Client was behind the times in being able to acquire in realtime production data from various forge presses, heat treat ovens, automatic inspection machines, and product trim stations. They were faced with increasing pressure to eliminate waste, increase efficiency and understand their downtime issues. They did have islands of automation installed, however; a plant floor network or data collection mechanism/infrastructure was not in place. Shift production reporting data was collected by hand, lacked consistency, did not include downtime, and was handled and re-entered several times as it made its way into a final report.

The Solution

This project was kicked off with a site tour, a presentation of options for collecting information in realtime, a prioritization of information to be collected and reported, and an outline of the downtime information of interest. An Allen Bradley ControlLogix platform was selected to act as a gateway for linking the various processors throughout the plant. This solution allows access to all PLCs from any PC on the office LAN. The GE Fanuc iHistorian product was selected as a plant historian allowing for the plant wide collection of discrete, analog, text/string based production and downtime information. GE Fanuc's Proficy Portal was selected to give plant personnel realtime access to all collected information using a browser in graphical and/or text based report formats.

The Result

The technical solution selected provided this client with the ability to visualize plant operations in a set of tools that are easily configurable by the client without the need for outside support. For the first time, production managers and schedulers had accurate realtime information in hand allowing them to make better business decisions. Downtime information, especially those reflecting high frequency and high impact problems, allowed for a focus on issues proven requiring immediate attention.

The Benefits

Benefits to the client include:

- Elimination of a 3rd shift due to improved manpower distribution.
- Web based realtime production information eliminated time delays and guesswork.
- Factual knowledge of downtime issues are yielding increased operation efficiencies.
- Version control over production PLC code through a centralized storage location.
- PLC troubleshooting from a centrally located site.

Your Goals - Our Experience - Exceptional Results