

Azure Wireless

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Azure Wireless Announces Contracts for Wireless IP Manufacturing Control Systems

Solutions to provide wireless IP control systems for flexible manufacturing operations of six Fortune 500 companies and U.S. government

ROCHESTER HILLS, Michigan – February 21, 2005 – Azure Wireless announces that it has received contracts to provide wireless IP network control systems to six Fortune 500 manufacturers and the U.S. government. The contracts include design engineering, implementation, system integration, testing and support.

The systems will enable the companies to implement flexible, reconfigurable manufacturing operations, streamline plant-floor communications system requirements, reduce costs and complexity, eliminate legacy serial communications and leverage IP network investment. The systems are also capable of providing mobile Human Machine Interface (HMI), allowing engineering and maintenance staff to remotely monitor and control machines.

The customers include an automobile manufacturer, a Tier 1 auto supplier, a non-automotive vehicle manufacturer and several consumer goods manufacturers. Several of the systems will utilize legacy serial PLC equipment in the first phase of their migration to IP-based control systems, with Azure providing serial-to-TCP/IP protocol conversion as part of the contracts.

The systems ensure reliable and robust communications through the use of on-site network design engineering, diversity antenna systems and, in some cases, hot-standby wireless electronics, while network security is achieved through the implementation of the WPA (Wi-Fi Protected Access) and WPA2 (IEEE 802.11i) security standards.

“Manufacturing control systems are one of the last bastions of legacy serial communications networks and manufacturing engineering has tended to view Ethernet with caution. IP is only now beginning to be viewed as a realistic alternative to serial in this environment, and with the maturation of wireless technologies and introduction of robust wireless network security solutions, progressive manufacturers are leapfrogging wired IP networks and implementing wireless as a means of achieving a truly flexible, reconfigurable manufacturing environment,” said John Polakowski, president of Azure Wireless.

“The customers who will continue existing serial control systems are able to leverage existing control systems investment while beginning to reap the benefits that a flexible wireless IP network provides. They are not required to implement new on-board control systems in order to begin converting their communications to IP and none of what we are providing will be obsolesced when they do upgrade legacy serial control systems to Ethernet,” continued Polakowski.

About Azure Wireless

Azure Wireless provides its clients and channel partners with innovative mobile computing, wireless networking and control systems solutions and integration that produce productivity increases, efficiency gains and operating expense reductions through untethered connectivity. For more information, please visit <http://www.azuresol.com> or call 248-651-8210.

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