

Ethernet, growing in popularity and functionality

Effective communication is vital to the success of every organization. There is no exception for the industrial manufacturing and process industries.

As industrial automation becomes more common in plants around the world, fast and low-cost deterministic networking of control systems is being demanded. Control Techniques understands this and has embraced the challenge to bring low cost Ethernet up to the performance standards required by high-performance drive applications.

Our SM-Ethernet option module (\$600 list) is available for the Commander SK, Commander GP20, Unidrive SP, and Digitax ST. It allows drive control and status data transfer using your choice of either the Modbus TCP/IP or the Ethernet/IP protocol. SM-Ethernet also has a built-in, password protected web server that allows remote monitoring, and parameter manipulation through your favorite web browser. Advanced benefits include automatic email triggers based on thresholds that you set. The SM-Ethernet option module is now our best selling communications option.

The next step up is an Ethernet product designed for industrial automation and precise control. While the two standard IP protocols available with SM-Ethernet are popular and well accepted, they are not deterministic, therefore limiting their use to applications not needing to react in real time. For these more demanding applications, Control Techniques will soon release the SM-EtherCAT module (\$700 list). SM-EtherCAT uses a special “pass through telegram” that allows for extremely fast, deterministic update rates. See page 378 in our product catalog for further details. The SM-EtherCAT is now in beta testing.

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