

SCHOTT Tubing employs Softing's OPC Technology in Precision Measurement Application

Whether flat screens for TV sets or displays for computer monitors, notebooks and mobile phones – hardly any other special glass application has experienced a similarly dynamic development as CCFLs (Cold Cathode Fluorescent Lamp), the background lighting for LCD TFTs (Liquid Crystal Display Thin Film Transistor).

The quality standards for producing special glass types that are used in

TV sets, computer monitors, pharmaceutical packaging systems, halogen lights, or in plant engineering applications are extremely high. The permissible tolerance for the glass-tube wall thickness is 20 nanometers (20 billionths of a meter). SCHOTT Tubing is using a precision instrument to measure the thickness of the glass-tube wall. The measurements are collected in a Microsoft Excel sheet.

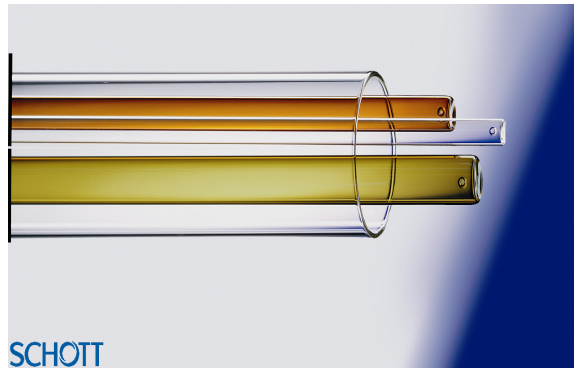
Until quite recently, SCHOTT Tubing did not have an interface between their process control system and the precision instrument/Excel. A plant operator had to copy every single measurement manually from the Excel sheet to the process control system; a tedious, time-consuming, and error-prone method in need of improvement.

SCHOTT's control engineers contacted Softing to identify a scalable, reliable, and robust method to link the process control system with the precision instrument. SCHOTT Tubing decided on Softing's industry-hardened OPC technology. In particular, SCHOTT is employing Softing's OPC Easy Connect Suite and OPC ActiveX control as a reliable link to automatically transmit the measured values from Excel to the process control system.

After only a few mouse clicks Softing's OPC ActiveX control is integrated with Excel and enhances Excel with an OPC interface. Linking the measurements listed in the Excel sheet to the process control system was quickly achieved by using Softing's OPC Tunnel and OPC ActiveX controls.

"We are extremely pleased with Softing's solution," said Mr. Pollath of SCHOTT Tubing's process data processing. "Based on our experience with a pilot installation we decided to implement this solution step-by-step in all of our production facilities."

"Over the last 25 years Softing has acquired the technical expertise that enables us to actively shape open technology standards and to be at the cutting edge of progress for the benefit of our customers," said Jürgen Lange, Softing's Market Segment Manager OPC. "We are proud of the fact that a considerable number of large companies, like SCHOTT, rely on Softing as their technology provider."



Industry

- Special glass for flat screens

Task / Objective

- Automatic transfer of measurement data to the process control system

Requirements

- Automated access to Excel data via OPC
- Link between two OPC client applications

Solution

- Softing OPC Easy Connect Suite
- Softing OPC ActiveX Client Controls

Benefits

- Elimination of copying data manually
- Avoid errors at the transfer of measurement data to the process control system

Market segments

- Usage of special glass in pharmaceutical industry, electronics, vehicle construction and environment engineering.

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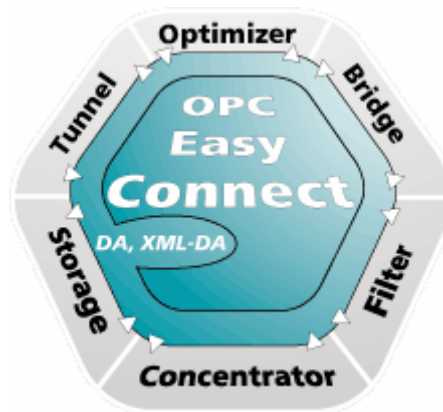
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Industrial Communication
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2009 – 010

Softing's **OPC Easy Connect Suite** is designed to enhance OPC-based applications. This intelligent set of OPC middleware products simplifies the commissioning and operation of OPC clients and servers, significantly improves the data throughput of your OPC interfaces, and ensures reliable OPC communication links. For example, the OPC Tunnel, one of Softing's OPC Easy Connect tools, is an effective solution to establish a communication link (encrypted, if desired) between an OPC client and server that bypasses the cumbersome DCOM layer completely.



Every install of Softing's high performing OPC Servers includes an OPC test client and an **OPC ActiveX Client Control**. The OPC ActiveX Client Control enables a user to easily implement simple HMI applications based on the included source code for MS Excel, Visual Basic, Delphi, .NET, HTML pages, and of course MFC applications.

About SCHOTT

SCHOTT Tubing, a subsidiary of the SCHOTT Group, is one of the leading manufacturers of glass tubing worldwide with a product range of more than 60 different special glass types and a production capacity of more than 110,000 tons. SCHOTT Tubing offers tailor made products and services for international growth markets such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, automotive and environmental technology. The SCHOTT Group employs 16,700 people worldwide and has sales of approximately US\$ 3 billion.

About Softing

In industrial automation, Softing is a specialist for fieldbus technology and has established itself as a world-leading partner for networking automation systems and control solutions. Softing provides customers the key technology to connect devices, controls and systems with the leading communication technologies. In fieldbus technology, Softing is a world-class expert for Foundation fieldbus, PROFIBUS, and CAN/CANopen/DeviceNet. The company's wide range of expertise includes solutions for OPC, FDT, and Real-Time-Ethernet protocols such as, PROFINET IO, EtherNet/IP, or Modbus/TCP. Many of the products and services developed by Softing since the company was founded in 1979 have become reference standards throughout the world. In addition, Softing has established itself as a provider of sophisticated diagnostic tools for fieldbus systems.

For more information: <http://www.softing.us> or Tel: (978) 499-9650,
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