

April 07, 2003

Product Round-Up: Operator Interfaces (Part 1 of 3)

HMI selection criteria are a'changin'

February 28, 2003

Specifiers of industrial operator interface terminals have changed their selection criteria over the past few years. As a result, some vendors are having a hard time keeping up with these industry trends.

A recent Venture Development Corp. (www.vdc-corp.com) study identified the product selection criteria of operator interface monitors and terminals, and found several key characteristics were named by a majority of users.

The largest percentage of user respondents identified quality and reliability as important selection criteria. This is clearly important in mission-critical operations and difficult manufacturing environments. High quality, reliable monitors and terminals are an important contributor to minimal down time, increased productivity, and higher profitability.

We'll talk about the other findings in the next two installments of this round-up, to be web-published the weeks of March 10 and 17.



HMI Talks to Multiple PLCs

From a single screen, NS operator interface can access information from PLCs on an Ethernet network, a ControllerLink network, and up to two serial ports, all simultaneously. It also has a four-channel video input module to display camera images from vision inspection sensors. Its ladder tool monitors a PLC's ladder program from a system menu so the user doesn't have to use a laptop or PC to troubleshoot.

Omron Electronics

800/55-OMRON; <http://www.info.omron.com>

Monitors Mount Easily

Entuitive Series 3000 Models 1567L 15-in. and 1767L 17-in. LCD modular industrial touch monitors mount in front, but removing an anodized bezel allows rear mounting. Both are available with a serial and USB touch interface for use with AccuTouch five-wire resistive, and IntelliTouch and SecureTouch surface-wave touch technologies. Both have a 250 NIT panel, DVI-D interface, and UL, cUL, FCC, CE and TUV-GS approvals.

Elo TouchSystems

800/356-8682; <http://www.elotouch.com>

Pendant Arm Holds Monitor

The Vertical Motion Pendant Arm can swing, rotate, tilt, swivel, raise, or lower a monitor in a 16-in. vertical range. The NEMA 12-rated arm also allows monitors to completely lift and swing away from the work area when not needed. It can tilt 20[deg] for anti-glare and accommodate monitors weighing 25-100 lbs. Optional extension arms expand the reach of the display up to 50 in.

Hoffman

800/355-3560; <http://www.hoffmanonline.com>

Flush With Successful Space Saving

The space-saving microOP/ATM flat-panel workstation



mounts flush in the walls of manufacturing suites. It is completely accessible from the front and can house most standard desktop or industrial PCs. The workstation includes an 18-in. LCD and a recessed industrial keyboard with pointing device. Options include touchscreens, cooling, and purging for hazardous areas.

Automated Control Concepts
732/922-6611; <http://www.opstation.com>.

HMI Software for Machine Builders



InteractX software includes 18 preconfigured, fully rendered panel tools for buttons, lights, gauges, and readouts. It supports graphics with true-type color, roundness, gradients, patterns, materials, and transparency. The software provides alarm management functions, an OPC client and server support network, and support for VBA and ActiveX. It has an embedded web browser and an integrated browsing tool for viewing web-enabled documents and media.

CTC/Parker
513/831-2340; <http://www.ctcusa.com>

Fanless Industrial Computer

The Panel 1060-935 fanless RISC computer has a 5.7-in. QVGA STN LCD with resistive-type touchscreen and five function keys. The front metal bezel is NEMA 4/12 certified. It has a 206 MHz Intel StrongARM processor, 32 MB of SDRAM and 16 MB of Flash memory, an onboard LCD controller, two serial ports, one Centronics connector for 24-bit digital I/O, and a CompactFlash Type II socket that supports a solid-state disk.

Axiom Technology
626/581.3232; <http://www.axiomtek.com>

OPC Server Connects to HMIs

Open Access OPC server and ActiveX controls for the company's motion and machine controller product lines enable interoperability between devices, automation control, and business systems. The OPC server provides users with easy access to machine and process data for interface with commercial HMI products, SQL databases, web servers, and wireless communications products.

Berkeley Process Control
510/222-8004; <http://www.berkeleyprocess.com>

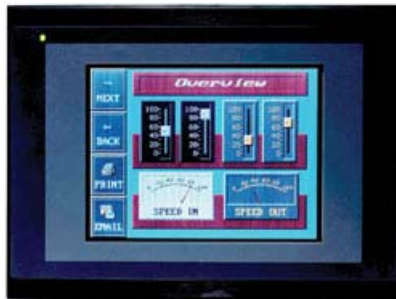


Programmable Touchscreen

The Panel-Touch Controller is a C-programmable computer with a built-in operator interface. User-defined graphics objects can be defined with Windows paint programs, making it easy to create sophisticated displays. It has a high-contrast 128x240 pixel display and a 5x4 in. touchscreen. The controller has a real-time operating system, device drivers, RS232/485 ports, 256K Flash, 128K RAM, analog and digital I/O, PID control, motor controls, and communications.

Mosaic Industries
510/790-1255; <http://www.mosaic-industries.com>

Touch Buttons



The E615T E Series touchscreen has a 5.7-in. TFT display with 256 colors, Ethernet and Profibus connectivity, embedded Internet/intranet accessibility, web server and browser, multilanguage support, and alarm/recipe management. It can connect to about 250 products from Mitsubishi and other vendors. Also available are E-Keys membrane pushbutton/pilot light modules that connect to E-Series terminals and support applications requiring operator interaction.

Mitsubishi Electric Automation
847/478-2100; <http://www.meau.com>

Touch the Screens

Touchscreen products include resistive and capacitive touchscreens in sizes 2-17 in. Screens are available with anti-glare, scratch-proof, and anti-reflective coatings, and can accommodate finger, gloved hand, or stylus inputs. Applications include mobile handhelds, inventory management, factory automation, PDAs, and web phones.

Touch International
512/388-0090 x26; <http://www.touchintl.com>

Industrial Computers Come Loaded

VersaView computers and monitors are available with pre-installed software products, including RSVIEW Enterprise Series HMI software and the RSBizWare suite of software products, minimizing the time needed for loading and configuring software. Monitors are available in 12, 15 or 17.4 in. display sizes, and computer memory is available from 128 MB to 1 GB RAM.

Rockwell Automation

800/223.5354; <http://www.ra.rockwell.com>

HMI Connects to the Web

The GLC2000 family combines control and HMI functions with Ethernet connections. Data can be monitored and transmitted to remote offices via Ethernet or the web. It has built-in ladder logic for control, supports the Flex Network distributed I/O, and handles up to 1,008 I/O points. The family consists of the 5.7-in. GLC2300, 7.4-in. GLC2400, 12.1-in. GLC2600, I/O modules, and on-screen live video.

Xycom Automation

734/429-4971; <http://www.xycom.com>

