



## SUMMARY

### Customer

Hilscher-Clarke

### Challenge

Installation of industrial switches for energy monitoring

### Solution

Technical expertise

### Results

- Longer product life span
- Lower total cost of ownership
- Greater reliability in harsh environment



For a fast-tracked project such as this, Anixter was able to provide a quick turnaround and get us the right equipment faster than I anticipated. The open communication, their ability to think on their feet and the quick responsiveness were all keys to our success in this project.

**John Russ, Automation Manager and Project Engineer for Hilscher-Clarke**

### Customer Challenge

Hilscher-Clarke's Systems Integration and Automation group was hired to install an industrial communications network in an existing steel manufacturing plant. Part of the completed network included the installation of Industrial Ethernet switches, which were being used for a day-to-day energy-monitoring project. Up to 25 switches were needed to complete the installation. In the harsh environment of a steel manufacturing plant, network switches need to perform under stressful conditions while providing uncompromised reliability and performance.

"Initially the customer came to us to help put in a new network backbone, which would alleviate an existing mixed-fiber network that had control, business and communication devices connected," said John Russ, Automation Manager and Project Engineer for Hilscher-Clarke. "We wanted to start from scratch and run fiber around the plant to fan out from the network cabinets." Each network would have its own independent fiber ring, including the automation/PLC control network that included the industrial switches.

The original specifications called for a "lighter" industrial switch, which was similar to a standard IT data switch. Even though the switch did not have the industrial ratings, the steel company felt that the tradeoff between potential equipment failure and cost was worthwhile. The contractor called on Anixter for its experience in dealing with IT and industrial switches and requested Anixter to recommend and source the right products to meet the end-user's long-term needs.

### Anixter Solution

After reviewing the initial specifications, Anixter proposed a modular solution for the industrial switches. The solution would allow the installer to use the same family of switches in different configurations, which would minimize the need for training on multiple switches and speed installation at the job site. Anixter also recommended a manufacturer partner that provided not only a modular solution, but also one whose products could withstand the harsh steel manufacturing environment.

"What we needed was a solution to connect all of our hardware together," Russ said. "Anixter had the product offering and recommendations for this network, and together we had some meetings with the customer to come up with a solution." After listening to Anixter's and Hilscher-Clarke's recommendations, the steel manufacturer decided to go with the heavy-industrial switches for the installation. These provided a higher temperature specification rating, which required no fans, as well as an extended warranty. Considering the features of the recommended switches—robustness, fewer components needed to monitor and a superior warranty—the overall cost of ownership over the life of the switches was much less than the initial specifications.

CASE STUDY

# HILSCHER-CLARKE INCREASES RELIABILITY WITH ANIXTER'S INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTISE



## Project Results

The entire process with Anixter started with a simple meeting and progressed into a comprehensive needs assessment and product specification review that allowed the customer to select the best product for the application while reducing total cost of ownership for the manufacturer. With Anixter and its manufacturer partner, the installer received a valuable resource, knowledgeable about the latest industrial automation products.

“Anixter provided the on-site expertise and demonstrated a deep understanding of the products they offer” said Russ. “For a fast-tracked project such as this, Anixter was able to provide a quick turnaround and get us the right equipment faster than I anticipated. The open communication, their ability to think on their feet and the quick responsiveness were all keys to the customer having success in this project.”

## Industrial Communications Solutions

Through enhanced business intelligence and improved plant-to-enterprise communications, Industrial Ethernet is helping businesses to connect divergent systems into one seamless, integrated network. By integrating production information with day-to-day operations, Industrial Ethernet provides:

- Efficient installations and troubleshooting
- Faster and less costly plant upgrades, expansions and change-outs
- Access to real-time data to improve overall plant operations
- Remote troubleshooting and corrective action capabilities
- A lower total cost of ownership

You can rely on Anixter's technical experts to keep you current on the latest Industrial Ethernet products, applications, industry trends, standards and emerging technologies.



OVER  
**8,300**  
employees

OVER  
**100,000**  
customers

MORE THAN  
**450,000**  
products

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