

Chapter Twenty-Two:

Rockwell Automation Uses Content Marketing to Be Global, Local, and Cost-Effective

This global manufacturing company goes way beyond promoting the “features” of its products and services, to clearly explaining how it provides solutions for its customers.

Type of Organization: \$5 billion multi-national corporation with HQ in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Major Marketing Objective: To strengthen ties to Australian customers with an integrated print/online content marketing program that bridges cultures and languages.

Content Types:

- » Print magazine
- » eZines
- » eNewsletters
- » Comprehensive online product and service library

Unique Element: The Asia-Pacific marketing group creates a core publication in English that is customized by language and content to match local needs.

Results: Content-rich publications build trusted relationships with a diverse customer base by helping to solve problems and teach best practices.

You just know that a company whose service mark is “*Listen. Think. Solve.*” will have a pretty good handle on content marketing. This global manufacturing company uses both print and online content marketing effectively to connect with its technically savvy buyers around the world.

Even with a limited budget, the Rockwell Automation Asia-Pacific division is able to reach out to customers and prospects in multiple languages and multiple ways. Traditional trade publication advertising has become less

effective over the years. In addition, in the Asia-Pacific region, trade shows, which are big in North America and Europe, are relatively rare. This limits the ways in which this manufacturing giant can communicate effectively and regularly with its audience.

Because of these limitations, Rockwell has chosen to create its own high-quality content, which reflects the high quality of its products and services.

Custom Magazine Targeted to Specific Countries

Rockwell's Asia-Pacific magazine *Automation Today* is an excellent example of how to provide relevant content that is both broadly applicable to customers—and customized to individual countries. *Automation Today* typifies Rockwell's "Listen. Think. Solve.®" approach to its customers and to content marketing.

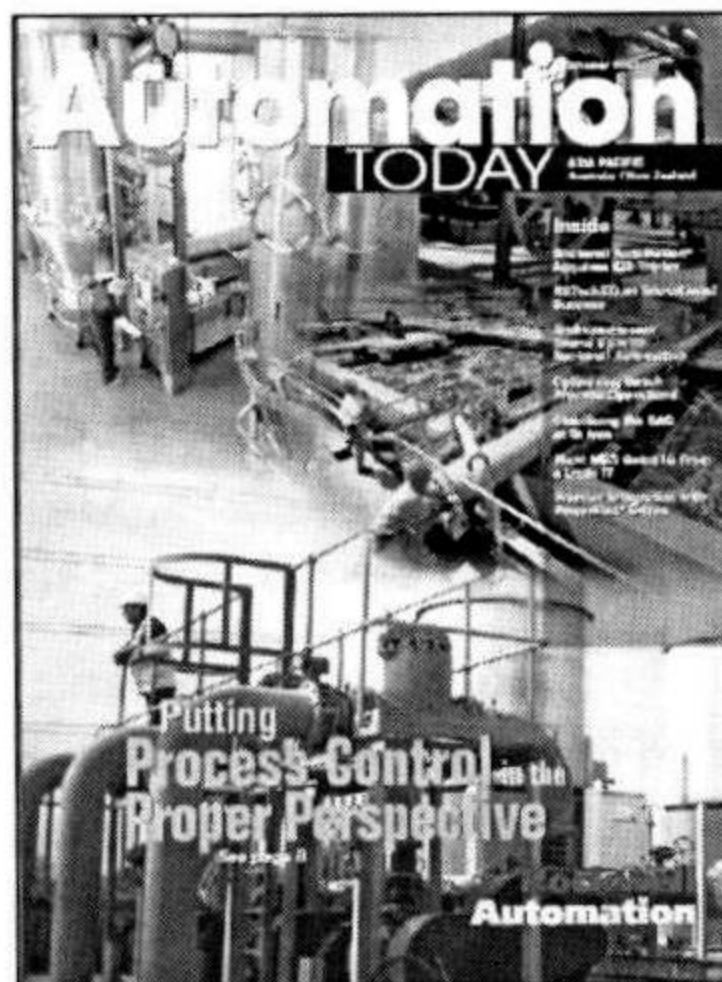
Gail Anderson, manager of Asia-Pacific marketing communications, notes that Rockwell's current approach is much different from the way it used to handle customer communications:

"We used to be very feature-oriented and internally focused. But we have learned that our customers are looking for solutions. We now take a customer-centric selling approach to determine what our customers need to solve their problems."

Gail's comments about being customer-centric ring true on the web. Here's how the company describes what it does at the very top of its website's homepage:

"When it comes to automation, your requirements are unique. So are our solutions. We listen to you, then apply our resources to build cost-effective, results-based solutions. It could be a single, powerful component. An information or asset management solution. Or an enterprise-wide, integrated system. Whatever your automation requirement, you'll find the answer by partnering with us."

Rockwell Automation is a \$5 billion global company with 20,000 employees worldwide, serving customers in 80 countries. It provides solutions both



to manufacturing end-users and to OEMs. According to the company, these solutions are “designed to give our customers a competitive edge.”

In fact, Rockwell Automation is a veteran content marketer and has long published a monthly magazine in North America called *The Journal*. This magazine is very much customer- and solution-focused. Although *The Journal* is a custom publication, it could certainly stand on its own as a solid monthly manufacturing magazine.

Automation Today stands on the shoulders of its North American sister publication. Gail and her team launched the new magazine in 1999 to provide relevant and meaningful content to a diverse audience of customers in the Asia-Pacific region. Previously, it had simply mailed copies of *The Journal* from the U.S. This was less than optimal because it was expensive and because the magazine contained a great deal of North American advertising which had relatively little relevance to the Asia-Pacific market.

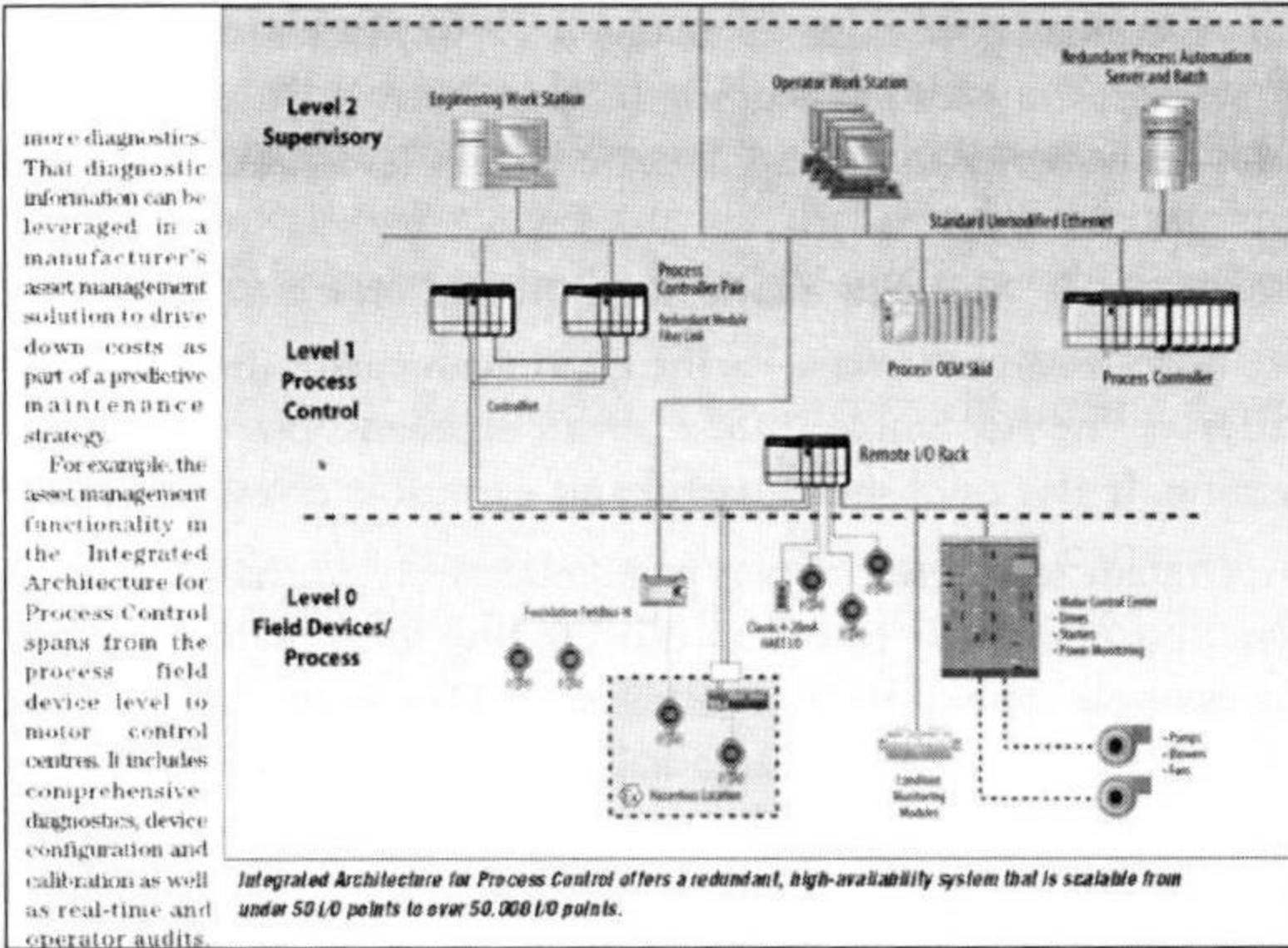
Although *Automation Today* can pick-up stories from its sister magazine, its content tends to be unique and specific to its own markets. To be certain that the publication is relevant to its readers, the team has conducted research asking whether it gives customer readers what they need; whether the articles are the right length; whether the frequency is right; and whether it's written to the right technical level. The team has also determined exactly who is reading the magazine and whether it's being shared with colleagues.

The magazine is prepared in electronic format with 18 fixed pages and two blank pages, which can be filled with local content. Some country teams actually add extra pages to the publication. It is printed in five languages: two versions in Chinese, plus Japanese, Korean, and British English. Each country manages its own final production, printing, and circulation.

Typical feature articles are fairly horizontal so that it is clear to readers in different disciplines how they can benefit from the solution described. Although many of the articles do feature Rockwell products and services, they are always written from the perspective of solving customer problems.

For example, a typically practical article described a three-step migration program that enables manufacturers to transition from aging distributed control systems (\$65 billion worth of existing control systems are estimated to be near the end of their life-cycle). The process described is designed to eliminate most of the pain from a complex transition. Even though the process is illustrated with Rockwell Automation equipment, it would apply no matter what kind of automation equipment was involved.

Chapter Twenty-Two: Rockwell Automation Uses Content Marketing to Be Global, Local, and Cost-Effective



Detailed and useful graphics accompany the more complex feature articles. Thus, an article about process control automation included a very detailed graphical diagram of the system and process described. It's obvious that a great deal of care has gone into each element of the magazine.

APPLICATION STORY

The Lefroy mill's centrepiece is the 11 m-diameter SAG mill, which utilises an advanced multi-variable control system founded on ControlLogix.

Manta Controls has taken advantage of the unique advanced process control functionality of the mill's existing ControlLogix platform, coupled with the open nature of the ControlLogix development environment.

Closed-Loop SAG

Located at Karnbalda, 80 km south of Kalgoorlie, the Lefroy mill comprises four main process circuits: comminution, gravity separation, leach/adsorption and carbon handling/electrowinning. The comminution circuit largely comprises primary crushing, coarse-ore storage and feeding, a bank of 10 hydrocyclone classifiers, and the SAG mill – an enormous tumbling mill mounted on load-cells and powered by a 13MW wrap-around drive.

Stabilising the SAG at St Ives

The Lefroy mill's centrepiece is the 11 m-diameter SAG mill, which utilises an advanced multi-variable control system founded on ControlLogix.

Each issue also features a number of customer success stories. The October 2007 issue described an incredibly complex Rockwell Automation applica-

tion in an Australian gold mine. It involved the implementation of an “expert control” system in a very challenging process control situation. The discussion of the implementation is sophisticated, high-level, and well-written.

The Australia Team Adds Valuable Content in Print and Online

Each country within the Asia-Pacific region can customize its content marketing efforts. The Australian team does an excellent job with its version of the magazine. It also publishes a useful and enjoyable eNewsletter.

The Australian team uses its two pages effectively so that it seems to their Australian customers that this is an outstanding local manufacturing magazine. For example, one of its brief articles, “A Day in the Life of a Technical Instructor,” does a great job of humanizing a critical member of the Rockwell team, John Sciberras. By describing in detail what he does and how he does it, readers learn how a talented Rockwell veteran spends his time helping customers just like them to keep their technical knowledge and skills current.

The Aussie team does a great job of content marketing online as well. Its eNewsletter is delivered bimonthly and is promoted as “...packed with the most up-to-the-minute news...this eNewsletter will enable you to be among the first to find out about new products, training, services, events, workshops, and any special offers from Rockwell Automation Australia.”

The December 2007 issue includes 10 articles on a wide variety of topics. Readers find everything from how to protect their automation investment, to asset management, to the complete 2008 training schedule.

NEWS
Robotic foosball shows its skills

A group of engineering students has taken the game of ‘foosball’ out of the recreation room and into the workshop, getting together with motion control experts to build a highly competitive automated opponent to tackle human players.

Engineering students from The University of Adelaide have taken out the top award in their final-year mechatronics project competition, with an automated foosball table capable of kicking human opposition. Comprising a motion sensor system, software written by the student team for decision-making, and a precision manipulation of the controls, the automated game proved to be stiff competition. The winning project was sponsored by Rockwell Automation’s training arm, Sage Didactic, and supported by Rockwell Automation motion control technology.



Chapter Twenty-Two: *Rockwell Automation Uses Content Marketing to Be Global, Local, and Cost-Effective*

The lead story highlights a group of Adelaide University students who have created an automated version of foosball that can blow away the human opposition. Several stories in the newsletter, including this one, feature local partners. In this way, the newsletter provides useful and interesting content to its end-users—and helps to promote the services of its trusted local partners.

Vital Global Customer Resource: The Corporate Online Literature Library

The Asia-Pacific team benefits from a well-structured corporate site that includes a wealth of product-related content to make it easier for customers to buy.

The Literature Library is a perfect example. It is clearly organized by:

- » Products
- » Industries and applications
- » Services and support
- » Solutions



Current and prospective customers can drill down to find an incredible amount of information about any product or service they are likely to need—and how it would be used in their application or industry. Thus, in a few minutes, buyers can access what would have taken many phone calls, lots of postage, and lots of time just five or 10 years ago. Rockwell Automation provides instant information gratification for its web visitors.

Content Marketing Takeaways

The Asia-Pacific division of Rockwell Automation has a limited marketing budget. It has chosen to focus much of its effort on content marketing because it accurately reflects the company's customer-centric focus.

When the folks at Rockwell talk about listening, thinking, and solving, they are dead-serious. The quality of their print and online publications makes it clear to their customers that Rockwell means what it says.

Rockwell's products and services provide solutions to thorny manufacturing problems. Its content marketing efforts focus on providing relevant information that describes how to solve those problems. Although its magazine's articles typically talk about Rockwell products and services, they have intrinsic value based on the thoroughness and clarity of their discussion of technical, process, and automation issues.

Rockwell Automation proves that just because you're a technology company doesn't mean that you have to live in a feature-oriented universe. In fact, customer-centric content marketing is probably even more important if this is the world in which you operate. If you can describe to your potential customers how they can stay at the top of their game technologically and how they can solve very difficult manufacturing problems, you will begin to earn their trust and show that you and your organization are the competent and caring partners they need. ❖