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Opto 22 Announces New High-Density Thermocouple Input Module

Chevron Corporation Among First to Adopt New Technology that Offers Four Times the Density of Previous Thermocouple Modules

Temecula, CA — August 29, 2006 — Opto 22, a developer and manufacturer of hardware and software for industrial automation, remote monitoring, data acquisition, and machine-to-machine (M2M) applications, has announced the release of the SNAP-AITM-8 thermocouple input module, which accepts up to eight channels of temperature or millivolt input from a variety of standard thermocouples or millivolt device inputs.

The SNAP-AITM-8 is ideal for customers with applications requiring temperature monitoring, data acquisition, and control. The new input module accepts up to eight isolated thermocouple probes, quadrupling the density of standard SNAP thermocouple modules and reducing the cost per point by approximately 33%. This increased density can reduce required panel space for applications with a high number of thermocouple inputs—such as semiconductor, food, petrochemical, and pharmaceutical processing—to as little as 25% of the previous space required.

In addition to analog-to-digital conversion from type B, C, D, G, E, J, K, N, R, S and T thermocouples used in industrial, scientific, and medical research applications, the SNAP-AITM-8 can also be configured to accept millivolt readings in the -75 to +75, -50 to +50, and -25 to +25 ranges. This allows direct instrument readings from Wheatstone bridges, strain gauges, and other instruments and devices.

Opto 22 systems that include the new SNAP-AITM-8 modules have recently been deployed at Chevron Corporation research laboratories in Richmond, CA. At these facilities, Chevron technicians and scientists experiment with various catalysts to trigger the breakdown of crude oil and improve refining techniques. The Opto 22 system, designed and installed by systems integrator IC Engineering in Richmond, CA, is used for digital control functions—such as firing solenoids and opening and closing valves—and the SNAP-AITM-8 connects to multiple thermocouples that serve as process variable inputs to PID loops (proportional-integral-derivative loops) for regulating temperatures in heating processes for band heaters and other equipment.

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“For our heating process applications, which require temperature sensing and regulation, Opto 22’s new SNAP-AITM-8 modules significantly decreased our control system cost by providing higher I/O density—saving valuable cabinet space—and lower cost-per-point than their previous thermocouple modules,” says Ryan McCollum, Project Manager at IC Engineering. “For the multitude of process control applications we’re involved in, like curing and other thermal processes used in semiconductor manufacturing and other industrial settings, the cost savings could be tremendous.”

The SNAP-AITM-8 offers resolution at 0.1% of range (75 μ V), accuracy up to 0.5°C, factory calibration, and built-in cold junction compensation. Like all SNAP analog input modules, the SNAP-AITM-8 provides transformer isolation to reduce noise and installation problems, 4000 Vrms optical isolation (4000 volts of transient protection for 1ms) from other modules on a SNAP rack, is UL and CE approved, and is backed by a lifetime guarantee.

When used with Opto 22 programmable automation controllers (PACs), the SNAP-AITM-8 is ideal for high-resolution temperature monitoring, data acquisition, and control of autoclaves, industrial ovens, pasteurizers, heat exchangers, and other equipment that requires precise thermal regulation. The SNAP-AITM-8 will also be fully supported by Opto 22’s ioProject™ suite of automation software.

The SNAP-AITM-8 thermocouple/millivolt module is available immediately, with ioProject software support expected by the fourth quarter. List pricing for the new module is \$495.00 USD.

About Opto 22

Opto 22 develops and manufactures hardware and software products for applications in industrial automation, remote monitoring, and data acquisition. Using standard, commercially available Internet, networking, and computer technologies, Opto 22’s input/output and control systems allow customers to monitor, control, and acquire data from all of the mechanical, electrical, and electronic assets that are key to their business operations. Opto 22’s products and services support automation end users, OEMs, and information technology and operations personnel. Founded in 1974 and with over 85 million Opto 22-connected devices deployed worldwide, the company has an established reputation for innovation, quality, and reliability.

Opto 22 products are sold through a worldwide network of distributors, partners, and system integrators. For more information, contact Opto 22 headquarters at 800-321-OPTO or visit the website at www.opto22.com.