Building efficiency: with digital innovation the invisible becomes visible

By Anoop Hariparsad

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Many commercial and industrial facilities were built in an era where technology was an afterthought. This is partly because of the lack of truly feasible technology options that could make the management of building simpler and, importantly, more efficient.

Anoop Hariparsad, offer and channel marketing manager: digital energy at Schneider Electric

Fast-forward 40 years and the industry now features advanced solutions that, short of running a building on auto pilot, offer efficient, optimised, and sustainable solutions that catapult facilities into a new era of sophistication.

And short of being a medieval castle, the good news is a lot of buildings can be modernised to benefit from this new and exciting age in efficiency and optimisation.

At Schneider Electric, our methodology when approaching buildings, old or new, is to measure, analyse and then put systems in place to control. In the case of an older building, it is important measure how it is using its energy - is this done in an efficient manner and how can technology help?

Employing a digital strategy

Once an organisation understands where it is and where it wants to go, it needs to identify the solutions to achieve its goals and a fundamental part of this journey is employing a digital strategy.

With digital innovation, the invisible suddenly become visible. Digital technologies such as metering and monitoring, coupled with smart devices and analytic software, allow insight into how a building operates.

Moreover, it provides an understanding of the building's energy and operational efficiency which in turn enables a service provider to identify areas where power can be saved, and untapped areas utilised.

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Making the most of your digital strategy

In a digitised building, all the vital cogs start running continously to provide information on the data required to obtain operational insight.

Now that you have all the data, what are the next step? Analysis. Here service providers take advantage of best-in-class operation and IT solutions to unlock a building's performance to maintain your facilities remotely and proactively.

With its key operation insights, you can reduce energy use, unscheduled maintenance, and extend the life of your assets to save time and money which all contribute to the efficiency of your building.

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Building management systems

A building management system (BMS) realises a digitally connected building which offers 24/7 support for:

- Air conditioning, heating, ventilating, lighting;
- Access control and control devices such as valves, actuators, sensors, and meters; and
- Energy management and building operating systems.

Moreover, an open BMS integrates multiple systems for centralised, real-time control and management across one-to-many enterprise buildings and can help you understand and monitor your facility's energy usage.

Today, there are sophisticated solutions that optimise building operations by constantly monitoring systems and identifying faults, and a cloud-based suite of analytics and monitoring services that provide key insights into how to improve efficiencies.

Using AI algorithms and analytics further allows you to understand the building's energy use and help transition from a

reactive operating model to a more effective preventive mindset.

ABOUT ANOOP HARIPARSAD

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