

A Profitable Advance

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Honeywell Process Solutions (HPS) has been helping customers to better operate their production facilities with its focus on distributed control, field instrumentation and advances in these technologies from generation to generation. To showcase other advantages that Honeywell can now deliver, Ian Brown, Vice President and General Manager of Honeywell's Advanced Solutions business took to the stage on Tuesday morning at the Pacific HUG.

Advanced solutions play a key part in Honeywell's transition from distributed control systems to business transformation, Brown said.

Honeywell introduced its Advanced Solutions business to meet changes in the customer landscape including increasing focus on remote monitoring and collaboration centres. "Almost all of customers have some element of advanced solution in their plants," said Brown, who worked for Honeywell in Perth before moving back to the UK.

Brown brings extensive experience in advanced control to his role with Advanced Solutions, which has access to over 1500 experts in 80 countries. After working for Honeywell UK, Brown formed his own Aberdeen-based process control consultancy focusing on remote performance monitoring of offshore equipment. The business used Matrikon technology to deliver its solutions and became successful, winning a number of digital oilfield projects.

"Our success triggered an acquisition of my company by Matrikon," said Brown. From 2004, when the deal took place, until 2010, when Honeywell acquired Matrikon, Brown ran its UK business and then the Europe, Middle East and Africa unit of the company. "We grew the EMEA region from a very small part to about 25 percent of the business."

He said that business transformation is really the key theme for HPS' Advanced Solutions.

And it's not just about technology. There is a need to establish safe and stable operations; manage assets; comply with government regulations; adapt to demand that forces changes to production; and empower the workforce. Scarcity of workers presents particular challenges to employers in some localities.

"Advanced solutions technology has now matured from where we were deployed as small scale technology programs and pilots, or initiatives focused on solving specific problems," said Brown. "It has matured now to the point where the value is well proven and we're looking at enterprise deployment of the advanced solutions suite."

Advanced process control can increase efficiency, make plant operations safe and stable, and ensure reliability and sustainability.

"We're living in a really volatile market at the moment where exchange rate and commodity price fluctuations are making it harder and harder to make the right business decisions in time to react to the market," Brown said.

"I recently spent a bit of time in Queensland with a couple clients. The scale of projects and opportunities in Australia at the moment is tremendous, but you also face a real scarcity of resources. The big challenge is going to be getting the most out of the workforce that you have."

He said it is necessary to leverage technology as much as possible to support people and ensure they can be as efficient and effective as possible.

"We can add value to your business by enabling and empowering your workforce. And that value has a direct bottom line impact as well."

Naming a case study, Brown said one Honeywell customer is reporting a four to six percent increase in production.

"We're looking at a platform that is producing 100,000 barrels of oil a day. At the current prices of oil and gas, four to six percent is a significant short-term P&L driver. Even more significantly, this customer has been able to extend the reservoir by one to two percent. In oil and gas, the reservoir is the asset, and the amount of producible oil is really what drives share price. The ability to recover that oil is the key differentiator from company to company.

"One to two percent on a field that is producing 100,000 barrels per day for 30 years is a significant needle mover for a client. We're talking about technology that really does shift the needle. It's not small, it's not fine-tuning. It really makes a significant difference to the balance sheet of the companies that we're working for."