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The cloud
plays a key role
in the 'new normal'

**Understanding ATEX
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**SCADA: Minimising
system security gaps**

**What could the AIoT
offer industry?**

THE CLOUD PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN THE 'NEW NORMAL'

The world of automation is in a state of transition, today more than ever before. Flexible work models, contact limitations and travel restrictions, along with the steady growth of production efficiency and diversity are forcing manufacturers to change how they think. With a new version of its engineering framework and an easy-to-use and flexible cloud solution, Siemens helps its customers keep pace with industrial digitalisation trends, says *Stephan Schott*, marketing manager Siemens Digital Factory.
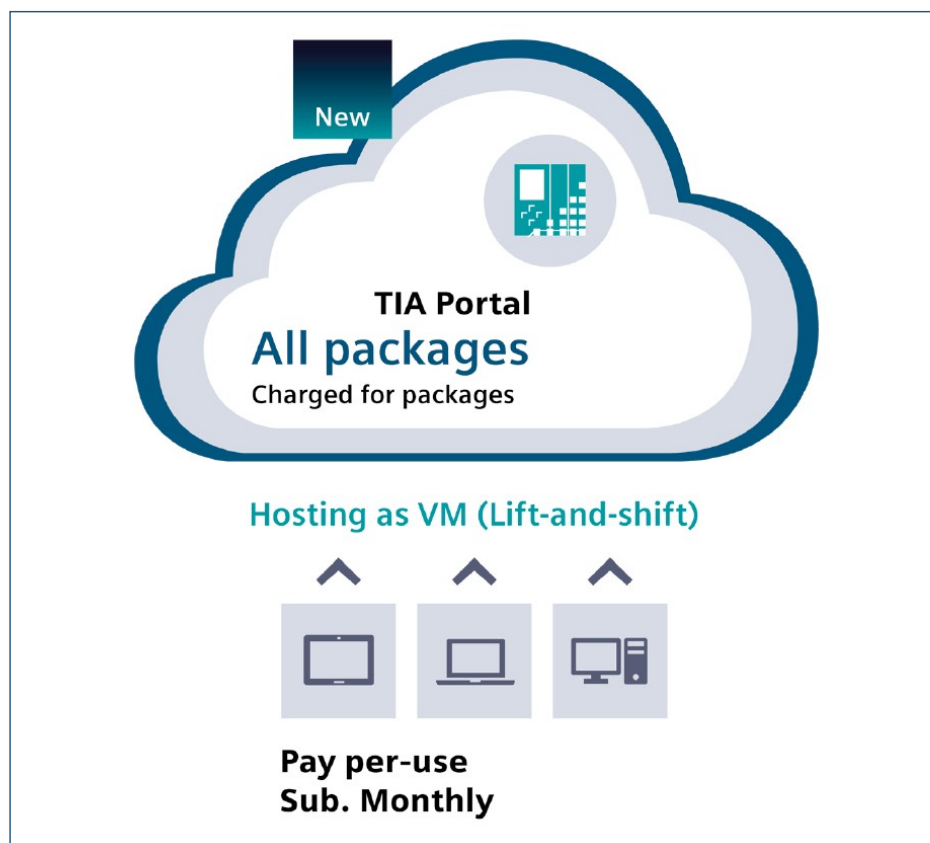
The way we work is changing. What was still virgin territory for many companies just a few years ago has in many cases now become a commonplace work mode. We're talking about buzzwords like mobile work independent of location from a home office and, in the industrial setting operations like virtual commissioning and remote maintenance. We're facing special challenges, and they need unique and creative solutions.

The digital applications that we enjoy as end-users often access cloud platforms in the background to guarantee their optimal and flexible use. Successful streaming platforms, for example, have frequently shifted much of their capacity to cloud platforms. Industry needs to catch up on what's already happening in the private sector. Cloud solutions are of inestimable value both today and in the future for meeting the challenges facing industry: for example, in automation.

When IT and automation merge

May of this year is when it all happens! That date will mark the launch of TIA Portal V17 (Totally Integrated Automation Portal). In November of last year, the industrial world got its first glimpse of the new engineering framework version at Siemens Digital Enterprise SPS Dialog.

Steady advances in digitalisation in both the private and industrial spheres require and allow us to take this another step ahead: It's already apparent that the worlds of automation and IT are merging more and more. As a result, software business models already well-known in IT are gaining ground. In the private sphere, we've known about them for years as the cloud-based solutions that store our music and photos. Beginning in May of 2021, Siemens will provide a flexible, cloud-based engineering solution for industrial automation: TIA Portal Cloud.

All versions, all options

With TIA Portal Cloud, users will automatically get fast access to the latest TIA Portal version (V17) and to previous versions: TIA Portal V16 and TIA Portal V15.1. However, even older versions will be made available so that existing customers who have earlier versions running in their machines and plants can reap all the benefits of TIA Portal Cloud. TIA Portal Cloud also provides all available TIA Portal options, including the failsafe engineering software Simatic Step7 Safety, Simatic Energy Suite for energy monitoring, and Simatic S7-PLCSIM Advance for simulating and testing the user program in a virtual controller. Along with these familiar

options, however, the cloud version also contains option packages that may be unknown to some customers, like Simatic Visualization Architect (SiVArc). By using TIA Portal Cloud, customers therefore benefit from all TIA Portal versions, including all available options for the engineering framework. All engineering and simulation scenarios are covered in the cloud, and they provide users with an easy and high-performance test environment for TIA Portal scenarios.

More than just a cloud

Especially in times when the ability to work remotely is essential, even across national boundaries and time zones, cloud-based solutions can help companies take an important step forward. TIA Portal Cloud offers real added value in this regard and guarantees a fast and straightforward introduction to TIA Portal engineering, made possible by the easy use of TIA Portal and all its options and the fast provision of the appropriate TIA Portal versions. Web-based access to TIA Portal Engineering in the cloud allows customers to use the solution flexibly from any location. All the customer needs is Internet access, an up-to-date browser, and PC or tablet hardware. The user simply signs in to immediately access all TIA Portal versions and options from anywhere without having to go to the trouble of installing anything.

TIA Portal Cloud not only maximises flexibility and ease of use, its cloud-based engineering solution also eliminates time-consuming updates because the latest versions are always available. Considering the enormous amounts of data needed for installation and updates, this offers companies tremendous added value. To complete the new product range, the solution also includes cloud-based data storage for TIA Portal projects. Programming work can always be stored in a cloud memory making it available everywhere, and the user benefits from easier handling via a central and secure data repository. Up-to-date security standards are applied

both to the connection to the cloud and to the cloud storage and protect our customers intellectual property and knowledge.

Demand-driven license models

Starting in May, a new payment model will be offered that also provides enormous added value for users. In the past, a local TIA Portal installation contained a one-time purchase license. With the launch of TIA Portal V17 and TIA Portal Cloud in May, there will now be an additional, demand-driven payment model that can be flexibly adapted to the customer's objective and requirements. Similar models are already being used in IT and in the consumer sector. For example, streaming services offer a basic function as well as a subscription that can be cancelled at the end of a monthly period. A variety of office applications offer various subscriptions that are adapted to the needs of private individuals, companies, students, and families.

By transferring this model to the TIA Portal engineering framework, we are taking a decisive step. Customers will soon be able to access whatever they need for integrated engineering in a targeted manner.

As of May this year, customers will have the choice between two licensing models for TIA Portal V17. When purchasing a TIA Portal V17 license, users can choose between the well know perpetual license model with optional software update service and the new annual subscription model. The subscription model for the on-premise TIA Portal version will be designed for packages tailored to the requirements of a wide range of customer types, from small-scale customers to large companies, from single machines to complex plants, and from simple control tasks to simulations and energy management.

A similar option will be offered for

TIA Portal Cloud. In this case, the services used will be billable either through a monthly subscription or on a pay-per-use basis: in other words, billed by the hour depending on usage.

Added-value utilisation models

The introduction of a variety of flexible license models isn't simply a trend that industry is unwilling to ignore: We believe that it's essential to develop these models because they offer companies real added value. Subscription models for TIA Portal and TIA Portal Cloud provide users with the huge benefit of a small initial investment. The subscriptions make it possible to turn investment costs (CAPEX) for engineering software into lower annual or monthly operating costs (OPEX). The license models are also extremely flexible: If a short-term project only requires one specific option, TIA Portal and TIA Portal Cloud subscriptions can be purchased for just one month or one year.

To meet the challenges of our times, it's especially important for industrial companies to offer their employees the option of flexible work independent of location – so why not use the many benefits of digitalisation and rely on cloud-based engineering solutions? After all, a number of cloud solutions are already making things easier for us in private life: It's time to take this step in industrial automation as well and use digitalisation to meet our current and future challenges.

For further details go to: https://sie.ag/3nVeu3d