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Press Release

automatica 2018: Focus on Medical and Pharmaceutical Applications The World of Wonders

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The average life expectancy is increasing. Thanks to automated production, more effective and affordable medications and therapies are made available to a wide range of patients. From June 19 to 20, 2018, the leading international trade fair [automatica](#) in Munich will show how economically and efficiently pharmaceutical and medical products can be produced today.

The development seems unstoppable: Automation pervades all areas of production of pharmaceutical and medical technology and leads to new process quality with positive effects for patients and staff. Producers and plant engineers in close collaboration are succeeding again and again in finding new, efficient automation solutions for the most demanding manufacturing procedures that were previously considered as non-automatable.

An example of this comes from Italy. The system house [Elettrosystem](#) succeeded in creating a world first with the realization of a complex system for the difficult mounting of spiral

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tubes. The spiral tube is a special hollow probe used in anesthesia and intensive care medicine. In the past, it was not feasible to mount a fine screw spring made of steel on a PVC tube and coat the component with adhesive. The challenges were in distributing the spring coils uniformly as well as in handling the two flexible components.

The world's first facility for the partial assembly of four spiral tubes simultaneously consists of two mirror-image designed cells, in which four precise [Stäubli](#) six-axis robots handle complex tasks. The spring is mounted in an integrated process cycle, which is linked via linear systems.

Gerald Vogt, Group Division Manager at Stäubli Robotics, is as enthusiastic about this premiere as of the dynamics of the complete industry: "As a robotics market leader in the field of pharmaceuticals and medicine, we experience again and again how automation advances into new areas despite strict restrictions, certification and validation requirements, consequently enabling medical progress for everyone. We are already looking forward to [automatica](#) 2018, because the new technology developments of many exhibitors there set the course for further quantum leaps in life science applications."

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Fully automated production sets global standards

[Fresenius Medical Care](#) proves that it is possible to be located in Germany and become the undisputed world leader in products and services for dialysis patients with highly automated production lines, the relevant know-how and innovation. In St. Wendel, the company manufactures dialyzers for hemodialysis and bag systems for peritoneal dialysis. Worldwide, almost every second artificial kidney today is based on a polysulfone dialyzer made by Fresenius. ([Application in video](#))

In the production of dialyzers in quantities of more than 100 million worldwide each year, not only innovative process technology solutions are in demand, but reliable control of each production step is also crucial. "We rely on fully automated processes to eliminate error sources in production. As a result, we achieve a consistent level of quality with extremely low tolerance as well as safe processes and cost-effective production," Dr. Franz Kugelmann emphasized, Head of Technology Development at Fresenius.

Six-axis robots from [ABB](#) as well as Scara robots from the Japanese manufacturer [Epson](#) are used for assembling the dialyzers. The Epson four-axis robots handle different tasks, ranging from mounting and operating to feeding system components and all the way to packaging. Volker Spanier, Head of Factory

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Automation at Epson, sees conclusive evidence in the Fresenius production that robot-supported automation solutions contribute significantly to maintaining production sites in Germany and Europe.

Lucrative market for European companies

Supporting arguments are provided from Switzerland by Jean-François Bauer, Business Development Director at [Mikron](#):

"The market is developing rapidly: new forms of medicine, more complex procedures, smart devices, changing patient needs, and—in addition—new, global players in the industry. This growth market offers many opportunities for European companies that are familiar with the strict industry regulations FDA, EMA, GAMP, ICH and GMP."

At [automatica](#) in Munich, the company will show how Mikron reacts to the new market requirements in terms of higher flexibility and scalability of assembly plants and a shorter time-to-market. A wide range of products will be presented there, ranging from manual work stations to "Proof of Principle" and all the way to the well-known high-performance systems.

Laboratory automation undergoing changes

Dr. Michael Kane, General Manager of Business Development at [Yaskawa Europe](#) sees a similar development for the field of laboratory automation: "We also expect a growing demand for

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more flexible, customer-specific automation there. Automated standard process systems are often designed for high throughput and are inflexible. Consequently, enhancements or customer-specific adaptations are not feasible, and certainly not possible under limited space conditions. Flexible system integrators can provide solutions with clever ideas and industry-specific knowledge. Numerous examples of such solutions can be found at [automatica](#)."

Standard laboratory equipment is often not really designed for automation. For the operation of the equipment, Yaskawa is therefore preferably using two-armed robots and paying attention to a strict separation between programming and operating robots. As a result, defining workflows becomes as simple as possible for laboratory staff. The manufacturer will present the latest developments in dual-arm robotics in Munich.

[Video: This is what the exhibitors at automatica say](#)
[automatica Press Releases and Photos](#)
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About automatica

[automatica](#) is an international trade fair for robotics and automation and the central meeting point for manufacturers and users of integrated assembly solutions, robotics, industrial machine vision and professional service robotics. At the last event in 2016, a total of 833 exhibitors from 47 countries presented their products and solutions; 43.052 visitors from more than 100 countries came to the Munich trade fair. Messe München GmbH and VDMA Robotics + Automation, conceptual sponsor of the trade fair, are behind the industry-driven concept of automatica. [automatica](#) takes place every two years. The next fair will be in Munich on June 19 to 22, 2018.

Messe München

Messe München is one of the leading exhibition organizers worldwide with more than 50 of its own trade shows for capital goods, consumer goods and new technologies. Every year, a total of over 50,000 exhibitors and around three million visitors take part in more than 200 events at the exhibition center in Munich, at the ICM – Internationales Congress Center München and the MOC Veranstaltungszentrum München as well as abroad. Together with its subsidiary companies, Messe München organizes trade shows in China, India, Brazil, Russia, Turkey, South Africa, Nigeria, Vietnam and Iran. With a network of associated companies in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America as well as around 70 representations abroad for over 100 countries, Messe München has a global presence.

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