



Research Success Stories



September 2012

Making factories more energy efficient – and one’s university better known

The goal of the project Factory-Ecomation is to increase the energy efficiency and reduce emissions of factories. Apart from contributing to a more sustainable industry, the motivation for the coordinating “Scuola Universitaria Professionale Della Svizzera Italiana” (SUPSI) is to be at the frontline of research networks.

With rising energy costs and governmental pressure towards saving energy and reducing emissions, it is vital for factories to increase their energy efficiency and include environment-related aspects into their business plans. These are the two thoughts that were at the beginning of the project Factory-Ecomation.



Dr. Paolo Pedrazzoli
 Coordinator
 Factory-ECOMATION

tags: “It brings you to the front-line of research, you get access to more resources and publication networks, you work with the foremost universities, you build a name for your institution (given you work competently) and you get to have a say in the objectives of future funding schemes.”

“Wonderful” for small and medium companies

Funding from European projects is good not only for universities,

but for small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

“SME actually get paid for improving their business, that’s wonderful for them.”

as well: “They actually get paid for improving their business, an activity they may not have the resources for under normal conditions,

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project Factory-Ecomation aims to conceive, define and demonstrate a new kind of factory, where energy consumption, emissions and environment-related aspects in general have the same importance as productivity and product quality. Apart from reducing energy consumption and emissions, a key concern is to develop a holistic eco-oriented management of factories. This could mean, for example, that production of wastes could be seen as positive and eventually even increased because those wastes can be transformed in energy that in turn could be used to increase efficiency and contemporarily power an emissions abatement equipment. The hardware innovation and the factory management logics are tested in the factories of two of the project partners, namely IKEA and BREMBO.

that’s wonderful for them”, says Pedrazzoli. “In addition, they can extend their markets and get in contact with experienced partners. Unfortunately, many do not know and trust these European funding possibilities”, he adds. When he contacted Swiss SMEs to ask them to participate in the project, they felt that it all sounded “too good to be true” and declined. A better informed German SME, on the other hand, agreed to participate about seven minutes after they had received the e-mail with Pedrazzoli’s request.

To Paolo Pedrazzoli, having reliable partners and a strong coordination is the key to make such project work “like clockwork”. But what if the existing network of contacts does not include all the partners with the properties necessary for a certain project? “In this case, Euresearch can be very valuable. They can help to find the right partners”, says Paolo.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Project Name:	Factory ECO-friendly and energy efficient technologies and adaptive autoMATION solutions (Factory-ECOMATION)
Research Area:	FP7-NMP
Coordinating Institution:	“Scuola Universitaria Professionale Della Svizzera Italiana” (SUPSI)
Coordinator:	Dr. Paolo Pedrazzoli
Number of Partners:	12
Start Date – End Date:	01.10.2012 – 30.09.2015 (36 months)
Project Cost:	9,337,750 €

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