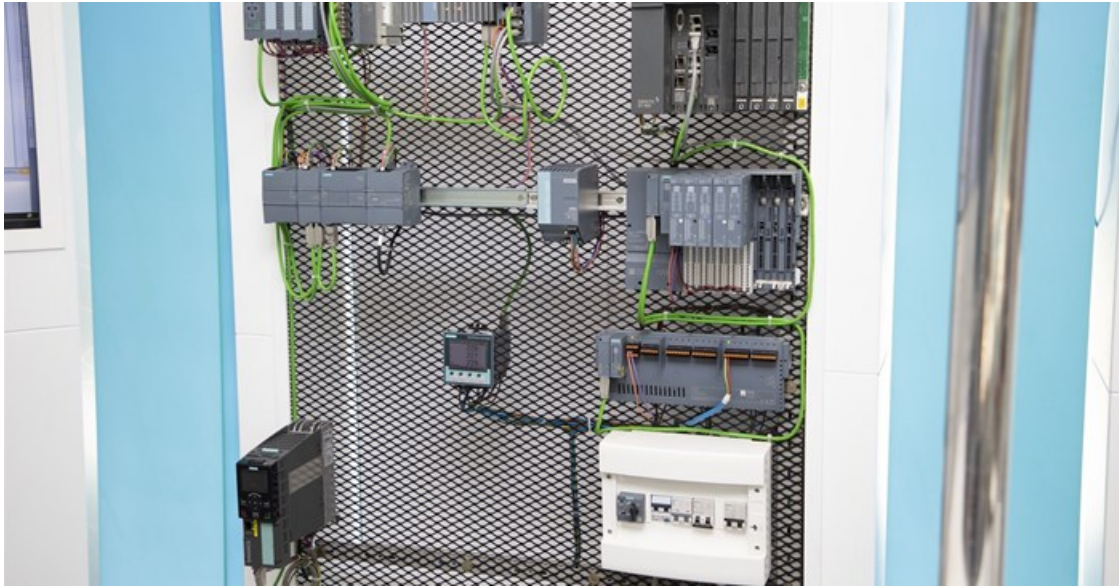


New digital incubator brings mining into the 21st century

Digitalisation in the mining industry goes well beyond the automation of production. It allows for new approaches to business processes and creates real opportunities to merge the digital and physical worlds.

The value of data coupled with machine learning, artificial intelligence and additive manufacturing offers South Africa a remarkable opportunity to create smart mines of the future. For example, imagine intelligent machines able to adjust operating parameters based on information received from other machines.



These advanced capabilities will boost production, predictability and scalability while translating to profits. Digitalisation will contribute to the entire value chain with a shorter time-to market, increased flexibility in volatile global markets, optimise productivity and create safer operations for everyone on site. What must be addressed critically is how investors and technology leaders can also become educators and skills developers.

The Digital Mining Incubator (DMI) is a co-creation space focused on developing mining engineering competence. The incubator is integrated into the Wits Tshimologong Digital Innovation Precinct and is aimed at upskilling young individuals who have an interest in the mining sector, as well as disadvantaged individuals interested in actively participating in the future of mining. Together with mentors from Wits, Tshimologong and Siemens, students will be enabled with the necessary tools and skills to effectively transform and develop the South African mining sector.

“Our partnership with Wits and Tshimologong is about advancing the digital opportunities that mining offers our youth.

Failing to position the mining sector in South Africa within discussions about the fourth industrial revolution means remaining stagnant on the path towards industrialisation. It's like being back in the 80's watching black and white television and constantly trying to reposition the bunny aerial to get rid of those blurry lines, all while living in the year 2018. This is not where you want to be," says Sabine Dall'Omo, Siemens CEO for Southern and Eastern Africa.

The DMI will provide a dedicated platform for developing innovative solutions to some of the mining industry's greatest challenges including health and safety, environmental protection and improved productivity, says Professor Barry Dwolatzky, director of Wits University's JCSE (Joburg Centre for Software Engineering) and founder of the Tshimologong Precinct, says, "Having Siemens open a digital incubator dedicated to promoting innovation in mining is a very significant landmark in bringing the benefits of 21st century digitalisation to one of the most critical sectors in the South African economy.

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