**Materials handling goes mobile**

*26 September, 2014: MAXOLUTION – the latest solution to replace static conveying with mobile conveying in the mineral processing industry – is being launched locally by specialist drive engineering company SEW-EURODRIVE.*

MAXOLUTION is an innovative new solution based on recent global trends and developments in materials handling, and adds substantial value to the mineral processing industry higher up the value chain.

According to SEW-EURODRIVE general manager communications **Rene Rose**, industrial gearboxes and motors are ideal for bulk materials handling, but are limited in their functionality when processed material becomes valuable.

“This processed material would be the actual gold and platinum, for example. To reduce the potential for pilfering, human handling should be limited with the higher-value commodities, and this is where MAXOLUTION comes into play,” she explains.

The trend in the industrial environment is a move away from conveyor belts that just move products from ‘A’ to ‘B’, and instead having an item or station that moves from ‘A’ to ‘B’. Although standard in the automotive industry, this technology is brand new to the local mining industry.

This technology comprises wireless communication and inductive power transfer systems. Rose explains that instead of having cable trays or busbars to transfer power to the mobile solutions, SEW-EURODRIVE makes use of its MOVITRANS contactless energy transfer system.

“Here, electrical energy is transferred from a fixed conductor to one or more mobile consumers, without contact. Instead the electromagnetic connection is made via an air gap, which means it is not subject to wear-and-tear and is therefore virtually maintenance-free,” she states.

This type of power supply is also emission-free and resistant to contamination from external sources. In addition, the wireless communication is shielded in order to prevent loss and interference.

**How the system operates**

An Automatic Guided Vehicle (AGV) utilises inductive power supply in the form of transfer cables embedded into the floor. One of these is a leakage cable, which provides the communications. The AGV boasts a built-in safety feature that slows it down when humans are near its path.

Rose notes: “This safety concept is based on a scanner that will detect any people in the vicinity, whereupon it will switch off and enter a ‘safe’ mode. This technology is particularly beneficial to the mining industry, which continues to place a greater emphasis on health and safety.”

SEW-EURODRIVE is able to offer a total solutions package for its mining customers. “We focus not only on the inductive power transfer, but also the gearboxes and motors – including the positioning system, wireless communication and power and control systems,” states Rose.

Additional functionality can be added to the system in the form of an integrated hoist. Due to the positioning benefits, the user can swiftly and dynamically change their station layout for different production runs.

Rose reveals that MAXOLUTION is being officially launched by SEW-EURODRIVE at Electra Mining. The event is being hosted at the Nasrec Expo Centre in Johannesburg from 15 to 19 September 2014.

“Our main focus will be on the Southern African mining region, which will essentially become a testing ground to roll-out this technology to other regions such as Australia and Canada,” she continues.

Rose indicates that local project houses, designers and consultants have already expressed a keen interest in the solution. “Feedback received indicates that they are all keen on the higher technology due to the flexibility it affords them in changing production runs and volumes.”

Although the initial capital outlay for MAXOLUTION is high, Rose concludes by adding that she is confident that the labour benefits and energy savings will entice more African mining clients to go this route.

SEW-EURODRIVE will be exhibiting at Stand J20 in Hall 6 throughout the duration of the Electra Mining event. For more information visit [www.electramining.co.za](http://www.electramining.co.za/EN/Content/Pages/Home)

***Ends***

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