



What CSIA Certification Means to Your Business

Control System Integrators Association
CERTIFIED
Member Program

The big difference in control system integration

What is the CSIA CERTIFIED member program and why is it important when your company is selecting a control system integrator?

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“Are *you* any better off now than you were four years ago”?

One might expect a question such as that from politicians up for election. But it seems out of place in this, a technical business publication. Before we dismiss it entirely, let’s define exactly who we mean by “*you*.”

The “*you*” could refer to CSIA Associates, the control system integration companies (CSIs) who belong to our association, or to our Partners, who manufacture the automation equipment used by our Associates. Or, it might refer to the End Users, who rely on CSIs to provide them with proven, reliable, and beneficial automation solutions for their manufacturing processes. If such were the case, then our answers would be a resounding “Yes!”

In fact, we could go back eight years or even a decade to show that CSIA has indeed made a big difference, for the better, in their overall performance and to their bottom line. How so, you might ask? Good question. Our answer lies within our Value Proposition. Namely:

“CSIA is committed to the business development of control system integration companies and their implementation of best practices in order to provide a healthy, low-risk channel for the application of technology to their industrial clients.”

Since our inception, we have encouraged our CSI members to improve their operational performance and their effectiveness by implementing our “Best Practices & Benchmarks” throughout their organization. And striving for continuous improvement, we seek to raise the performance bar, so to speak, as shown by the latest Version 3.0 of this outstanding document.

The benefits to our members speak for themselves. Every one of our CERTIFIED members has a story to tell as to how their operations have significantly improved.

Our Partners think so highly of these Best Practices, that all of the major players suggest or insist that their premium system integrators be CSIA CERTIFIED members.

But perhaps the most benefits are shared by the End Users themselves, who end up with automation solutions they can justify and use to increase their productivity, quality and manufacturing efficiency.

Yes, I think we can say that CSIA has made a significant contribution to Systems Integration in the past decade, and we predict the best is yet to come. Give us your vote.

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Certification. The big difference in control system integration.

What the 'big difference' means to your business

■ Best Practices and Benchmarks

CSIA CERTIFIED members adhere to best practices in all aspects of business. This means they have in place the processes and procedures that foster honest contracts and fair risk allocation, proper billing, project management that focuses on adherence to schedule, and customer service that is measured. In short, your automation project experience will be the best it can possibly be, giving you confidence in your system's performance and peace of mind overall.

■ Resources

Members must demonstrate a volume of business with engineering content that assures the availability of adequate resources to take on the demands of your automation projects.

■ Experience

Firms must have a number of years of project experience to qualify as members, assuring that your project isn't some novice's training ground.

■ Dedicated Technologists

CERTIFIED members meet the challenges of rapidly changing technology with proven technical management processes. This means you get the best, most current, technical expertise available.

■ Successful Business Ownership

Members must show a record of profitable business operation, protecting you from integrators who may not be around to finish or support your project. They also must have in place adequate liability insurance and proper business practices for activities such as HR, accounting, and general management.

■ Learning Oriented

Through their own internal, audited, quality improvement programs and through attendance at the information-packed CSIA Executive Conference, CERTIFIED members demonstrate a commitment to advancing their businesses with better processes and new techniques, particularly in the areas of project management and business management.

■ Stability

With HR practices geared toward retaining top talent and business practices dedicated to assuring long-term survival, CERTIFIED members provide you with the consistency and stability you need for a successful project. They also have an audited disaster recovery plan that demonstrates an ability to recover data and records, as well as an ability to maintain business operations.

How do you know that the system integrator you select for your automation, information, or control system project is competent or is likely to still be in business when you need support?

Because their salespeople or their brochure say so? Maybe not.

The CSIA CERTIFIED member program requires an independent, third-party audit of members on a myriad of criteria that spans all aspects of business and project management performance. These criteria come from the CSIA "Best Practices and Benchmarks Guidelines" manual that details standards necessary to assure that you get the level of quality, performance, and long-term support you deserve.

Companies can make unsubstantiated claims about their capabilities and experience. But an independent audit, as used for CSIA CERTIFICATION, can assure you that claims are accurate and verifiable.

Standards that ensure the quality of work that you receive provide a roadmap for CSIA CERTIFIED members to follow to demonstrate professionalism and commitment to improving the quality of their work.

Information, such as multiple references and members' credit ratings, bonding capacity, and financial performance, help to minimize your risk exposure for any given project.

Audited qualifications of CERTIFIED members demonstrate clearly that they have the record of profitable business experience, size, and financial resources to guarantee quality engineering services.