

Challenge yourself at ICT Group

YOUNES' CHALLENGE: To become proficient in as many programming languages as possible

Younes El Ouazghari, Software Engineer/ICT Belgium



Younes just came back from the Middle-East where he provided support in the commissioning phase of a complete production line for cooking oil. "This region is known for its unrest," says Younes, "I don't think I would go there as a tourist. Nevertheless, I never hesitated when I was asked to provide support on location. I have been to the region four times now and really got a good sense of the atmosphere. It is beautiful and the people are very hospitable. They work very hard to rebuild the economy, this huge vegetable oil refinery is a good example of that effort." Younes works in secondment for an international machine manufacturer in the food industry. "With the automation of such processes, several machines and installations need to communicate flawlessly. For this project, I have automated the production process with Siemens' TIA Portal. The refinery is the end-user of this product so for me it's a great opportunity to be completely involved from the beginning to the end. The project will be coming to an end soon, then it is time to deliver the final acceptance test."



Freedom

Younes is very aware of the nice variety in his job.

“Some days, I can easily work from home in Antwerp, other days I work at my client’s office in Brussels or I fly out to whatever city to provide support or after-sales on site for the end-user. That flexibility gives me a great feeling of freedom in my work.” Now that this assignment is coming to an end, Younes and his Operational Manager (OM) are discussing what his next project is going to be. “My OM suggested two different projects from which I can choose. One is with a pharmaceutical company that is growing very fast. In this project, I would have to determine and describe the automation specifications for the suppliers of new pharmaceutical machines. The new machines must be able to communicate with the existing production lines to guarantee continuity in the 24/7 operational plant. The other project is at a machine manufacturer for compressors and generators. They have in-house programmers who are writing new software for their products and they are looking for a trouble-shooter for the aftersales team.

Making choices

“This is not an easy choice” Younes adds, “but I’m really grateful that I have a say in the matter. My OM is convinced that I will develop new skills on both projects and leaves it up to me which way I want to go. The project in the pharmaceutical industry will help me to further develop my leadership skills as a coordinator. The project with the machine manufacturer could really help me develop my professional skills. I could advance my knowledge of generic programming languages like C# and Java. For me, that is currently the biggest challenge in my work, I really want to master as many programming languages as possible. I am quite comfortable with industrial programming languages like Step7 and TIA Portal by Siemens or Rockwell’s RSLogix. It would be great to have the opportunity to focus on C# and Java, these are for software engineers the equivalent of English in the spoken languages. At ICT Belgium my curiosity is constantly encouraged and I really appreciate that. Because of that, this is not just any job but I really love my job.”

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