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Mr. David Chia

Chairman, Smart Automation Industry Group

Chairman, SME Centre @ SMF Pte Ltd

Managing Director, Beckhoff Automation Pte Ltd

David Chia began his career in the automation industry as a Service Engineer at Siemens, where he honed his technical expertise. Over the years, he took on diverse roles, including Project Programmer, Trainer, Technical Marketing Specialist, Business Development Manager, and Sales Manager, gaining valuable cross-functional experience across the automation value chain.

David further broadened his global perspective during his time at Rockwell Automation, where he served as a Global Product Manager overseeing a USD 150 million product portfolio. In this role, he worked closely with design engineering teams, manufacturing units, and global sales and marketing functions, building deep expertise in product lifecycle management, international markets, and customer engagement strategies. In 2010, David was appointed Managing Director of Beckhoff Automation Pte Ltd, tasked with establishing and expanding the company's presence in Southeast Asia. Under his leadership, Beckhoff Automation has grown into a trusted name in industrial automation across the region. David firmly believes in the philosophy "Go Global, Be Local," and actively works to embed Beckhoff within local industry ecosystems to better serve the needs of regional customers.

Beyond his corporate responsibilities, David dedicates time to industry development and talent cultivation. He actively volunteers with the WorldSkills Competition, promoting excellence in vocational skills, and collaborates closely with educational and research institutions to advocate the practical application of industrial automation technologies in combination with scientific research.

David also serves on the Council of the Singapore Industrial Automation Association (SIAA), where he contributes to the advancement of Singapore's manufacturing and automation sectors. In addition, he holds the role of Head of OPC Hub ASEAN, the regional branch of the US-based OPC Foundation, driving the adoption and development of IEC 62541, the Industry 4.0 interconnectivity standard, across ASEAN.

David holds a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering and an MBA from the NUS Business School.

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