PetrolPlaza Special Cloud-based solutions: Smarter kid on the block

Cloud-based wetstock management technologies challenging the capabilities of ATGs for compliance monitoring

In years gone by the Automatic Tank Gauge (ATG) was the right solution for the challenges of fuel management and environmental compliance. Locally automating a consistent practice for compliance and accurate measurement of stock levels was a sizeable step forward for the industry – but in today's evolving retail fuel environment, it's become more and more difficult for the ATG to be an automated 'one stop shop' for compliance monitoring.

As cloud-based technologies and the IoT (Internet of Things) continues to evolve, so too will the ATG's role in a fuel network. Accurately measuring the surface area of a tank is impressive. Monitoring interstitial spaces is important. But with the development of real-time cloud software such as Leighton O'Brien's Wetstock Live platform, simple water alarms have evolved into water ingress analysis to determine root causes which not only reduces false alarms but makes remediation more efficient, saving costs.

Combining ATG data with POS data enables flow rate monitoring with the same analysis to determine if flow rates dropped due to dispenser issues, product contamination, phase separation, engineering design and other causes - each requiring a potentially different response. Also pulling data into a hardware agnostic solution allows the cloud to not only manage operational issues in new ways but report on equipment performance in new ways. How accurate is my flow meter? Which equipment performs as promised? Which dispenser has the best flow rate? Which STPs work best? The list goes on.

Using the same data companies can automate meter drift analysis from head office to plan meter calibrations based on cost/benefit analysis rather than a set date, recalibrate ATGs and validate deliveries to an accuracy of 0.3%.

It can also improve wetstock management such as carrying less fuel while reducing runouts (stock outs/dry runs), and isolate actual leaks with central analytics that not only alert to losses but provide transparency to know it's a real loss, then respond with the appropriate action.

Leighton O'Brien's Wetstock Live is also certified as the most accurate provider of wetstock analytics to detect fuel losses of 0.45 litres per hour with greater than 99.6% accuracy, thereby providing more accurate leak detection capabilities than most ATGs with a leak detection threshold of 0.22 litres per hour.

ATGs are a valuable investment for every retail site, but as cloud-based solutions and the IoT continues to gather pace, there's an opportunity for retailers to re-evaluate which ATG features are important and which features are better managed with transparent, certified, cloud-based software solutions.

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