

DAIICHI SEIYAKU CO., LTD.

Contacts

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Products/Technology

Daiichi is a large pharmaceutical company with significant interests in the use of automated equipment and manufacturing control equipment for its pharmaceutical activities. It now uses both NEC and Burroughs computers and indicated interest in demonstrations by others for system applications in pharmaceuticals.

There are problems to be overcome in the use of software and systems from outside Japan (such as in the use/handling of Japanese and Chinese character sets and dealing with system conversion problems) but Daiichi has indicated these problems do not mean that outside equipment is eliminated from contention.

The pharmaceutical market in Japan has some unique features to be dealt with in systems work: cycle times are much shorter than in the U.S.; paperwork problems are similar to North America; plants run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; manufacturing is done to order rather than by forecasting/inventory approaches; etc. The industry has been automating for over 20 years, particularly in raw chemical manufacture and formulation aspects of production. Computers have been used for about 10 years; software is now outdated in many cases.

There are good opportunities for automation of pharmaceuticals work, particularly now that the Japanese government's reimbursement for drug companies has been reduced by 50 per cent, thereby increasing pressure on all drug companies to reduce costs.

At present there is widespread use of computers (PCs) for process control. There is also a mixture of automated and non-automated production lines. Daiichi, like other pharmaceutical companies, is interested in pharmaceutical applications of computerized production and inventory control systems and the use of automated equipment and computer systems in the raw chemical manufacturing phases of production.