In an ongoing effort to provide customers with the best instrumentation equipment from around the world, leading distributor, Protea Automation Solutions, has acquired speciality explosion proof and intrinsically safe instrumentation supplier, SA EX.

In addition to the company’s assets and world-renowned agencies, Protea also retains the skills of SA EX owner, Adrien De Becker, who is regarded by many in local circles as a leading expert in the field of intrinsically safe and explosion proof instrumentation. Simultaneously, the acquisition allows Protea to move a step closer to providing a true one-stop-shop destination for quality automation solutions.

SA EX represents a line of products that includes mobile and safety devices that have been specially designed and manufactured for hazardous environments. It also includes certified test, measurement and calibration devices such as multimeters, pressure gauges and other process control and calibration devices for hazardous environments in the petrochemical and mining industries among others.

Perfect fit
According to Jerry Smits, national sales manager for Protea Automation Solutions, the company had worked with SA EX for a number of years and always had the highest regard for the quality of products sold by the company, as well as the quality of service and expertise lent by Adrien. “When the opportunity arose recently to acquire the company we did not hesitate, as we know the value of a good company supported by a good leader.

“We believe that there is a close fit between the two companies and just like SA EX, Protea also prides itself on its ability to provide unique process solutions based on product offerings from any of its manufacturers. Our agencies currently read like the who’s who of the industry and includes brands that are globally well-known in the process automation and instrumentation industry.

“Adding to this, our brag-worthy newcomer agencies therefore fit in with the existing crop of manufacturers and provides contractors and clients with all the best brands, under one roof, from a single supplier. The new brands include the likes of RKI gas detection devices, Interteck enclosures, Gönneheimer electronics and instruments, Ecom mobile devices, ESP Safety Inc. detectors and safety systems, as well as Grünewald control and measuring engineering equipment.”
Customers first
Speaking after the acquisition, Adrien concurred saying that the extra impetus and reach afforded to the company through the significantly more extensive network of Protea will no doubt lead to far greater exposure and will subsequently lead to dramatically increased sales across the southern African region.

“When I moved to South Africa and started SA EX in 2003 I established the business using my already vast experience of the instrumentation and automation industries. This, combined with hard work and passion, is what gave the company its start in life and what helped me to build it to the point where it became an attractive target for acquisition by a large, well respected company such as Protea Automation Solutions.

“In many ways that makes me proud of the company’s achievements and the knowledge that the company has been taken over by a company whose workforce is equally passionate about quality and customer service, is reassurance that the right decisions were made. Also, to be working with a team which is equally dedicated gives me the motivation to continue serving a growing customer base under a larger umbrella.”

Solutions provider
Jerry concludes, “From a customer point of view the acquisition means that they will have wider access to some of the world’s best explosion proof and intrinsically safe devices and instruments. With Adrien still very much involved and with the addition of our broader product offering and additional expertise they should easily find all their requirements under a single roof – whether it be intrinsically safe, explosion proof or any other instrument or automation product.

“It may also be helpful for existing and potential customers to contact Protea Automation Solutions to establish their requirements and where necessary ensure ongoing stock holding are in place.”

Intrinsically safe and explosion proof products
Protea Automation Solutions acquisition of SA EX gives contractors and clients access to some of the world’s best products under a single roof. The newly acquired range includes:
- RKI gas detection devices
- Intertec enclosures
- Gönnheimer electronics and instruments
- Ecom mobile devices
- ESP Safety Inc. detectors and safety systems
- Grünwald control and measuring engineering equipment

These are among the most readily recognisable intrinsically safe and explosion proof products in the world and perfectly supplement Protea Automation Solutions’ wide range of existing automation and instrumentation products.

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