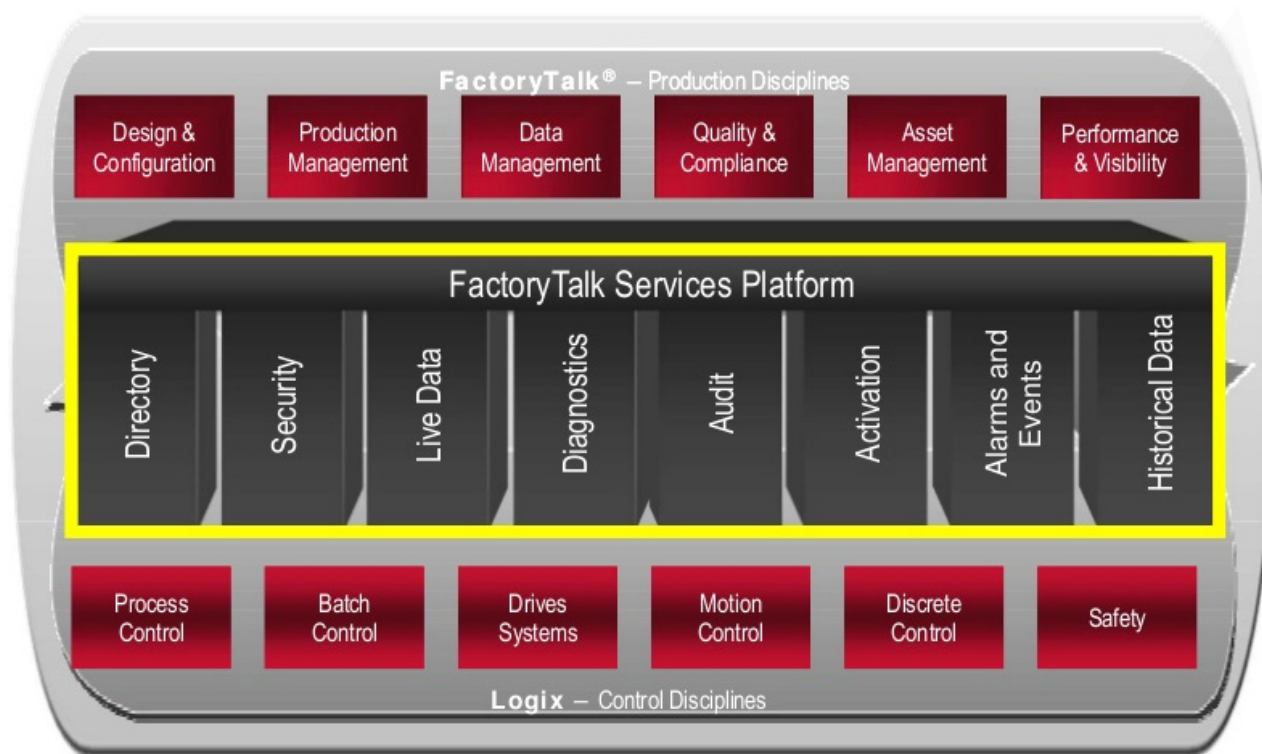# What is FactoryTalk?

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Factory Talk Services Overview

This platform turns up in many places, and can do many things, but there aren't many that really understand it. Here is a quick guide to explain the basics.

Quite often I will hear customers and/or colleagues say, "Let's use FactoryTalk," or, "Can FactoryTalk do that?," or, "What is FactoryTalk?"

In response to these questions, I want to try and explain in more detail exactly what FactoryTalk really is. FactoryTalk Services Platform is a suite of services including Live Data, Directory, Audit, Security, Activation, and Alarm & Events. It is not a product that you purchase as a standalone software package, but is embedded in most of the products from Rockwell Software. FactoryTalk is the prefix to the majority of the Rockwell Software's products, although there are some products that are enabled that do not carry the prefix. They are listed in the table as well as the features that are enabled in those products.

Here is a brief description of each component of the FactoryTalk services platform to give more of an understanding of the capabilities of each:

- Live Data – Provides a live data link between product clients and servers. For example, the connection between the HMI server and a PLC, or between FactoryTalk Historian SE and a PLC. FactoryTalk live data server is for Rockwell Automation devices and will also manage the link between clients and OPC-DA servers for non-Rockwell automation devices.

- Directory – Allows products to share a common address book that finds and provides access to plant-floor resources, such as users, roles, tags and graphic displays. The directory is managed with the FactoryTalk Administrative Console application.

- Audit – Collects messages that document changes done by users during design, management, and operation of production. This is an essential component for FactoryTalk AssetCentre to perform its function as a process control system asset and configuration management tool.

- Security – Provides a range of security services that are integrated into the FactoryTalk directory. The users and user groups are very similar in their management to active directory and can be linked to the active directory. This allows for a centralized authentication and access control which results in a "single user sign-in" experience when using FactoryTalk enabled products.

- Activation – Provides a secure, software-based system for activating Rockwell Software products and managing software activations.

- Alarm & Events – Provides both server-based and device-based process control alarm server.

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