

Where should I buy Niagara 4 from and why?

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I'm often asked this question during the N4 trainings I run for people around the world, so I thought I will share a few thoughts on this. Firstly, don't be afraid I will be trying to sell you Niagara, as all we offer at Thinktech is trainings, therefore I feel my advice is independent.

Yes, you can buy Niagara from number of places, and the choice and rules can initially be overwhelming, and you may feel, well why don't I just buy it from Tridium?

Tridium do not generally sell directly to the system integrators, instead they use distribution/sales channels. You can purchase Niagara through Vykon channel. This is the biggest Niagara distribution network and the Vykon version can be bought through number of smaller, national or regional dealers. The Vykon distribution, in 'Tridium world', is often referred to as 'pure' or 'vanilla' version, due to the fact that it is the closest software code to what is actually released from Tridium.

You can also buy Niagara products - software, JACEs, etc. through number of OEMs, e.g. Honeywell, JCI, Siemens, Trend, Distech, EasiIO, etc. (you may have noticed JACE controllers with different logos on them and in various colors) - yes all these OEMs buy Niagara from Tridium, add some extra features and sell as a branded product. You may have seen JACEs branded WEBS coming from Honeywell, Facility Explorer from JCI, EC-Net from Distech or IQVision from Trend. Yes, it is the same JACE, with different logos, but with extra software add-ons.



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Ok, so you may be thinking - you're still not telling me why to buy from certain distribution channels? Well, I'm not going to talk about the obvious things like who's going to give you good pricing, availability and most importantly the best customer service and support. In my opinion there are two major factors apart from the ones mentioned.

Firstly, if you use a lot of controllers and products from a particular OEM, you not only already know them and have established networks, but if you buy Niagara from them, often they will make your life easier. How? Because of these extra features they will provide, making it easier for you to work with the other products

coming from them. That may be extra drivers, templates, graphics that will make your engineering quicker and cheaper.

Secondly, if it is important to you, consider how quickly you can access the latest Niagara release. Keep in mind that some distribution channels will release new Niagara versions almost as soon as they leave Tridium, some will take months to make them available - that's the question I would be asking my supplier, if Tridium officially releases say N4.10 how quickly can I get it?

You may be asking, if there are so many versions, where do I go for training? We, as authorized Tridium trainers, will provide the training on the core of the Niagara platform, which is the same no matter where you buy it from, and we will equip you with tools that will help you work with any N4 distribution.

And remember, all we do is training. If you come for training with us, all you get is knowledge gained in the best training environment, and not a sales pitch for controllers or sensors or any other products someone wants to sell you.