PRESS RELEASE

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A different side of EtherCAT

PC as EtherCAT slave

Kithara Software, specialist in the field of real-time solutions for Windows® operating systems, has completed the support of PCIe EtherCAT slave cards as a complement to the popular Kithara EtherCAT Master functionality. This added feature allows for regular PCs to be applied as EtherCAT slaves.

A module of the real-time extension »RealTime Suite«, the EtherCAT Master by Kithara has been an established control solution for many years in the fields of measurement and control applications, automation, robotics as well as image capture and image processing. While slaves in EtherCAT networks have normally been implemented with specialized hardware, it is now possible to employ even simple off-the-shelf PCs as slaves.

Uwe Jesgarz, Managing Director of Kithara Software GmbH explained: "Before PCIe slave cards were available, PC-based communication only applied to the master side of the EtherCAT network. Now, through the

implementation of regular computers as slaves, it is possible to create, integrate and customize sophisticated automation processes in a much more target-oriented way."

EtherCAT is an Industrial Ethernet protocol, which features low reaction times and high transfer rates. It is used especially in industries with high production standards that, more often than not, can only be met by achieving "hard" real-time characteristics.

EtherCAT networks usually utilize special couplers and I/O terminals which lack a graphical interface. The display and input devices of a PC enable the user to receive and process data more specifically.

The universal applicability of PCs in EtherCAT networks allows for the creation of EtherCAT Slaves that are able to perform a variety of specialized tasks, such as transferring processing power. The extended hierarchical scalability of EtherCAT topologies enables the development of highly flexible automation solutions.

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About Kithara Software GmbH

Kithara Software is a specialist in the field of real-time solutions, specifically for Windows operating systems. The real-time extension »RealTime Suite« is an extensive system library for hardware-dependent programming, communication, automation and image processing in real time. The software is an efficient and easy-to-use technical basis for sophisticated applications in the fields of robotics, image processing as well as for instrumentation, control and automation technology. Consequently, it is a core component in mechanical engineering, for test facilities and other special machinery. Since its founding in 1996, Kithara has supported global companies in implementing innovative projects.

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