

Windows 7 as RTOS?

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Real-time in the automation

The real-time requirements in the automation are growing constantly. Windows in its standard configuration, though, is not sufficient to deliver real-time capabilities. Nevertheless, to use the favorite operating system, Kithara Software--a company specialized in real-time for Windows--now announces the »RealTime Suite« 2010.

Especially companies with international orientation prefer Windows as an operating system. But while today's PCs seem to be powerful enough for time-critical applications at a first glance, practical tests show: Without a real-time extension, Windows only delivers something like 'Real-time for fair-weather conditions'. But automation requires a deterministic behaviour in every situation. Everything else would not be tolerable in industrial applications and could have fatal influences.

The Berlin company Kithara Software provides the »RealTime Suite« for Windows. A wide range of the functional modules fulfill highest real-time requirements and can be arranged individually. In this way different solutions of communication for industrial automation can be realized with EtherCAT, real-time ethernet or CAN. The high-precision timers enable a priority-based, preemptive multi-tasking system, as professional programmers do expect from an RTOS. It supports tasks with up to 255 priority levels and executes only the highest prioritized task in real time.

PC-based control solutions--in contrast to traditional PLCs--are better suitable to meet the requirements of engineers when the projects are growing complex. Developers of applications with robotics, sophisticated mathematical calculations or imaging demand environments which are highly flexible but simple to implement.

The »RealTime Suite« is available for native code of the C/C++ and Delphi programming languages. C# is also applicable if DLLs are used. It supports all Windows versions including the new Windows 7.

Kithara Software GmbH

The company Kithara Software GmbH located in Berlin was founded in 1996 and has become a specialist for hardware dependent programming, real-time, multitasking and communication solutions for the Windows operating systems.

Simply applicable function libraries allow programmers the development of real-time solutions for Ethernet, automation with EtherCAT, real-time CAN as well as PCI and USB hardware access.

Kithara Software GmbH
Alte Jakobstraße 78
D-10179 Berlin

Telefon: +49(0)30 - 2789 673 - 0
Telefax: +49(0)30 - 2789 673 - 20

E-Mail: info@kithara.de
Internet: www.kithara.de

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