Factory workers select the desired supplies simply and conveniently via a Beckhoff touch panel.

Controlled tool dispensing around the clock

Convenient withdrawals and returns of supplies via Beckhoff touch panels

Tool dispensing systems made by SystemTechnik für Betriebsmittel GmbH (STB) in Germany make tools available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to cost-effectively suit user needs. STB's self-developed FEBA administration software controls tool withdrawals and returns as well as automatic material planning and refilling of used operating resources. Automation technology from Beckhoff guarantees ease of operation and system flexibility.

STB introduced the first automatic tool dispensing system for a large automotive manufacturer in 2003; since then, more than 200 systems are now in use at over 50 companies. "The demand is growing," says Executive Manager Bernhard Hentschel, adding: "Our idea is not to reinvent warehouse technology; instead we take established solutions, integrate them and manage them via our FEBA administration software." STB offers spiral cabinets including a lift, paternoster-style elevators, lift systems, a wide variety of drawer cabinets and complete operating resource logistic centers. All STB systems can be freely combined, so that tool logistics can be expanded gradually. It is for precisely this reason that STB relies on Beckhoff technology for control. "Beckhoff products are not only robust and reliable, they can also be combined flexibly and configured individually," says Bernhard Hentschel.

If need be, the factory worker goes to the dispensing system, gains authorization by entering a number code or by having a chip card read. The worker then selects the desired supplies via a Beckhoff touch panel. "To us, it is important for the touch panels to have connections at the rear and to have a shallow installation depth," explains Bernhard Hentschel. "The connectors that we use, such as DVI/USB, are very compact and flat and are located at the rear so we can make do with an installation space of only 21 mm." The panels are used in tandem with the TwinCAT control platform; data exchange with the FEBA administration system takes place via Ethernet using the ADS protocol.

STB has recently begun using I/O technology from Beckhoff instead of PC cards for the connection of all data points. Depending on the application,

The BC9000 Bus Terminal Controller is the nerve center of the Bus Terminal stations. Maneuvers such as 'drive drawer x to position y' are controlled from here.

STB assembles the optimum configuration in terms of function and cost from the large selection of Beckhoff Bus Terminals. The BC9000 Bus Terminal Controllers handle procedures such as the automatic opening of drawers or compartments, the activation of paternoster elevators or the monitoring of light barriers as well as checking results and transmitting them to the FEBA administration software.

SystemTechnik für Betriebsmittel GmbH **www.stb-feba-system.de**