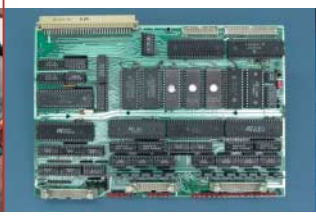
Development board 1980

Pioneering developers: Franz-Joseph Kucharski and Hans Beckhoff



P1000 single-board motion controller

25 years of Beckhoff – 25 years of New Automation Technology

On July 1, 2005, Beckhoff Industrie Elektronik celebrated its 25th birthday. Such an anniversary gives inspiration to look back and to venture a look into the future to assess one's work. On behalf of our company and our staff, who developed the company so successfully, I am pleased to undertake this task.

We can look back on 25 excellent and exciting years, as illustrated by a few statistics: Since 1980, our company has developed from a one-man business generating sales of 25,000 euros based on 25 m^2 of floor area into a global business with 600 staff, 21,000 m^2 of floor area, and sales of 129 million euros. The past 25 years were characterized by strong and steady growth, enabling the company to develop organically under its own steam. Average annual growth since 1990 was 24.2 percent. Many of you will be familiar with the "magic" growth formula derived from this: "Factor 10 every 10 years." This requires average annual growth of 25.9 percent, and this is indeed our ambitious target for the period up to 2010.

Our company is not only successful economically, but also in terms of technology. Many automation technology innovations that are taken for granted today were recognized by Beckhoff at an early stage and successfully put on the market. Important milestones include the following:

- **1982:** P1000 – single-board motion controller
- **1986:** PC Control – first PC-based machine control
- **1989:** Lightbus – fast fieldbus based on fiber optics
- **1990:** All-in-one PC motherboard
- **1995:** Bus Terminals – fieldbus I/O technology in terminal block format
- **1996:** TwinCAT – first highly integrated real-time software package under Windows with PLC and motion control functions
- **1998:** Control Panel – remote IPC control panels
- **2002:** CX1000 – modular DIN rail IPCs
- **2003:** EtherCAT – Ethernet for Control and Automation Technology

The PC control philosophy, Lightbus, the Bus Terminals and TwinCAT in particular represented technological quantum leaps. They triggered several smaller or larger revolutions in automation technology, became widely accepted as high-performance alternatives to traditional control technology, and are today regarded as standards. Our current contribution to technological progress is EtherCAT, the