

Cooperation of Berner & Mattner and Centigrade Improves Industrial Touch Interface Software

Machine control at your finger tips

Munich, February 9, 2011 – The software experts of Berner & Mattner Systemtechnik GmbH and the UI design specialists of Centigrade GmbH intensify their cooperation in the area of innovative touch interface software solutions. With their cooperation, they support manufacturers of machinery and plants to improve functionality and ease of use of human machine interfaces through modern touch-sensitive interfaces. In this way customers increase the attractiveness of their products and significantly reduce costs of errors, support and training. Both companies have established an integrated development model and a special infrastructure consisting of state-of-the-art development methods and tools for effective development of human machine interface solutions. The first success of the cooperation: The operating terminal, developed in cooperation with OMICRON electronics has been granted the iF communication design award for outstanding product design.

Both service providers supply manufacturers of industrial plants and equipment with intuitively operable touch interface solutions and, therefore, contribute substantially to the unique selling proposition of products. “Touch-sensitive displays offer tremendous potential for machine operation and will completely change market requirements. Examples of consumer electronics, in particular, demonstrate how products can be optimized through improved usability and individual interface design“, explains Dr. Klaus Wiltschi, Head of Industrial Customers Department at Berner & Mattner. “In the cooperation with Centigrade, we combine the required expertise in the areas of usability, design and software and provide the infrastructure and processes for the successful development of effective and efficient touch interaction solutions”.

Effective development model for human interface solutions

Touch operation follows its own specific usability rules – just transferring established usability concepts of PC software to touch interfaces simply fails. Likewise development processes involving designers and usability experts at a very late stage or even not including operators are completely inappropriate. Therefore, the partners strike a new path. Their development model is characterized by

- a.) early verification of workflow-oriented interaction concepts through prototypes and mockups,
- b.) agile software development methods with intensive involvement of customers and future users, and
- c.) parallel development of software and design.

Here, the workflow is given priority over function implementation. The work of developers and designers is seamlessly integrated by explicitly separating design and function based on state-of-the-art development technologies like SwiXML, XAML or QML. The web-based development platform and the automated build and test environments of Berner & Mattner enable effective cooperation of distributed experts by short integration and development cycles.

First success: iF communication design award

The iF communication design award is the first result of this new approach to developing human machine interfaces. It has been granted for the operating terminal of an electrical engineering test device developed by Centigrade and Berner & Mattner in cooperation with OMICRON electronics.

Thomas Immich, Managing Director of Centigrade GmbH: "We are going through an important transition regarding the human interaction with software. Touch panels are getting more and more inexpensive to produce and their user acceptance is increasing. It is therefore not surprising that touch panels are integrated into almost every modern smart phone. Hardware keys are vanishing and the user experience is more and more defined by software. This is why we need to rethink design and software development methods and processes. The cooperation with Berner & Mattner is an important milestone for us towards intuitively usable, visually attractive and technically elegant touch user interfaces."



CMControl operating terminal for an electrical engineering test device of OMICRON electronics, having been presented with the iF communication design award 2010



About Berner & Mattner Systemtechnik GmbH, Munich

Berner and Mattner Systemtechnik GmbH is specialized in custom-made solutions for the specification, development and testing of complex electronic systems. Its competence spectrum ranges from consulting, conception, software and systems development to the setup and operation of entire test and integration systems.

On the basis of its products and services, Berner & Mattner provides customized software and engineering solutions for the automotive, aerospace, industrial automation, transportation, and defence industries. This is why well-known companies such as Audi, BMW, Daimler, Deutsche Bahn, EADS Germany and Siemens have been placing their trust in Berner and Mattner for many years. The company with headquarters in Munich was founded in 1979, currently employs 300 people at 8 sites in Germany and Austria and is a member of the international Assystem Group. Further information on Berner & Mattner: www.berner-mattner.com

About Centigrade GmbH

Centigrade supports its clients in creating user interfaces of high usability, visual attractiveness and technical elegance. With its creative and agile team of usability engineers, designers and software architects, Centigrade is able to offer customized user experience services, ranging from requirements gathering to usability evaluations to conception and creation of exclusive screen and icon designs. In addition, Centigrade provides specialized GUI components and look and feels for applications based on Java Swing, WPF or Silverlight. Centigrade's client base includes medium-sized businesses as well as international organizations from diverse business areas. The company has been granted several awards for its work such as the prestigious iF communication design award. For more information about Centigrade, please visit www.centigrade.de.

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