

**PRESS RELEASE****Innovation through cooperation: Würth Industrie Service and Fraunhofer allow systems to communicate – Digital. Real. Transparent.**

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*Bad Mergentheim/Main-Tauber-Kreis.* Innovations in a company take place in an environment of increasing customer demands, high pace of innovation and constantly changing competitive and market landscape. It demands high level of strategic and long-term action. The companies regard the forming of cooperation as key to success and also as one of the approaches for dealing with increasing complexity. Würth Industrie Service GmbH & Co. KG too utilises innovation cooperations and networks extensively to enhance its capability for innovation, expand its skills and enter new market segments by working together with competent partners. It is primarily about developing the company in its role as one of the comprehensive partners in C-Parts management. For this reason, digital transformation is considered as the pioneering driving force. Challenging times particularly highlight the importance of digital and automated business processes. Würth Industrie Service relies consistently on high level of supply security with innovative solutions.

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Within the Würth Group, Würth Industrie Service GmbH & Co. KG specialises in modular procurement and logistics concept for industry customers with over 20 years of expertise in the market. Maximum process and supply security as well as maximum certainty of system and product quality customised as per the requirements of individual customers form the basis of efficient C-Parts management. Würth Industrie Service lives up to its role as a leader of innovation not only in logistics. Digital and networked systems and automation technologies are used since many years. Innovative supply solutions are designed for automated and secure supply of C-Parts and ideas are implemented in innovations together with more than 20,000 customers worldwide. As a result of the closely collaborating with research and industry, Würth Industrie Service is aware of the problems faced by manufacturing companies and creates innovations, which meet the resulting demands of Industry 4.0. "We see it as our duty to not only implement new developments but also advance actively", clarifies Stefan Reuss, head of Digital Solutions and IT of Würth Industrie Service. Especially in C-Parts management, digital

solutions are gaining importance nowadays and will become even more important in the future.

### **Cooperation with Fraunhofer IML: together towards success!**

Since 2013, Würth Industrie Service has been successfully doing development work for intelligent future-oriented solutions together with Fraunhofer Institute for Material Flow and Logistics IML. The company is able to implement technology trends for an efficient C-Parts management in a timely and precise manner by actively working together with highly qualified scientists. Thus, Würth Industrie Service plays a significant and long-term part in developing the logistics of the future. Stefan Reuss believes: "As a young and innovative company, Würth Industrie Service benefits from the highly efficient professional and methodical expertise in all areas. We can utilise the complete know-how of the Fraunhofer network. New ideas can be converted into solutions and practice-oriented systems as well as application-specific products in a structured manner. The cooperation between Fraunhofer IML and Würth Industrie Service offers the necessary flexibility for the same."

### **Digitalisation as pioneering driving force in modern C-Parts management**

Connected systems provide the starting point for Industry 4.0 in modern C-Parts management. These are the systems that generate large amount of data. This also applies to digitalised ordering, managing and handling of production goods and operating supplies. Millions of data records are accumulated per month in a middle-sized industrial company. At the same time, it is extremely important to harmonise and efficiently align the value chain and intralogistics processes. Only a customised business model turns the data supply of Würth Industrie Service into a potential turnover. This is exactly where the company starts with the new concept of purely **data-driven business models** in the course of existing cooperation and actively engages in development. One thing is certain: Transparency and traceability of their inventory is an important success factor for the industry customers. Therefore, Würth Industrie Service focuses on consistently developing technologies by cooperating with Fraunhofer Institute for Material Flow and Logistics IML. The motto is: together towards success!

**iDISPLAY** meets the claim “Systems are connected with each other – Digital. Real. Transparent.” in its full functionality. The company undertakes development work on the study in cooperation with Fraunhofer IML. The result of the prototype: another milestone in C-Parts management in the direction of Industry 4.0. The manufacturing companies can directly interact at the storage location and directly initiate different processes within their value chain using iDISPLAY, a multifunctional shelf label, which functions independently. For the first time, not only an exchange is possible from the digital to the tangible world but also communication from the reality to the virtuality. It provides maximum transparency of data and information!

With the promise of maximum transparency, the study also presents **iBin®: the first intelligent Kanban bin**. As the first C-Parts partner, Würth Industrie Service presents an optical ordering system that revolutionises the entire materials industry in a sustainable way. For the first time, it is possible to obtain the information about quantity, number and order status of the items at bin level via the built-in camera and transfer it to the ERP system automatically using RFID technology. Therefore, not only is it possible to deliver small parts needed for production just-in-time on a requirement-driven basis, but also supply C-Parts in real time. It is a future-oriented and intelligent system that sets new standards. In this case, successful development work means innovation through cooperation: The iBin® is developed together by Würth Elektronik ICS GmbH & Co. KG and Würth Industrie Service and demonstrates exceptionally high level of dynamics and innovativeness of the companies of Würth-Group. Since the LogiMAT 2013, numerous developments and innovative approaches of technology were reviewed during the cooperation work.

In order to design the storage location more effectively in the future, Würth Industrie Service also focusses on developing innovative solutions for **seamless indoor localisation and indoor navigation** together with Fraunhofer IML allowing the customers to localise our systems on site. Whether Kanban systems, storage systems or vending machines: in order to optimise the onsite support, the company relies on the expertise of Fraunhofer network.

The motto: Würth Industrie Service regards the forming of cooperation as key to success. This also paves the way through challenging times to establish the company as the reliable C-Parts partner. In particular, the cooperation with Fraunhofer IML improves our understanding of innovative skills. In the face of

global competition, increasing customer demands and rapid innovations, this is the only way to convert visions into reality in a consistent and timely manner.

### Pictures:



Photo 1: Study on iDISPLAY.jpg

Caption 1: iDISPLAY - Digital. Real. Transparent.

Photo source 1: Archives of Würth Industrie Service GmbH & Co. KG



Photo 2: iBin®: Inventories at a glance.jpg

Caption 2: iBin®: The first intelligent Kanban bin of Würth Industrie Service

Photo source 2: Archives of Würth Industrie Service GmbH & Co. KG



Photo 3: Seamless indoor localisation and indoor navigation.jpg

Caption 3: Research: Innovative solutions for seamless indoor localisation and indoor navigation.jpg

Photo source 3: Archives of Würth Industrie Service GmbH & Co. KG

#### Brief profile of Würth Industrie Service GmbH & Co. KG

Within the Würth Group, Würth Industrie Service GmbH & Co. KG is responsible for the supply of the industrial sector. Since its foundation in 1999, Würth Industrie Service is located at the Industriepark Würth in Bad Mergentheim, Germany with over 1700 employees.

As a full C-Parts provider, the company offers its customers a specialised product range of over 1,100,000 items: from screws, connection and fastening technology, tools to chemical-technical products and occupational safety.

In addition to the extensive standard range, the strength of the company lies in its customer-specific, logistical and dispositive supply and service concepts as well as in special parts. Under the service brand "CPS® - C-Product Service", the company offers modular solutions, which are customised as per customer-specific requirements. Thereby, the consumption-based and demand-based systems significantly rationalise the processes for purchase, logistics and quality assurance and enable the customers to procure small parts in a cost-optimised manner.

Logistic and dispositive services such as shelving systems with scanners or a just-in-time supply using Kanban bin systems contribute significantly to increasing the productivity.