

### **A look into the future at the 2014 North American EtherCAT Plug Fest**

**Recently, the EtherCAT Technology Group (ETG) invited its members to attend the annual North American EtherCAT Plug Fest – held at the North American headquarters of Beckhoff Automation in Savage, Minnesota, USA. For a period of two days, participants subjected their EtherCAT masters and slaves to rigorous interoperability testing, discussed open questions, and prepared the devices for future marketing. Additionally, the ETG shared exclusive information about prospective EtherCAT device test developments to the members.**

The 2014 North American EtherCAT Plug Fest was also highlighted by the location of the two-day event. The Savage, Minnesota facility of Beckhoff Automation LLC also houses the North American EtherCAT Test Center (ETC), which was accredited by the ETG at the beginning of 2014. The goals of the event were to test EtherCAT devices from the 35 participants for interoperability, to strengthen the exchange between the ETG and the ETC test engineer, and to lay the groundwork for continued success of the test center and the EtherCAT Technology Group in North America.

Rainer Hoffmann from the ETG in Germany who was onsite at this Plug Fest, noted his pleasure regarding the mix of EtherCAT masters and slaves brought to the event: “Thanks to the balance of EtherCAT masters and slaves, we were able to concentrate on all device types in equal measure, clear many open questions, explain test proceedings, and discuss best practice experiences with the attendees.”

In addition to utilizing the official EtherCAT Conformance Test Tool (CTT), the ETG representatives also presented a beta version of a new CTT – representing a unique opportunity for the attending EtherCAT device manufacturers to review the current development status of the tool. Additionally, the manufacturers of EtherCAT devices for the semiconductor industry received information about the development of EtherCAT device tests specific to their industry.

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## Picture:



### Picture caption:

In addition to the interoperability tests for their EtherCAT devices, manufacturers who joined the 2014 North American EtherCAT Plug Fest received exclusive information about future EtherCAT test developments.

### **About EtherCAT Technology Group (ETG):**

The EtherCAT Technology Group is an organization in which key user companies from various industries and leading automation suppliers join forces to support, promote and advance the EtherCAT technology. With over 2,900 members from 58 countries, the EtherCAT Technology Group has become the largest fieldbus organization in the world. Founded in November 2003, it is also the fastest growing fieldbus organization.

### **About EtherCAT®:**

EtherCAT is the Industrial Ethernet technology which stands for high-performance, low-cost, ease of use and a flexible topology. It was introduced in 2003 and has been an international IEC standard and a SEMI standard since 2007. EtherCAT is an open technology: anyone can implement or use it.

→ For further information please see: [www.ethercat.org](http://www.ethercat.org)

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