

Background information

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Virtual press conference myPNOZ

(Check against delivery)

14 January 2021
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Industrie 4.0: Bringing technologies to life – in the service of the customer

In 2021 we are celebrating 10 years of Industrie 4.0! The Industrie 4.0 working group in the Industry-Science Research Alliance (FU) was launched in 2011. At that time the Research Alliance was the central, innovative policy body advising the German government on high-tech matters. I was appointed to the Research Alliance and as a member was able to be there at the drafting and therefore “the birth” of Industrie 4.0.

The implementation recommendations presented to the German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the 2013 Hannover Messe stated, and I quote: *“In future industry will increasingly need to produce individual, more sophisticated products for the same price, in order to meet the changed needs of the market.”*

As with every innovation, Industrie 4.0 also follows the hype cycle. Initially the hype meant that almost every product innovation was called an Industrie 4.0 product, so the term was overused. Disillusionment followed – and the realisation that Industrie 4.0 meant hard work and effort. So what now?

10 years after the launch, many will ask whether we have achieved this objective. The answer is: we are part of the way there.

Industrie 4.0 is a vision, a guiding principle, not a project that is time-bound. We will be dealing with this issue for a long time to come!

What's important is that we have embarked on the journey. And that's good!

And together we have all achieved some important things:

- There is cross-sector exchange between IT, automation and industry
- When talking to customers, Industrie 4.0 provides a reason to look holistically at existing processes and how they are implemented.
- Globally we are thinking increasingly in terms of systems and business models rather than products and hardware
- Thoughts regarding the production of the future turn not just to fully automated shop floors but to human/machine collaboration. Each in its place, with its own strengths.

We are currently on the so-called “path to enlightenment”, as the hype cycle so beautifully puts it: From the experiences we have gained (both good and bad) we can more easily recognise the requirements that are actually placed on companies.

I'd now like to take a closer look at these requirements. In my estimation, the following two requirements play a special role and are essential for companies:

- **Digitisation:** In other words, dealing with (not necessarily) new but as yet unused and therefore dormant technologies, specifically the merging of IT, engineering and automation technology. Everything is networked and communicates with

each other. Data can be transferred seamlessly between various sectors and systems. This is the basic technical requirement and applies to internal processes as well as products, solutions and business models.

- **Agility:** When production cycles become shorter and markets become faster, you have to find a different way to manage product development and customer care within the company. More manpower in development does not mean faster times to market. Agility is required, of both methods and minds.

How can companies handle these requirements?

- **Digitisation requires cooperation!** It's only possible to integrate these so-called "new" technologies if the IT department is involved in product development. So the system administrator needs to talk to the product manager; the machine builder to the start-up. You won't get far on your own; innovation only emerges from dialogue and collaboration.
- **Agility requires commitment!** Agility cannot be imposed; it is a matter of attitude. For many areas this means that product developments and other processes can no longer follow the waterfall principle and run successively. The transition from waterfall to agile methods such as Scrum is a change process, which companies must support.

Cooperation and commitment – You can see: people play a key role in these challenges. People are needed to fill out the technologies and methods, otherwise they remain empty shells, tools and platforms.

You have to bring people with you, into this increasingly complex world. And for me that's currently the greatest and perhaps most difficult challenge and an enormous task for companies! You can buy technologies, but you can't buy people's attitude and motivation. If people are ready to join the journey, then the transition can work well. Of that I'm convinced. So I'm looking forward with excitement to the next 10 years. I'm also looking forward to sharing our experiences with you today; how we live and breathe these requirements at Pilz. One outcome is our new myPNOZ, which we present to you today. With the help of agile methods and based on a universal digital concept, we are better able to meet customer's needs in the field of safe automation. Safety in batch size 1.

Pilz Group

The Pilz Group is a global supplier of products, systems and services for automation technology. The family business is based in Ostfildern and employs around 2,500 staff. With 42 subsidiaries and branches around the world, Pilz supplies safe solutions for human, machine and the environment.

The technology leader offers complete automation solutions comprising sensor, control and drive technology – including systems for industrial communication, diagnostics and visualisation. Consulting, engineering and training round off its international range of services. Pilz solutions are used in many industries beyond mechanical engineering, such as intralogistics, railway technology or the robotics sector for example.

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Pilz on social networks:

On our social media channels we provide background information about the company as well as the people at Pilz and report on the latest news from automation technology.



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