Beckhoff Innovation Lab at
Kempten University of Applied Sciences

New automation lab strengthens hands-on engineering training and supports skilled worker retention in the Allgäu region

Kempten University of Applied Sciences is integrating modern PC-based control technology from Beckhoff directly into its engineering curriculum. As part of the Allgäu4Production education and innovation network and in close collaboration with technology partners GROB-WERKE and MULTIVAC, as well as other regional companies, the new laboratory will strengthen hands-on training, technology transfer to industry, and the long-term retention of skilled workers in the region.

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With the Beckhoff Innovation Lab, which opened in the spring of 2026 at Kempten University of Applied Sciences, Beckhoff is making targeted investments in training future professionals. The Verl-based technology company is taking on sponsorship of the lab, thus bringing its PC-based control technology directly into the Faculty of Electrical Engineering. Students here are able to work with a modern, open automation platform – used in machines and systems around the

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world – at an early stage in their studies. This allows them to acquire the skills that industrial companies are specifically looking for in connection with networked, software-based production environments.

Beckhoff will be supporting the new university laboratory with an annual sponsorship, enhancing the laboratory's wide range of automation equipment. This includes industrial PCs, TwinCAT automation software, I/O components, EtherCAT communication technology, machine vision, robotics integration solutions, and the XTS intelligent transport system. In the future, approximately 30 students per year will work on real-world problems at seven laboratory workstations as part of practical courses, project work, and theses. In this way, the lab is specifically preparing Bachelor's and Master's students in the fields of automation technology and robotics, electrical and computer engineering, and systems engineering to meet the current demands of industrial companies.

End-to-end automation technology for networked production

For more than 40 years, Beckhoff has been a leading force in the development of open, scalable automation solutions. High-performance industrial PCs provide all control functions via software-based means. Traditional machine control and modern IT solutions converge on a single platform. This approach creates the technological foundation for a data-driven, fully connected factory.

The Beckhoff Innovation Lab takes a hands-on approach to precisely these technological principles. Students learn how to combine hardware components in a modular way, connect machine data to edge and cloud systems via standard interfaces, and efficiently integrate complete systems. In the laboratory, they work on challenging tasks ranging from sequence and motion control to measurement technology and data analytics, as well as machine vision, robotics, and AI-driven production applications such as predictive maintenance and intelligent

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quality control. At the same time, the university laboratory fosters a holistic understanding of systems, which prepares students for the diverse automation environments found in industry. The future professionals gain firsthand experience of how information technology and automation work together seamlessly in modern machines and systems.

Strong regional partnership within the Allgäu4Production network

As part of the Allgäu4Production education and innovation platform for networked production and Industry 4.0, the Beckhoff Innovation Lab establishes a close connection between Kempten University of Applied Sciences and regional industry. The regional technology partners contribute specific application scenarios and current issues from the field of machine building. This gives rise to project-based formats in which students work on digitalized production topics with a focus on the future – from machine connectivity and data utilization to complex motion sequences and the integration of new software functionalities. In this way, students are able to gain an early insight into the real-world demands of modern production environments.

Prof. Josef Griesbauer, professor of automation and measurement technology at Kempten University of Applied Sciences, emphasizes the importance of this collaboration: “Beckhoff’s sponsorship of the lab and the active involvement of the partner companies represent a milestone in the expansion of our Allgäu4Production innovation platform. This allows us to offer students a modern, industry-oriented education in close collaboration with the professional world.”

The new laboratory also provides tangible added value for industrial partners in the Allgäu region. Fabian Glöckler, head of the control technology department at GROB-WERKE, explains: “The new lab demonstrates the added value created by collaboration within our Allgäu4Production network. It promotes direct exchange between

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universities and industry, thereby laying an important foundation for practical training and for the region's future competitiveness."

Holger Salzgeber, Team Leader Software Development at MULTIVAC, adds: "Through Allgäu4Production, we are in constant dialog with the students. The platform enables us to spark young people's interest in future-oriented industrial topics at an early stage, provide concrete insights into real-world practice, and prepare them specifically for the demands of today's industrial manufacturing."

Christopher Kleinert, head of the Beckhoff sales office in Kempten, also emphasizes this shared commitment: "A comprehensive understanding of modern automation is crucial today for successfully shaping the industrial transformation. With our PC-based control technology, we provide the technological foundation for efficiently connecting machines, plants, and IT systems and ensuring that production data can be used consistently throughout the entire process. At the Beckhoff Innovation Lab, young people apply these technologies in a real-world setting – and, in doing so, develop the skills that companies need for the productive, flexible, and sustainable manufacturing of tomorrow."

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Press picture:



Picture caption:

Investing in the next generation of engineers: Christopher Kleinert, head of the Beckhoff sales office in Kempten (left); Prof. Peter Stich, professor of digital factory and automated production at Kempten University of Applied Sciences (second from left); Prof. Frank Niemeier, Dean of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering; and Prof. Josef Griesbauer, professor of automation and measurement technology in the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at Kempten University of Applied Sciences (right), open the new Beckhoff Innovation Lab. Together, they are ensuring direct technology transfer and strengthening hands-on high-tech education in the Allgäu region.

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Press picture:



Picture caption:

Integrating theory and industrial practice: The Beckhoff Innovation Lab at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at Kempten University of Applied Sciences provides a connection between everyday academic life and concrete industrial requirements. At seven laboratory workstations, students work on real-world, application-focused problems in the field of automation technology.

Press picture:



Picture caption:

Space for hands-on learning: A look inside the Beckhoff Innovation Lab reveals its comprehensive technological infrastructure. In this professional environment, future specialists gain a comprehensive understanding of systems and practice the seamless integration of information technology and automation technology.

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Picture caption:

Students at the university lab in Kempten work with Beckhoff's open automation platform, encompassing industrial PCs, TwinCAT, and EtherCAT components. This enables them to gain in-depth practical knowledge and acquire the specific skills they need for their careers in industry.

Press kit:

www.beckhoff.com/media/downloads/press/2026/pr272026_beckhoff.zip

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