



Hans Beckhoff,
managing owner,
Beckhoff Automation

Beckhoff maintains stable operation during coronavirus crisis

Increasing revenue from previous financial year

Beckhoff Automation generated global revenue of 923 million euros in 2020. This corresponds to a slight growth in turnover of 2% compared to the previous year, in which the company achieved a turnover of 903 million euros. In a very challenging year due to the coronavirus pandemic, this is a noteworthy success and evidence of the high acceptance of PC-based control technology across markets and industries. The company currently employs 4,500 people worldwide.

“Despite being a difficult business year for the entire industry, our annual sales increased with an uptick of 2% to 923 million euros. That is not too bad, and we are satisfied,” Hans Beckhoff reports. “For 2021, we see a very positive business development with currently double-digit growth rates on the horizon; the global economy is currently on a very dynamic growth path in many business sectors! Therefore, the expansion of our production capacities and the increase in productivity are particularly important this year. In addition, we will continue our investments in research and development and training with full intensity.”

Ensuring and expanding production capacities

Beckhoff Automation has been taking the best possible precautionary measures since the beginning of the pandemic to minimize risks associated with the coronavirus and has since been able to maintain 100% of the company's activities without restriction. “We have not had and do not plan to have any

reductions in hours for our employees, we are operating at full capacity,” reports the managing owner. As further strong growth is expected, Beckhoff plans to expand production capacities for individual product ranges by up to 30% in 2021.

Beckhoff China drives strong sales development

2020 was the most successful year in terms of revenue for the Chinese Beckhoff subsidiary since its foundation, with impressive growth of around 28%. Beckhoff China now contributes 20% of the company's total revenue. Wind turbines, machines that produce solar modules and batteries, and general mechanical engineering are the main success factors here.

Varying sales development in other countries

Business in Germany and Europe recorded a single digit revenue decrease, which was mainly caused by the decline in deliveries and exports for series

machine construction. This is mainly due to the capital goods sector. North America achieved results at previous year's level. "Overall, global developments led to a slight increase but less growth than we were used to in recent years," Hans Beckhoff concludes.

Worldwide expansion

Undeterred, Beckhoff continued to expand its sales network. In the U.S., Beckhoff opened a new Process Industry Technical Center in Houston last year. This gives the company a branch office in a globally important center of oil and gas production. Business in the process industry is to be further expanded from this office location. In Denmark, Beckhoff moved into its own new headquarters. "Our goal is to be close to our customers everywhere. That's why our sales networks are constantly being expanded and condensed," reports the company owner, continuing, "We are increasingly investing in our own buildings in our foreign branches to further strengthen the local identity."

PC Control enables modern vaccine production

PC-based control technology has a wide range of applications, especially in the biotech and medtech sectors currently. Beckhoff technology is ideally suited for this purpose and is being used by many companies to produce goods that are urgently needed during the pandemic. The spectrum ranges from the development and production of vital respiratory equipment to diagnostics and testing, to the manufacture of medical masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE). As another example, a machine manufacturer

for vaccine production and filling also relies on PC-based control technology from Beckhoff.

Product innovations

At the upcoming Hannover Messe Digital Edition, innovations and further developments will be presented in all Beckhoff product and technology areas. New, more powerful CPUs for Industrial PCs, new I/O signal types as well as Bus Terminals optimized in terms of performance and cost will be featured. Additional highlights will include newly expanded motor series in the standard rotary as well as in the linear range and associated drives, exciting expansions in XTS and XPlanar motion systems, and extensive new TwinCAT software functions. The list of innovations is extensive and exciting!

Machine learning for industrial applications

AI is a current highlight of Beckhoff control technology. At Hannover Messe 2019, Beckhoff had announced the integration of Machine Learning (ML) into the TwinCAT 3 automation software. Last year, Beckhoff had an effective beta phase and a very successful market launch. The first customers are already using the Beckhoff solution. The special feature here is the execution of ML models directly in the TwinCAT real-time environment. There are thus no limits with regard to the fields of application in a machine.

Apprentice and student numbers at a constantly high level

For Beckhoff, highly trained specialists are of great importance. Every year, the company employs around 90 trainees and 90 students. Despite the coronavirus pandemic, the number of trainees and students at Beckhoff Automation remains unchanged. Career exploration days, internships and informational events for high school students continue to be offered in digital formats at Beckhoff Automation as part of the "Digital Youth Program". There is also an alternative program for students and schools to visit Hannover Messe, which Beckhoff has strongly supported in recent years.

Gütersloh campus anchored in law

Beckhoff Automation has been a key supporter of practice-integrated studies in Gütersloh since they began in 2010 and, together with the Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences, trains an average of around 30 students each year in future-proof engineering professions. The company supports Bielefeld UAS with several endowed professorships at the Gütersloh campus. Previously, the Gütersloh campus was merely a study location of the university; since March 24, 2021, the campus has been a legally established location of Ostwestfalen-Lippe's largest university of applied sciences.

Sales trend Beckhoff Automation

