



Open Industry 4.0 Alliance overcomes the challenges of 2020 and focuses on internationalisation in 2021

The alliance is establishing itself in Europe and the Middle East, and its sights are set on China

- **The number of members increased from 43 to 71 compared to the end of the previous year**
- **It is informally involved as an 'implementation alliance' in numerous other bodies**
- **12 workgroups for sectors and technologies are working within the Alliance**

Reinach, Switzerland, 21 December 2020 - The pandemic year is coming to an end and despite its inherent challenges, restrictions and obstacles, the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance can look back on a successful year. Over the course of 12 months, the Alliance was able to increase its membership by an impressive 60 percent compared to 2019, to now comprise 71 members. They derive not only from Germany, but also now from Finland, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. Epitomising this success, following the Vintage Drill showcase that began in 2020, the plan for a model factory is to be implemented in the coming year. Strategically, the alliance is increasing its focus on the topic of internationalisation in 2021.

"Strategic alliances such as the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance are more important than ever in light of initiatives by associations or governments," explains Nils Herzberg, spokesman for the board of the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance and Global Head of Strategic Partnerships for the Digital Supply Chain and Industry 4.0 at SAP. "While international bodies define the industry standards, our alliance drives their implementation. Our members implement targeted subsets of relevant standards in concrete projects for the benefit of their customers - and then make these best practices available to the other alliance members. Many members operate globally, but originally come from Europe. Now we are turning our attention to the Middle East and China."

2021 in figures: The Alliance has established itself

Currently, the Alliance is driving industrial digitalisation forward through 12 working groups in various sectors, targeted towards technical issues and marketing. An agile tech committee is also focusing on an app directory - the 'yellow pages' for industrial apps - and externally through the creation of an overarching app store supported by Alliance members.

In 2020, 111 (mostly virtual) workshops took place, including 15 tech committee workshops and five hackathons. Alliance members now list 159 products and services to be further developed in the coming months according to the interoperability guidelines of the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance.

The implementation alliance uses all existing standards

The Open Industry 4.0 Alliance sees itself as an implementation community that wants to use existing standards and connect them in practice. Automation silos are to be broken down and, in addition to the innovation of new plants, the focus is also on the digitalisation and transformation of brownfield plants. This alludes to already existing plants with components that partly date back to the time before the Industrial Internet of Things.

"Our member companies also send their employees to standardisation bodies as well as other consortia and associations, with the aim of raising the digitalisation of industry and the networking of the entire economy to a new level," explains Gerd Hoppe, Corporate Management at Beckhoff Automation GmbH & Co. KG and deputy board member of the alliance. "In this context, the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance is the practitioner alliance in the environment of the GAIA-X Foundation."

One of the key features of the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance is automatic asset onboarding through all four architecture layers, using technologies from the OPC Foundation, Platform Industry 4.0 and the Free Software Docker. The architecture layers are on-premise Open Edge Connectivity (devices) and Open Edge Computing Platforms. Then, in the cloud, the asset operator's Open Operator Cloud Platform and Common Cloud Central serve as a shared platform whose key components are asset repositories and digital twins.

"At the technology level, we are pushing our work in several strategic directions. For example, we are building a marketplace directory on the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance website that lists products and services of Alliance members and links them together," explains Hans-Jürgen Hilscher, CDO of Hilscher Gesellschaft für Systemautomation and Chairman Technical Committee of the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance. "As an Alliance, we also welcome profit-oriented projects from the extended community, such as a manufacturer-independent app store. The focus will be on apps that run on the Alliance-compliant Open Edge Computing Platform."

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Hashtag: #OI4Alliance

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About the Open Industry 4.0 Alliance

The Open Industry 4.0 Alliance acts as a partnership of leading European industrial companies that pragmatically participate in the implementation of cross-vendor industry 4.0 solutions and services for manufacturing facilities and automated warehouses. The alliance was launched in April 2019. The association is headquartered in Reinach, Switzerland.

Further information can be found at <https://www.openindustry4.com/>