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Theo Hell Industrieelektrik Uses Kontron System for Monitoring and Control of Water Facilities

➤ ThinkIO Top-Hat Rail PC Manages Giant Water Tap



Every second, 100,000 liters of water roars through the two 22 metric ton valves of the Eifel Rurtalsperre Schwammenauel, the second largest reservoir in Germany with a capacity of 200 million cubic meters. The Rurtalsperre Schwammenauel belongs to the Wasserverband Eifel-Rur (WVER), which operates a total of six dams with a capacity of 300 million cubic meters in the northern Eifel. They serve primarily as flood control, but are also used for the drinking water supply and as a local recreation area. The Rurtalsperre is the largest of the six reservoirs and, with the Urftalsperre, forms a connected lake region which lies, for the most part, in the Eifel national park. And when it came time to update the electronics

of this massive system, Kontron was chosen as a partner along with its Think IO system. The Kontron Think IO was chosen because it is a maintenance-free system with lots of connectivity potential. That, paired with Kontron's dedication to service, combined for a great fit to the WVER project.

How does the system work?

Overall, what happens in the pipes, valves, and burst pipe protections while the torrents of water churn through is illustrated in abstract form on a flat-screen monitor with the Kontron logo, installed in the door of the control cabinet in the valve chamber. If the cabinet is opened, the intelligent "monarch" of the waters can be seen. The Kontron ThinkIO hides its PC functionality and everything that goes along with it in a compact housing suitable for control cabinets, just 224 x 100 x 70 mm. It controls, monitors, and visualizes all of the fittings in the valve chamber. In addition to the two pipes of the bottom outlet, there is a third which branches to a small hydroelectric station. It displays a real-time visualization of the entire facility on the flat panel in the door. Furthermore, it is connected to the central

monitoring of the dam in a neighboring building via an analog dedicated line; later, the connection will be realized via the Internet.



Major bottom outlet project

The pipes and valves of the bottom outlet in the valve chamber (this term is generally used to describe the buildings which house the pipes and fittings at water facilities) were already implemented in the first building phase of the Rurtalsperre in 1936. After sixty years of service, they were worn out and could no longer be repaired, so the WVER had them replaced, a major project in construction and water technology that was even presented by German television channel ZDF in its

series Abenteuer Wissen.

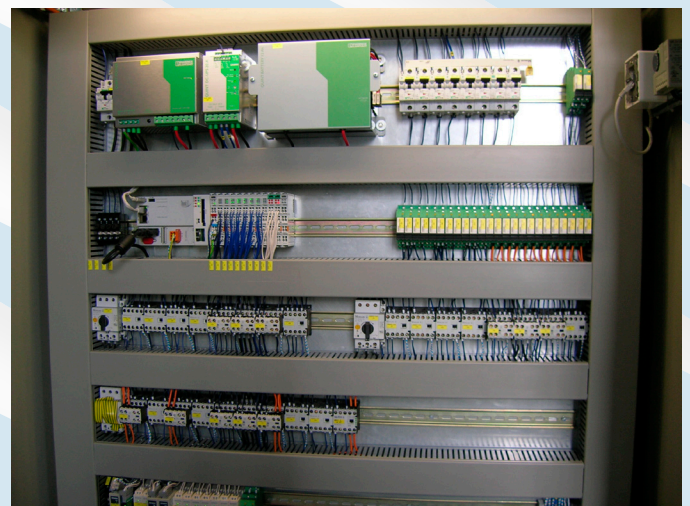
HELL is responsible for the electrical engineering of the entire dam association and thus also in the Rurtalsperren valve chamber. Each dam has its own central monitoring



station, which has been equipped by the Krefeld-based engineers. With HELL-MDÜS the international, mid-sized company, which employs 230 people, has developed its own modular data transmission system, which also covers the communications for Eifel dam network. Computer protected, it reports malfunctions, captures measurement data, and offers full PLC functionality. Together with a partner, HELL specially developed the Webaqua visualization software for use on water facilities.

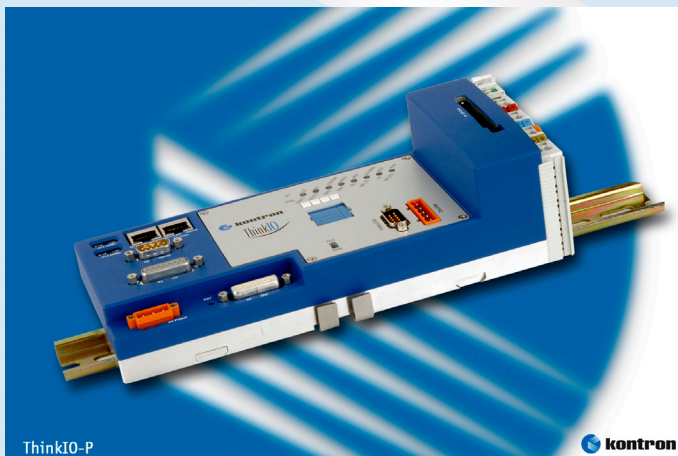
Kontron ThinkIO – the Better Sorcerer’s Apprentice

In the future, HELL will rely primarily on PC technology for HELL-MDÜS in order to use the wide variety of connectivity and communication options. With their communications and device interfaces, PCs can be used in any infrastructure without difficulty and controlled via the Internet. This is a crucial point, especially in remote systems, such as those represented by the electronics for the six WVER dams spread across more than 1000 square kilometers. That is why all 30 remote workstations, which so far have been connected via a dedicated line, will gradually be replaced and equipped with Kontron ThinkIOs. Then WVER can take its pick: DSL, ISDN, GSM, UMTS, LAN, or analog; every communication medium is possible with the Kontron PC.



Kontron ThinkIO Facts

Besides its appropriate technical specifications, the Kontron ThinkIO offers a complete bundle of qualities and functions: first of all, the top-hat rail PC is only 70 mm deep, which makes it slimmer than most competing systems, and it also finds plenty of room in a 90 mm control cabinet. Inside the robust, heat-dissipating aluminum housing, there are no moving or active parts like rotating fans or hard drives that are subject to deterioration or failure. Thus, the Kontron ThinkIO is fail-proof and maintenance-free – also an absolute must for geographically widely distributed systems. Also very practical for HELL: with four spring-loaded quick-locks, the control cabinet PC can be clicked onto the top-hat rails without tools.



With I/O module clamps, and a form-fitting and industrially tight connection to the computer via the WAGO-I/O system, the Kontron ThinkIO is adaptable and expandable to all applications. Up to 64 clamps can be added directly and up to 252 are possible with an extension clamp. There are well over 100 WAGO clamp versions on the market, including interface modules for ASI, SSI, incremental decoder, RS232 or RS485.

The Kontron ThinkIO also earned points on the HELL evaluation checklist with its software configuration: it is equipped with a real-time Linux

operating system, a web server, and a CoDeSys run-time environment for executing applications programmed with the IEC-61131-3-compliant, SOFT-PLC development environment of the same name.

Harmonizing partners

Just as the Kontron ThinkIO fits perfectly in the Theo Hell Industrieelektrik applications, Theo Hell Industrieelektrik and Kontron work well together. The partners have been working together for ten years. "Kontron is far ahead in both product quality and support service," explains Richard van den Ven, who is responsible for the WVER project. "We did not find a similar combination with any other providers."

Reason enough to use the Kontron ThinkIO not just in the Eifel dams. Thus, HELL also currently equips the 40 remote workstations of the Kempen city drainage system with the Kontron top-hat rail PCs. The control cabinet computers already control the water flow for the drainage operators in Düsseldorf and the Linksniederrheinischen Entwässerungs-Genossenschaft drainage cooperative.

About the Kontron ThinkIO

For the WVER, HELL uses the "small" ThinkIO-C. Its 266MHz Geode processor is powerful enough to handle the physically sluggish processes in the pipes and valves. For more complex or time-critical computations, Kontron offers the ThinkIO-P, which goes to work with Intel® Pentium® M processors up to 1.4GHz. It is currently the fastest top-hat rail PC on the market, particularly since the 1.4GHz of the "mobile" Pentium® processor corresponds to approximately 2.2GHz in a normal desktop PC. And if the Kontron ThinkIO is to be used in situations where it gets really hot or cold, there is the extended-temperature version. The Intel Celeron®

M processor in this control cabinet PC performs its duties on the top-hat rail faultlessly in a temperature range from -40 to +70 degrees Celsius.

The Kontron ThinkIO communicates via two Ethernet interfaces with RJ45 plugs and 100 Mb/s, one RS232 interface, a Profibus-Master connection, and two optional USB ports. More I/Os can be connected via the WAGO-I/O system.

The processor of the Kontron ThinkIO-C has 128MB of RAM available. The internal mass storage comes on a CompactFlash card with the same volume. An additional CompactFlash can be added externally.

The Kontron ThinkIO works with a choice of Linux and Windows CE 5.0. A CoDeSys runtime system is included in the delivery as an IEC-61131-3-compliant Soft-PLC. Thus all applications programmed in the development environment can be run on the Kontron ThinkIO.

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About Kontron

Kontron is a worldwide leading manufacturer of Embedded Computer Technology and robust mobile solutions. They supply leading OEMs, system integrators and application providers in the most varied market segments such as data and telecommunication, automation technology, metrology and control engineering, transportation, gaming and entertainment, medical and military technology, as well as aeronautical engineering and energy. Our objective is to enable customers to significantly reduce their time-to-market and to provide them with clear competitive advantages with products such as high-performance open computer platforms and systems, single board computers, HMIs and mobile, rugged computers. Kontron employs over 2,300 employees worldwide, with production plants in Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific region. The company is listed in the German TecDAX 30 under stock exchange code "KBC". Kontron is a member of the Intel® Communications Alliance and therefore receives early access to leading Intel technologies and preferential engineering support. For more detailed information on Kontron, please visit the company website: www.kontron.com

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