



‘Motion & I/O controller industry will more than double by 2023’

Discussing future technology growth drivers and his plans for the Indian market, **Wayne Baron**, President & CEO, Galil Motion Control, elaborates on challenges and opportunities in the marketplace, during an interaction with Sumedha Mahorey

What are the major technology trends that are being witnessed in the motion control & drives market?

The motion and I/O controller industry will more than double by 2023 due to the significant growth in automation in all industries, specifically food and beverage, automotive, biotech, medical, pharmaceuticals, textiles, 3-D printing, semiconductor, etc. OEMs designing systems are looking for turn-key solutions that minimise time-to-market to be competitive in their industry.

Embedded Ethernet has become a standard communication protocol for controllers; internal switching provides better performance and saves on equipment cost because external switches are not needed. Modbus TCP, Ethernet/IP, EtherCAT will continue to be some of the standard protocols used for motion and I/O control. Wireless for remote I/O will become prevalent as tablets and smart phones become common for remote application management.

Controllers will continue to get smaller, less expensive and

more intelligent due to better integration & higher performing processors resulting in quicker positioning & finer resolution in less time.

How does the R&D process work at Galil?

We continue to be a leading innovator by being a customer driven company. We evaluate our customers' unique motion & I/O challenges and solve them by providing the best technological solution at a competitive price. We were the first motion controller company to develop an Ethernet interface for our controllers. We quickly followed that trend by embedding an Ethernet switch in our products so customers could daisy-chain multiple motion and I/O controllers together without the cost of an external switch.

We are actively involved in innovation and encouraging the future of motion and I/O control by partnering and supporting research projects all over the world. A recent example is Galil's donation of a motion controller for a project lead by



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several graduate students from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. They were tasked to build a robotic system to secure a paraplegic surgeon in the standing position permitting him the precise motion to actively practice medicine and perform orthopedic surgeries.

Which are the themes of innovation that Galil is working on at present?

We are currently working on releasing support for EtherCAT, and we continually release new and innovative features for our motion and RIO product families. We are investigating wireless applications, and interactive software tools that leverage distributed architectures.

What are the major challenges in your market segment?

The biggest challenge we have is finding the most contagious approach to educate customers about hype vs reality. For example, for years there has been a surplus of noise about the best protocols for motion, including CANOpen, Sercos, Profibus, Devicenet and Ethernet/IP to name a few. While many of these protocols are not technically superior to Ethernet TCP/IP, publicity in the market can create a barrier to entry.

What are your plans for the Indian market?

Galil has been selling controllers in India for over 20 years. Our customers include BARC, IIT Mumbai, Indian Navy, Mahindra & Mahindra, TIFR, BHEL, and HMT to name a few. We are looking for opportunities to expand our India footprint by adding distributors & sales representatives. The Indian market is one of our focused growth regions for the coming years.

Your take on the launch of new technologies in 2013-14.

Our 2013 roadmap includes support of EtherCat, Linux and Mac support for our tuning software GalilSuite, and enhancements to our motion and RIO controller product lines.

What is your agenda for 2013-14?

Our agenda for 2013-2014 is to expand our penetration in emerging economies while maintaining our focus on providing

world-class customer support and high-quality high-value controllers that solve real problems for the OEM marketplace.

Any plans to set up an Indian operation to increase your market share?

We view India as a rapidly growing target market for motion and I/O control. We have been selling through distribution channels in India for over 20 years and are interested in an Indian partner capable of manufacturing & servicing our products for the Indian/Asian markets.

How do you plan to tackle competition in the global environment?

Galil is a customer centric company and has delivered high-performance, cost effective motion solutions for more than 30 years. We focus on understanding customer's needs and bring long-term success through our outstanding application support provided by engineers that have over 200 man-years of accumulated motion and machine control experience. We understand customers may need long-term product availability and continued support; our average product sales and support life is over 20 years. Our customers can continue to sell their systems without being forced to invest engineering resources to address product obsolescence. Our engineering resources are constantly involved in assessing and evaluating market requirements and technology trends to develop innovative solutions that meet customer requirements at the right time and price.

How is the demand dynamics for your products in the world market?

We develop very flexible products, allowing us to be competitive in all markets. This has allowed us to remain profitable in a constantly changing economic environment. We expect future growth in the next several years specifically in the medical/biotech, food services, textile manufacturing, industrial automation and semiconductor industries where Galil has a strong customer base. □

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