

# CiA members from the beginning

There are 14 members who joined the non-profit CAN in Automation (CiA) association in 1992 and are still members. Today, the CAN users' and manufacturers' group counts more than 720 members.

(Source: Adobe Stock)

Besides two founding members, ESD Electronics and G.i.N., some more companies have joined CiA 30 years ago. These are in alphabetic order: Eckelmann, Janz Tec, KEB Automation, Kvaser, Moba Mobile Automation, Moog, NXP (formerly Philips Semiconductors), Port Industrial Automation, Selectron Systems, Softing, and Vector Informatik. Most of them are German companies. Kvaser from Sweden, Philips Semiconductor headquartered in the Netherlands, and the Swiss Selectron were exceptions. There is one member not listed yet: Holger Zeltwanger, the initiator of the association. He was a private individual working in those days as an editor for the German VMEbus magazine.

Holger Zeltwanger said: "Kvaser was a very early CAN admirer. The company developed already before the CiA foundation CAN solutions for the textile industry and supported manufacturers of hydraulic devices with CAN connectivity. Philips Semiconductor provided the 80C200 stand-alone CAN controller competing against the 82526 stand-alone controller by Intel (USA). The Dutch chipmaker was also one of the first companies offering an integrated CAN high-speed transceiver. The company, now part of NXP, is today still a known CAN transceiver supplier. The first transceiver chips coming directly from the factory were given to CiA members to apply them in their products. These were connected in the very first CiA plugfest on the Interkama tradeshow in October 1992. "This was the first demonstration of CAN-interoperable products", he continued.

Talking to Holger Zeltwanger, he explained more details: "The early German CiA members provided different CAN-connectable devices. G.i.N produced some tiny CAN I/O modules, while ESD manufactured CAN interface modules besides VMEbus board-level products. A similar portfolio was provided by Janz Tec. KEB and Moog were suppliers of electrical respectively hydraulic actuators. Eckelmann developed decentralized control systems on behalf of machine builders as well as Selectron. Both companies offered host controllers and I/O modules. In the meantime, Selectron has changed its focus to rail vehicle control devices – still implementing in many of its products CAN interfaces. Softing, headquartered

in Haar (near Munich), develops and manufactures CAN-capable hardware and software for industrial automation and vehicle electronics. Port was the first East German company joining the CiA. Moba offering electronic devices for construction machines was another enthusiast of CAN technology. Vector Informatik started its CAN business with one of the first CAN analyzing tools and became also a CiA member in 1992".

Without these fourteen members, the CiA association would not have been developed as it happened. These CiA pioneers organized jointly the first CAN plugfest in October 1992 and developed already in May 1992 the first CiA specification, which demanded the use of high-speed transceivers and recommended a pin-assignment for the 9-pin (DIN) Dsub connector.

Of course, there are also other important CiA pioneers, which nowadays are no members anymore, but have contributed to the development of the CiA association, said Zeltwanger. "For example, the STZP technology transfer center and Philips Medical Systems (now: Philips Healthcare) were the main contributor to the CAN Application Layer (CAL). The first CAL work drafts saw the light of day already in the second of half of 1992. STZP became Ixxat, which was acquired by HMS Networks (Sweden). Philips Medical Systems is now Philips Healthcare and left CiA in 2019. The CAL specifications were released as CiA 200 series and were the base of the CANopen application layer and communication profile developed by a European research project". [But this is another story.](#)



On June 1 and June 2, CiA celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an in-person event in Nuremberg (Germany)



Holger Zeltwanger, initiated the CiA association 1992 in Nuremberg (Germany)

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