

PRESS RELEASE – May 2010

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New connectivity solutions for integrating mobile devices into vehicles

USB hub makes saved data usable with the head unit - flexible software architecture saves costs and steps of development

Funkwerk Dabendorf GmbH, specialist for on-board communications solutions, has developed a USB hub that can be used in vehicles for charging or data transfer. In addition, the Brandenburg company has developed a software architecture that simplifies the integration of Bluetooth phones for automobile manufacturers. Both features can be implemented immediately.

Seamless integration with the USB hub

Drivers want to be able to use their mobile end devices in their vehicles, in order to have access to saved content or personal music collections while behind the wheel. Due to high demand, vehicle manufacturers are thus eagerly seeking ways to enable or simplify the connection of external devices for their customers. Not only the number of connections to be integrated and a sufficient power supply must be taken into consideration. It must be ensured that vehicle electronics are protected against disrupting impulses by consumer devices.

With its USB hub, Funkwerk Dabendorf has developed a solution that fulfils these standards. The hub allows parallel connection of two devices to the head unit, for instance a mobile telephone using a cradle or a USB stick with saved music or videos. The driver can comfortably control the devices from the display of the head unit. "This new form of seamless integration means the highest degree of comfort for each vehicle holder, since stored data can now be called up at any time, even while in a vehicle. In addition, we avoid long cable runs which are prone to weakening mobile signals", says Thomas Kern, OEM Business Director at Funkwerk Dabendorf. The

USB hub has been specially conceived for use in vehicles and can withstand vibrations and variations in temperature. Its electromagnetic compatibility ensures that on-board electronics aren't compromised. High charging voltage and current provide for a reliable connection between the vehicle and end device. The USB hub is already in use by a premium manufacturer.

Flexible software makes new Bluetooth telephones vehicle-compatible more quickly

Compatibility of a smart phone or mobile telephone with the on-board solutions at hand has first priority for mobile phone users. However, with a constantly growing number of common telephones, automobile manufacturers face the enormous challenge of integrating different Bluetooth profiles and generations into the vehicle. "In the development of individual multimedia solutions such as hands-free car kits, automobile manufacturers are investing considerable effort in comprehensive approval tests. This process can drag on for two years or more", explains Thomas Kern. "The product life cycle of consumer electronics is, however, significantly shorter. Once the vehicle comes onto the market, its compatibility with new mobile phone models can thus no longer be ensured."

Funkwerk Dabendorf has developed a flexible software architecture that saves vehicle manufacturers time and money in costly steps of development for implementing Bluetooth. The individual components are configured independently of the software framework and can be adapted to telephone-specific features. "The automobile industry is striving to fulfil customers' desires for greater compatibility and unrestricted use of their mobile telephones. However, this is not always possible in the short term, unlike in the fast-moving CE industry. A flexible software structure or connection of mobile end devices to the head unit are suitable solutions for confronting this trend", says Thomas Kern.

More information is available from

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About the company

Funkwerk Dabendorf GmbH, headquartered in Dabendorf near Berlin, is a division of Funkwerk AG, a stock-market listed company. Funkwerk Dabendorf develops and manufactures solutions for mobile in-car communication, multimedia and infotainment. The company's customers include renowned automotive manufacturers, such as Audi, BMW and Daimler as well as commercial vehicle manufacturers like DAF, Daimler Trucks, Iveco and MAN. Funkwerk Dabendorf is the global leader in compenser technology, an amplifier technology specially designed to provide dependable wireless in-vehicle reception.

Funkwerk Dabendorf also supplies a wide range of advanced retrofit products, including hands-free kits, Bluetooth multimedia systems and portable navigation solutions. The product palette is rounded off by an efficient fleet management system. An extensive network of retailers and qualified fitting companies provide efficient installation services and dependable after-sales service. Funkwerk Dabendorf is a market leader for mobile in-vehicle communication, as is proven by the many awards the company has won and the top ratings its products regularly receive in tests.

Funkwerk AG, headquartered in Kölleda near Erfurt, is specialises in solution-oriented information and communication systems for such applications as transport and traffic, vehicles, security and data networks. Funkwerk systems automate, rationalise and secure the operating processes of a wide range customer target groups, from private enterprises to public institutions, as well as offering new benefits and services to end customers. With its four divisions Traffic & Control Communication (communication, management and information systems for transport and logistics companies), Automotive Communication (communication and infotainment systems for vehicles), Enterprise Communication (communication and access solutions for companies and institutions) and Security Communication (personal security and video surveillance), Funkwerk is strategically well positioned in emerging markets. Previously, the Thuringian technology conglomerate reported sales around €220 million with around 1,400 employees.

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