

Press release from Technical Academy St. Andrä, the province of Carinthia and Infineon Technologies Austria

First “learning factory” for Industry 4.0 at the Technical Academy St. Andrä

The Technical Academy St. Andrä is expanding its range of training and further education courses even more significantly towards Apprenticeship 4.0 with an “Industry 4.0 learning factory”. The province of Carinthia and Infineon Austria are the backers of this seminal project.

St. Andrä/Lavant Valley, 11 May 2017 – If Industry 4.0 is to become established in companies, and above all in industrial production, the training and qualifications of skilled employees must be adapted to the new requirements imposed by digitisation. For the apprentices at the Technical Academy St. Andrä, the question of what work will be like in the factory of the future is no longer merely theoretical, but is being posed in practice too with immediate effect thanks to an ultramodern “Industry 4.0 learning factory”. The basic model for a “small-scale intelligent factory” from the company Festo is one of the first of its kind in Austria.

The “Industry 4.0 learning factory” uses the digital world to enhance the interplay between classic industrial processes. Industrial production is no longer just a matter of interaction between people, but everyday work is also being visibly supplemented by cooperation between networked machines and the use of large data quantities. Manfred Stippich, Managing Director of the Technical Academy, comments: “In future the speed at which companies and their employees adjust to digital change is going to be crucial to competition. So it is all the more important that we tackle this as early and comprehensively as possible while we are training our technical specialists – and this applies to both our apprentices and in-service training for our employees. The “Industry 4.0 learning factory” will enable us to keep abreast of this.”

Small-scale networked learning

This Industry 4.0 learning model from Festo combines the real world of production with the virtual world of information and communication technology. Amongst other things, the “intelligent factory” comprises networked processes which start from the customer order, logistics and production and continue through to quality control and dispatch. These are handled from a “control panel”, which can also be combined with virtual assistance systems such as tablets or smart glasses. The apprentices have already connected the model to the Academy’s existing equipment, such as a 6-axis robot or MPS systems (Modular Production Systems), and are now able to run through various scenarios and problem solutions as if they were in a real production environment. “Naturally as an apprentice it is great when we can practise real examples and processes during our training on such a modern learning system. It definitely gives us an edge. We will then be able to address the topic much faster in the company”, say Infineon apprentices Marie-Theres Staudacher and Maximilian Höhenberger, who are currently completing their training at the Technical Academy.

Apprenticeship 4.0 – companies such as Infineon Austria benefit from a knowledge edge

Infineon Austria currently employs 49 apprentices in the dual profession electrical engineering and mechatronics. They are completing the first one and a half years of their four-year apprenticeship at the Technical Academy.

Infineon Austria is a pioneer of Industry 4.0 in Austria, and has been addressing the topic of digitisation for some years. Thomas Reisinger, Member of the Board of Infineon Austria with responsibility for operations, says: “Training and development is the key criterion for managing digital change. As a supplier of Industry 4.0 products, but in particular as a user of Industry 4.0 processes in our production, it is hugely important for us to push ahead with using the system-oriented knowledge that is necessary for the smart factory in all forms of training. The new learning model at the Technical Academy provides the ideal support for these goals within the framework of our apprentice training.” The skilled employees of tomorrow are thus being familiarised with the demands of the factory of the future in a faster and more comprehensive way.

Province of Carinthia and Infineon Austria provide support

The current model of an intelligent factory at the Technical Academy is the first stage of this expansion, the costs of which amount to around EUR 100,000. The province of Carinthia provided EUR 20,000 of funding for the acquisition, and Infineon Austria is supporting the project with EUR 15,000 worth of further training on the learning factory for the trainers at the Technical Academy. Gaby Schaunig, deputy governor of the province of Carinthia, says: „We want to and must further expand Carinthia’s good position as an industrial and technological province on all levels. This is why we are funding activities such as the intelligent learning factory at the Technical Academy, in order to generate a knowledge edge particularly in education and training too.” The Technical Academy is planning to further extend this learning model in the next few years.

About the Technical Academy St. Andrä

The Technical Academy St. Andrä is an experienced partner in training skilled employees for many businesses throughout Carinthia. The Technical Academy currently trains around 200 apprentices a year, concentrating on the job profiles in “electro-industrial engineering/process control engineering”, “mechatronics”, “machine production engineering” and “mechanical engineering”. The authorisation to undertake inter-company training pursuant to Section 30 of the Vocational Training Act (BAG) allows the Academy to train apprentices in 16 different job profiles for industry and commerce.

The Technical Academy offers the optimal infrastructure to give the youngsters the opportunity of working with the latest machines and models, and with state-of-the-art IT equipment. Continuous investments in expanding the training workshop premises, in computers, software and machine equipment, and in enabling the trainees to achieve qualifications guarantee a high standard of training, and thus highly-qualified skilled workers.

Further information can be found at www.technische-akademie.at

About Infineon Austria

Infineon Technologies Austria AG is a group subsidiary of Infineon Technologies AG, a world-leading provider of semiconductor solutions that make life easier, safer and greener. Microelectronics from Infineon reduce the energy consumption of consumer electronics, domestic appliances and industrial facilities. They make a major contribution to the convenience, security and sustainability of vehicles, and enable secure transactions in a connected world.

Besides Germany, Infineon Austria is the only subsidiary within the group that pools competencies for research and development, production as well as global business responsibility. The head office is in Villach, with further branches in Graz, Klagenfurt, Linz and Vienna. With around 3,600 employees from around 60 countries (including 1,400 in research and development), in the financial year 2016 (ending in September) the company achieved a turnover of € 1.8 billion. An R&D expense rate of more than €400 million makes Infineon Austria one of the strongest industrial research companies’ in Austria.

Further information at www.infineon.com/austria