

CompactPCI Systems



By Astrid Schoofs

AdvancedTCA, frequently asked questions (II)

PICMG Europe's task is to educate and inform readers about the AdvancedTCA technology. As we already concluded, AdvancedTCA is no successor of CompactPCI. AdvancedTCA is designed to provide an open, multivendor architecture that is aimed at central office telecom applications.

What exact markets are targeted with the PICMG family of (AdvancedTCA) specifications?

Unlike CompactPCI, which began as an industrial computer specification and later evolved to address a variety of telecom and communications markets, AdvancedTCA is being written specifically to address the \$100 billion per year (and still growing) market for central office grade equipment. As convergence moves the architecture of core telephone switching equipment from circuit switched designs to packet switched designs, core telecom manufacturers such as LUCENT and Nortel see a need for an open industry specification that accomplishes the following:

- Maintains the rigorous standards such as NEBS and ETSI compliance, high availability, robust system management, and DC power distribution
- Is open and non-proprietary

By outsourcing more hardware in the future, these companies can concentrate on their core competencies, which include services and software.

In addition to the telecom and communications markets, there is a surprising amount of interest on the part of military equipment suppliers in AdvancedTCA, as the high bandwidth communications capability and extremely robust mechanical and electrical definitions are attractive for next-generation military communications equipment.

Can proprietary technologies be deployed in the AdvancedTCA environment?

Any transport technology compatible with AdvancedTCA backplane topologies and signaling characteristics may be deployed. It is anticipated that the system management infrastructure will recognize the presence of user defined links and configure according to the same sort of interoperability rules used for those link technologies, which are explicitly supported.

How is PICMG Europe going to launch AdvancedTCA in Europe, and which companies will support this introduction?

As a marketing organization it is very important for PICMG Europe not only to inform about the features of AdvancedTCA but also about the following benefits:

- Time-to-market
- Investment costs
- Multiple sourcing
- An approved infrastructure

We are very pleased with the fact that so many members in our association are willing to help us launch this new technology in Europe. Among PICMG Europe member companies that support the introduction of AdvancedTCA in Europe are:

- Intel
- Force
- Asis Ltd.
- Sun Microsystems
- Radisys

Our goal is to organize a dedicated event at the end of the summer where all the efforts of the committees will be bundled and where we, together with the members, inform the press, the manufacturers, and the end-users about AdvancedTCA. We will keep you informed!

Two new members join PICMG Europe



PLX Technology Inc. is the leading supplier of high-speed interconnect silicon and software to the communications industry. Their Web site is www.plxtech.com.

Asis Ltd. is part of the Transelectric Group, an Israeli company. It has five years of experience in the design, modeling, simulation, and manufacture of some of the fastest custom backplanes worldwide. Their custom business continues to grow but alongside this is the development of enclosure product to the AdvancedTCA specification. The Web site address is www.asis.co.il.

What is PICMG?

PICMG stands for PCI Industrial Computers Manufacturers Group. The intent of this manufacturers group is to use the technology and components of the commercial PCI local bus in industrial environments. By making the power of the commercial PCI local bus available for the industrial market, we all will set a new level of price/performance in open control architectures.

The definition of the technical specifications is done via the office in the USA. In 1997, a European branch office of PICMG, PICMG Europe, was installed to promote the usage of systems for industrial environments based on the PCI local bus in Europe. Written specifications have been completed. Marketing of the technology and products is the necessary next step. PICMG Europe is the necessary and independent association for supporting this goal.

In the marketing of these technical specifications, we are stronger as a group than as a number of individual operating companies. Moreover, users expect from open environments that suppliers co-operate on the same back panel.

Current PICMG Europe Members:

ACKSYS Communications & Systems	Interface Concept
ADLINK TECHNOLOGY INC	Iskratel
Agilent Technologies	LVPower
Apra-norm Elektromechanik GmbH	MarekMicro
APW Ltd	Meilhaus Electronic
Asis Ltd.	Microbus Plc.
AVX (ELCO Europe, a division of AVX)	Motorola Computer Group
BVM Ltd.	N.A.T. GmbH
CET Technologies PTE Ltd.	National Instruments
CIRPACK	Nyquist Industrial Control
Dage Group	PEP Modular Computers
Digital Development	Performance Technologies
Digital-Logic AG	Perlos Corporation
DMD Computers	Radisys Corporation
D-TACO Solutions	RECAP Realtime Computers Ltd.
EKF Elektronik	PLX Technology
Elma Electronic	Rittal
Elma Trenew Electronic	RTSoft
Enea OSE Systems	SBS Technologies Europe
Eonic Solutions	SMA Regelsysteme
ept GmbH & Co.	Schroff
Erni	SUN Microsystems
Eurotech	Thales Contact Solutions
FCI	Thales Communications
Force Computers	Tyco Electronics
GESPAC	VITEC Multimedia
Hartmann Elektronik	VMIC
HARTING	Würth Elektronik
Inova Computers	Weiseman & Theis
Inside Technology	Ziatech/Intel.

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