

THE VXI PLATFORM

Today and the Future



Prepared by the VXI Consortium

The demand for VXI Products

Since its inception in 1989, the VXIbus has become a well-accepted platform for automated test and high-end data acquisition.



The worldwide market for VXI products is approximately \$650M (Prime Data) and continues to grow in step with the general test equipment market. This growth is driven by the ongoing introduction of innovative new products from leading instrumentation companies, both domestic and international, and customer demand for VXI solutions.

Over 120 leading electronics manufacturers worldwide including companies like Teradyne, IMS, BAE, Schlumberger, and many more, design build and integrate VXI instruments. A complete list of VXI suppliers can be found at www.vxibus.org. There are approximately 1,400 VXI products on the market today, ranging from switching systems and I/O to general-purpose measurement, data acquisition, microwave, and optical instrumentation.

Tom Sarfi of VXI Technology:

"For over a decade, VXI Technology has been providing creative solutions for the functional test marketplace. We offer over a hundred high-density modular instruments and switch modules on VXI, and together these produce powerful test solutions. Our new catalog is packed with 23 new products introduced in 2001, and we continue to invest R&D into new VXI-based solutions."

The demand for VXI products and the large installed customer base warrants the need for manufacturers to continue the introduction of new VXI products. For demanding applications, engineers worldwide continue to select VXI more than all other modular instrument platforms combined.

The Growth and Support of VXI

The corporate business strategy by Tektronix to discontinue the production of their general-purpose ATE VXIbus products (they still manufacture VXI mainframes and high-end digitizers), and the introduction of the PXI specification, may send the perception that VXI is being phased out.

This perception is far from the truth, since manufacturers worldwide are continuing to invest in the development of VXI products and systems. The VXI platform was designed by instrument manufacturers and users specifically to meet the needs of the modular instrument market and, as such, it is a stable, reliable standard, with field-proven interoperability, power, and cooling specifications.

Chandran Nair of National Instruments:

"National Instruments continues to invest in the software and controllers that are the heart of today's VXI systems. With the recent introductions of TestStand 2.0, LabVIEW 6i, and Measurement Studio 6.0, we are providing more powerful test development and management environments. National Instruments recognizes that almost all test systems contain a variety of hardware platforms, and that's why we focus on providing users integration and interoperability among all common measurement platforms, including VXI, GPIB, PC, and PXI. We've also introduced new VXI control options based on MXI-3 technology that enables long-distance, high-performance control of VXI systems using a flexible copper or fiber optic cable connected to a PC."

Bob Patera of Agilent:

"Agilent continues its focus on providing the test and measurement industry's broadest VXI based solutions.

In recent months, we have introduced new VXI hardware and software and VXI-based instrumentation. A continuous series of new products and enhancements for ATE, functional test, and data acquisition ensure that Agilent's solutions are always up to date. Recently, we have extended VXI based measurement products into RF and Microwave applications. For example, the Agilent 89600 Vector Signal Analyzer and the Agilent E1438A 100MSa/s digitizer allow users to evaluate and analyze leading edge digital communications up to 40GHz."

Bob Stasonis of Teradyne:

"Teradyne offers test systems that are both PXI and VXI-based - Our high performance Mil/aero systems, featuring high-speed digital and multi-channel analog I/O, are VXI-based. The Teradyne Spectrum offers In-circuit and functional testing in a VXI mainframe. Both the PXI and VXI architectures offer benefits to the particular markets that we serve. VXI has accuracy and bandwidth performance that provides our mil/aero, RF, ADSL, and telecom customers with fast and economical solutions to their test requirements."

PXI brings together the right technologies for PC-based products, leveraging some similar "extensions for instrumentation" as VXI to the CompactPCI board format. Many manufacturers of VXI instruments also manufacture PXI instruments.

VXI is well accepted in manufacturing test, high-end data acquisition and Mil/Aerospace functional test applications. Where high-end, complex measurements are called for, VXI excels. No significant change is anticipated to this proven platform based on currently available technology.



Summary

The VXI platform continues to be a growing, and cost-effective solution for the applications for which it was designed, with major manufacturers worldwide investing millions of dollars in future products.

Jack Pouchet of Racal Instruments:

"As a founding member of the VXIbus Consortium, we at Racal Instruments are fully committed to the further expansion and support of the VXI modular instrument platform. Racal continues to pioneer the use of new technologies within the VXI platform. Our VXI product development programs support the release of new products on a monthly basis from high-density switching, complex instruments such as our new VXI FRA, to industry leading ARBS and A/D & D/A converters. At Racal we have made a significant investment in the future of VXI and support that investment by aggressively funding ongoing research and development within the VXI and instrumentation markets."

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The VXIbus Consortium is a not-for-profit corporation made up of the leading companies in the Test & Measurement industry.

Our goals are to develop, support, and promote the VXIbus, the most popular open standard platform for commercial ATE systems in the world today.



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