

PRESS RELEASE

Flexible automation of COVID-19 analysis

infoteam Software Group is partner of the research project FlexACO

Bubenreuth, 24 September 2020

- Increasing test capacities in medical analysis laboratories through flexible automation of pre- and post-analysis (preparation and post-processing of samples)
- Reduces the workload of laboratory staff and increases infection protection by reducing manual process steps in the area of pre- and post-analysis
- Increase in test quality due to consistent digital documentation and uniform performance of pre-analysis

The infoteam Software Group, headquartered in Bubenreuth near Erlangen, is conducting research together with the Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg (Chair of Manufacturing Automation and Production Systems), Yaskawa Europe GmbH and the University Hospital Erlangen as an associated partner to improve the existing laboratory automation for PCR-based diagnostics of COVID-19. The greatest potential for optimisation lies in the digitisation and automation of pre- and post-analysis. The "FlexACO" project is funded by the Bavarian Research Foundation within the framework of the temporary funding priority for COVID-19 research.

"Our declared aim is to significantly increase the test capacity in medical analysis laboratories through demand-oriented and flexible automation. At the same time, laboratory personnel should be relieved by reducing the number of manual process steps and minimising their risk of infection," says Alexander Brendel, Director Life Science at infoteam. "Automation of the kind that is to be researched in the project could triple the number of tests that can be carried out per day and laboratory".

Robot expert and research partner Yaskawa is supporting the project with the "MOTOMAN SDA" double-arm robot, a reliable system for motorically demanding motion sequences.

The interfaces of the robot controller, the existing diagnostics solution and the connected software systems such as LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System) and image recognition are to be integrated on the software side by infoteam.



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To this end, infoteam's own zenLAB® framework will be used to establish a specific middleware that ensures process coordination and documentation throughout the entire process. If the approach proves to be suitable within the framework of the research project, a later validation for regular operation is possible through the regulatory prepared documentation of zenLAB®.

The use of the results of the research project should not be limited to COVID-19 in the future, but should also be used for other procedures. In particular, laboratories that wish to build on existing automation solutions in diagnostics will benefit from the flexible and modular approach being researched here. The "FlexACO" project started in early September 2020 and is scheduled to run for one year.

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About infoteam Software Group

infoteam Software Group has been implementing unique software solutions for their customers in the industry, infrastructure, life science and public service markets for almost 40 years. Its core business comprises the partial and total development of control and embedded software, middleware and application software – agile, modern and in line with the latest security requirements. Special areas of expertise include normatively regulated software for use in medical and laboratory equipment (IVDR, MDR, FDA, ISO 13485, IEC 62304, etc.) as well as functionally safe software at the highest safety level (IEC 61508, EN 50128, etc.). The service portfolio is well rounded as a result of many years of experience in data analysis, AI and machine learning.

infoteam Software Group employs more than 300 people and has offices and subsidiaries in Germany, the Czech Republic, Switzerland and China. The parent company, infoteam Software AG, is headquartered in Bubenreuth near Erlangen, Germany.

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