

## **Open controller for ship drives**

Weidmüller's innovative u-control controller now has maritime approval

Weidmüller's u-control controller is an innovative and flexible hardware and software solution with a stable open interface and all relevant maritime approvals. This means that the u-control is suitable for use as a reliable controller for any ship drive. The Norwegian manufacturer of propulsion and manoeuvring systems Brunvoll AS already uses this versatile, configurable control solution. One of the reasons for this is that Weidmüller already consistently takes the IT requirements of tomorrow into account today. After all, Weidmüller has been a global pioneer and partner for the digitalisation and automation of the industry for more than a decade.

Weidmüller also offers control solutions for the maritime economy. "Our u-control controller and our u-remote I/O system are certified by all leading classification societies and meet the high requirements of the EU Marine Equipment Directive," says Martin Flöer, Strategic Program Manager at Weidmüller. "With these maritime approvals, the Weidmüller u-control controller may be used globally on ships with immediate effect."

The u-control is one of the most modern and compact controllers on the market. The modular design of the hardware offers the advantages that are typical of modular systems: It can be extended as desired and is extremely flexible. Thanks to the dual-core technology, the non-time-critical and Web-based applications on Linux are separated strictly from the sensitive real-time applications in the second core. The open interface meets the requirement for flexibility so that, for example, custom software can be installed. This is often required in maritime applications. In addition, the controller is compatible with the u-remote I/O system, so it can be modularly adjusted in line with the requirements of the application.

Martin Flöer: "Thanks to its stable open interface, the u-control is the ideal controller for any manufacturer of ship drives. The programmable controller is an open platform upon which any manufacturer can easily and robustly build

their own control architecture and flexibly adjust it for each individual ship drive. Because we see each customer as a partner, we want to help our customers to obtain their perfect control platform. This allows them to concentrate fully on their core competence of ship drives."

Since 2019, Weidmüller has been cooperating successfully with the Norwegian propulsion and thruster manufacturer Brunvoll AS. The first ships equipped with the Weidmüller u-control are now traversing the world's oceans, as the controller fully automatically converts the actions of the helmsmen on the bridge to the movement of the Brunvoll propellers.

Hans Fredrik Nordhaug of the Brunvoll Group emphasises that "cooperation with Weidmüller is close and resembles a close relationship. Weidmüller is very clear about our requirements and meets them unerringly. The flexible Weidmüller control kit offers a gratifying range of options that are easy for us to implement ourselves. At the same time, the system meets our high requirements for environmental and IT compliance. With the u-control, our BruCon 5 control system achieves reliable and safe performance even during dynamic positioning."

The u-control controller and the u-remote I/O system are the central components of Weidmüller's u-mation automation solution, which enables open, platform-independent, custom control solutions. This includes the scalable, Web-based u-view HMIs, which make internal machine processes visible on touch screens or IPCs.

With an eye to the future, Weidmüller's Strategic Program Manager Flöer says: "Our complete solution u-mation constitutes a future-proof automation portfolio, since we always anticipate the requirements of tomorrow and integrate them today. In addition, we're currently working on integrating Weidmüller's machine learning software AutoML into u-mation so that automated predictive maintenance, condition monitoring and remote maintenance of ship drives are possible in the future.



Caption: u-control – future-proof and perfectly configurable for custom software applications

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