

A CONTROL BY ANY OTHER NAME...

In July 2007, ITT sold its Switches group to the American private equity firm Littlejohn & Co LLC, creating a company named CoActive Technologies. A major part of ITT's Switches group, the Interface Controls division – responsible for joystick, foot pedal, analogue rockers and armrest products – has been renamed DeltaTech Controls. Martin Gosling, European sales and marketing director for DeltaTech Controls Europe looks at the implications of this change for its customers and the market in general.

What is the greatest change you expect having left such a large corporation?

Being part of ITT Corporation had its benefits, of course – not only from a company brand standpoint, but also because that organisation is an extremely lean and process-oriented company. Effectively, the only thing we are changing here is our company name. Our processes remain the same; therefore we will continue to supply quality products and services quickly and cost-effectively to our customers. But with the change in ownership, we are positioned as a much more important part of our parent company. As a major contributor to CoActive Technologies, we will be able to bring much more focus to our market and will be given more flexibility to drive technologies and product development.

Under the ITT banner, Interface Controls achieved a well-deserved reputation for providing cost-effective high-tech vehicle control solutions. How do you expect this to develop?

We will be more flexible and responsive. Despite the fact that we will continue to use all the proven processes which benefited both our business and our customers over the years under ITT, our internal decision-making process has been drastically reduced, resulting in quicker turnaround times for our customers.

What about from a technology standpoint?

DeltaTech Controls has a reputation for employing the best design engineers for control solutions in the world, many with patents to their name. The change in ownership will allow these engineers to develop and evaluate even more new technologies and techniques for the next generation of controller products so that we remain one step ahead of our competition.

How do you think your competition will react to the change?

Despite the diversity of the control market, due to our innovative solutions, worldwide presence and customer base, we are regarded as the market leader for electronic controls. We can therefore understand the desire of our competitors to attack our

business at every opportunity. It is up to us to ensure we stay one step ahead with new control techniques and technologies.

How do you expect these techniques and technologies to change over the coming years?

The replacement of mechanical control devices with their electronic equivalents will continue. Hydraulic levers and joysticks are being replaced with electronic joysticks and controllers, making them easier to integrate, more flexible and more reliable.

Mechanical connection will be replaced by electronic communications and drive-by-wire concepts, with off-highway vehicles also employing high-performance communication standards such as CANbus.

We also expect Hall-effect sensing technology to continue to be the technology of choice for generic sensing needs for reasons of reliability and performance. DeltaTech Controls is regarded as a market leader in all of these fields already.

We have seen the trend towards fully integrated control solutions in the off-highway markets over the last few years and we expect this to continue. Our solutions address the cost issue that comes with custom-engineered subsystems, such as joysticks and manual controls, preferred by most vehicle manufacturers. DeltaTech Controls achieves this by offering modular solutions, enabling generic portions of an



DeltaTech Controls' new ownership will enable some of the best design engineers of control solutions in the world to explore more innovative possibilities for future vehicle generations

assembly to be re-used while still leaving room for customisation. This also greatly improves turnaround times.

So whether it is for a fully integrated armrest for a tractor or a complete control system for a motor grader, DeltaTech Controls will continue to ensure it is developing technologies that enable us to provide next-generation custom solutions quickly and cost-effectively to the market.
Martin.Gosling@CoActiveTechnologies.com

