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Asset Management as a Precondition for Knowledge Management

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Smart sensors and extensively configurable devices are gradually imposed by the automation market. Except for safety systems, they find their way into the next Instrumentation & Control (I&C) generation. The understanding and handling of these devices require an extensive Knowledge Management (KM). This will be outlined for security, testing and training.

For legacy systems, security often relates to vetting and access control. For digital devices, a refined asset management is needed, e.g. down to board-level support chipsets. Firmware and system/application software have their own configurations, versions and patch levels. So, here, as a first step of the KM, a user needs to know the firmware configurability. Then, trainings can address when to apply patches, perform regression tests and on what to focus, based on accumulated experience.

While assets are often addressed implicitly, this document justifies an explicit and semiformal representation of primary and supporting assets (the asset portfolio) and the establishment of an asset management system as a basis for a robust knowledge management.

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