



AS-Interface | Interview

1/2024

Save time, money and resources: child's play with AS-Interface

In a conversation, Fabricio Granados, Director of International Sales at Bihl+Wiedemann, explains how machine builders, integrators and operators can make life easier with AS-Interface.

ASi MASTER NEWS: What is the main distinguishing feature of AS-Interface compared with other fieldbuses?

Fabricio Granados: AS-Interface lets you integrate sensors, actuators and modules into automation solutions more easily, flexibly and economically than with any other fieldbus. This is because they are all easily connected to the reverse polarity protected ASi profile cable – no need for preassembled cables and coded connectors, right where you need them, within seconds, without special tools and with a flexible choice of topology. Child's play – it couldn't be simpler.

ASi MASTER NEWS: Why does ASi not need any connectors and just a single cable?

Fabricio Granados: This is due to the electromechanically elegant contacting of the ASi cable using piercing technology. There, the nodes in the ASi network are simply pierced onto the yellow profile cable – without the need of a connector for the connection. This is much more complicated with typical fieldbus solutions using round cables. To connect just two modules in the field, you need two pre-assembled cables each for data and power and therefore four specially coded connectors, which cost corresponding money.

For larger systems using Ethernet fieldbuses, several hundred cables, often in different lengths, and twice as many connectors quickly add up. And there's another advantage: You can connect ASi modules to the profile cable at any point and they can also be easily replaced, moved or added. This is not possible with other fieldbus solutions.

ASi MASTER NEWS: What makes ASi so cost-effective as a wiring system and fieldbus technology – bearing in mind that users can save up to two thirds of the usual wiring costs.

Fabricio Granados: What is as easy as piercing modules is also quick. And time is money. This also applies to planning. With AS-Interface, you can decide flexibly on-site exactly where the module needs to be connected. The lengths of the connection cables do not need to be considered, nor does the correct coding of the connectors. There is no wrong design with ASi – and therefore no searching, modifying or waiting for the right connection technology, which also costs time and money. In addition, AS-Interface can be used to connect an extremely large number of modules to the control system, and thus realize further savings, especially in large system configurations. With AS-Interface, you literally pull the plug on wiring costs.

And digitally too – because with ASi-5, only one IP address is ever required, even for the integration of more than 100 modules with which IO-Link devices are connected or frequency inverters are controlled. This also saves time and money – and nerves – when setting up the ASi network. When all is said and done, AS-Interface solutions from Bihl+Wiedemann save you up to 68 percent of wiring costs compared to other fieldbus systems.

ASi MASTER NEWS: What makes ASi so resource-efficient and sustainable?

Fabricio Granados: The more resource-efficient the solution, the better its prospects. And compared to other fieldbus technologies, ASi is more future-proof due to its very nature. While conventional parallel wiring requires a lot of cable and therefore a lot of copper and plastic, the consumption of these resources is minimal with AS-Interface. This applies to both the raw materials themselves and the energy consumption in cable production. And ASi also produces significantly less waste when it comes to disposal. All this also applies to plugs and sockets, which other fieldbus networks are full of, whereas AS-Interface does away with them completely.

ASi MASTER NEWS: Even if there are already a lot of them – why haven't all automation specialists long since converted to AS-Interface?

Fabricio Granados: That's a good question, which I can't completely answer. But rest assured, we are working towards 100%. Speaking of which: what is your current situation, dear readers?