FROST & SULLIVAN

BEST PRACTICES AWARDS

IXON

2020 EUROPEAN IIOT PLATFORM FOR MACHINE BUILDING NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION AWARD

Strategic Imperatives

Frost & Sullivan identifies three key strategic imperatives that impact the automation industry: internal challenges, disruptive technologies, and innovative business models. Every company that is competing in the automation space is obligated to address these imperatives proactively; failing to do so will almost certainly lead to stagnation or decline. Successful companies overcome the challenges posed by these imperatives and leverage them to drive innovation and growth. Frost & Sullivan's recognition of IXON B.V. is a reflection of how well it is performing against the backdrop of these imperatives.

Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated companies. IXON B.V. excels in many of the criteria in the IIoT space.

Match to Needs

Digital transformation, catalyzed by Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), virtualization, cloud, mobile in a connected world, and changes in customer demand for high-quality products and services, is rapidly changing today's organizations of all sizes and types, including machine builders. Industry 4.0 and smart manufacturing/smart factory initiatives are accelerating the pace of change in machine manufacturing/machine building. In today's competitive market, machine builders simply cannot afford to be slow in their response to adapting to emerging trends and digital transformation. To thrive and stay aligned in these rapidly evolving new business environments and to be agile and flexible, machine builders need to connect their machines to the cloud and build smart machines.

Within this scenario, Frost & Sullivan notes that many machine builders/manufacturers currently find it complex and hard to connect machines to the cloud because they do not find it secure, easy, and accessible for users. In addition, the connection takes too long, costs too much, and requires too many in-house resources; therefore, machine builders need the right tools.

Founded in 2014, Netherlands-based IXON B.V. helps machine builders seamlessly connect machines to the cloud. The company offers IXON Cloud, which is an affordable, cost-saving, user-friendly, proven, open, expandable, web-based, and no-code IIoT platform that is purpose built and suitable for every advanced machine builder. IXON's value proposition is that its cloud platform enables industrial machines quickly, easily, securely, and with more accessibility than previously possible with customized software.

Positioning and Design

Frost & Sullivan commends IXON for displaying its innovation leadership in supporting machine builders through the following:

IXON Cloud enables machines easily and securely

IXON effectively leverages its team of software, hardware, security, and cloud professionals; its roots as a system integrator (SI); and its extensive experience working with machine builders to find and successfully fill the current market gaps. For example, the industry lacks a complete solution that could make it easy and secure for machine builders to connect to the cloud. Other competing solutions offer only specific features, such as remote access, data logging, or visualization dashboards, and sometimes come with no hardware connectivity. An incomplete solution naturally makes cloud enablement difficult for machine builders because they have to shop from different vendors to meet their various needs while building their smart machines. Time is of the essence in digital transformation; however, working with different vendors is complicated and time consuming and puts machine builders at risk of being overtaken by competitors.

IXON differentiates and excels in this space because its platform allows machine builders to meet all their needs with one vendor. The unique combination of the platform's extensive features, such as remote access through a secure VPN connection, cloud data logging, data visualization, alarms and notifications, and user management, makes it a complete, end-to-end solution. All these features come together in a secure, scalable, and easy-to-use platform; therefore, IXON Cloud is flexible and allows customers to start small and then scale easily and quickly in the future during their Industry 4.0 journey. Frost & Sullivan research finds that IXON's intention in offering a feature-rich, end-to-end platform is to become a single vendor for machine builders and to support them in every step of cloud enabling their machines.

Connectivity hardware

IXON is further differentiated because it provides hardware connectivity in addition to the cloud platform; therefore, IXON Cloud is ready for immediate use. IXON provides the industrial IXrouter that quickly, seamlessly, and securely connects industrial machines to the IXON cloud-based software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform, with no additional software required. Moreover, IXON Cloud and the IXrouter seamlessly integrate, and the router is fast and user friendly because it can be online in only one minute and can set up a connection between a machine and IXON Cloud in a plug-and-play manner. Once connected to the IXON Cloud, the machine is immediately accessible in the device overview, and from then on, all machines and machine devices can be configured and managed on only one IXON Cloud platform.

Furthermore, the router comes with an advanced built-in firewall, 8-GB buffer, and embedded software for edge analytics (i.e., data processing at the edge). In addition, the router supports Ethernet, Wi-Fi, and 4G/cellular, thereby providing users with flexible options to connect the router to the Internet.

Remote access solution with no additional software requirement

IXON allows users to connect over a secure VPN connection and access all industrial machines instantly and remotely with the single push of a button on the IXON Cloud platform. In addition, the company allows users to manage/maintain and control industrial machines over the Internet, with only a browser to access the SaaS platform from anywhere, at any time, and on any device. User management, with personalized rights per user or role, ensures the control of machine access rights and the services that users can perform on each machine. IXON's cloud mobile app for Android and iOS ensures greater mobility and responsiveness because notifications on machine malfunctions can be received on a mobile device, in addition to receiving access to real-time machine data.

Reliable and accurate cloud data logging: from IXrouter to IXON Cloud

On the IXON Cloud platform, users can choose the industrial equipment from which they want to pull the data directly, such as programmable logic controllers (PLCs), human-machine interfaces (HMIs), frequency inverters, and drives; configure the right industrial protocol, such as OPC unified architecture (UA), MELSEC, Modbus, and Ethernet/IP; choose the variables or parameters they want to log; and determine how frequently, under which conditions, and how long the data should be stored. The valuable machine data is then transferred directly and securely from the chosen industrial equipment to the cloud, where it is stored in ISO 27001-certified database clusters that are General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant. The data logging, streaming, and storing are unlimited, and the data is always available, accurate, and secure in the cloud for machine builders and their customers to make better, data-driven decisions. Furthermore, IXON enables machine builders to monetize the data because they now have the entire machine data available on one platform that they can use to reduce machine downtime. With less downtime, customers can achieve higher productivity and increased revenues.

Data visualization, alarms, and notifications

Users can use the data collected in the cloud to build their own real-time, interactive dashboards and visualize the data for further analysis on the IXON Cloud. A drag-and-drop tool to build dashboards renders an enriched user experience, and these dashboards can be configured or personalized according to the role of the user because engineers, operators, and decision makers may want to view different key performance indicators (KPIs). In addition, users can set up a number of alarm triggers about critical machine events, such as machine malfunctions; set the priority of each alarm; and set which users or groups should receive notifications or warnings and how they should receive them, such as on a smartphone or through email.

No-code platform

IXON's best practice is in making its IXON Cloud the only no-code IIoT platform for machine builders. A no-code, end-to-end platform makes it easy for machine builders to cloud enable their machines and enjoy flawless performance at every point. Users can perform all actions from only one place (IXON Cloud), without writing a single line of code, thereby saving both time and money by eliminating the need for developing coding skills or hiring expensive coders. In addition, the platform is open and

expandable and allows users to develop customized applications and integrate IXON Cloud with their own internal services.

Frost & Sullivan applauds IXON for allowing machine builders to focus on their machines and cloud enablement and not on time-consuming, manual tasks or configurations.

Customer Ownership, Purchase, and Service Experience

IXON's customer base includes more than 1,000 machine builders, and the company has sales representatives in seven countries worldwide. Some of IXON's leading customers include BMO Automation, Smart Robotics, SANOVO TECHNOLOGY GROUP, Hotraco Group, and Dorset Group. In addition to ease of use and security, other factors that IXON's customers find appealing include the platform's openness and the ability to test the IXrouter for free.

IXON enables predictive maintenance and condition monitoring of machines in the cloud: In today's competitive markets, machine builders cannot afford to have issues related to quality or machine performance or have a slow response to machine problems if they do occur. To this end, the aspects of IXON Cloud that deliver some of the greatest value for machine builders include performing remote, online, condition-based monitoring and analysis on machine performance; gaining better/new insights or discovering trends in machine productivity/performance; planning maintenance in advance; resolving any machine issues faster; providing targeted, optimal remote service or solving machine problems remotely and thus reducing unplanned machine downtime for customers; and optimizing a machine's health and maximizing its performance production rates. In addition, instant remote access and service and automated cloud data logging reduce an engineer's number of on-site visits, saving time and costs.

Overall, IXON enables machine builders to innovate faster, build smarter machines, and improve their service by meeting customers' increasing demands/expectations. Frost & Sullivan research indicates that machine builders can now remain aligned with a rapidly evolving business environment, focus on strategic activities that match their corporate goals, exploit new growth opportunities efficiently, and stay successful and remain ahead in their growth curve.

White labelling: Chief among IXON's customer value propositions is the white labelling feature, where machine builders can completely replace IXON's hardware (e.g., the IXrouter), platform, and apps with their own brand to create a familiar environment for their customers.

Conclusion

Machine builders need a dedicated, end-to-end platform to cloud enable their machines, and IXON successfully addresses this need through its cloud IIoT platform, with its extensive set of features and IXrouter. Machine builders previously found it complex to connect their machines to the cloud; however, IXON has made this task easy, secure, and affordable with its plug-and-play router and no-code platform. IXON's open platform, ISO 27001-certified database clusters, remote access, mobile app, reliable cloud data logging, data visualization, alarms and notifications, and white labelling render an unmatched customer value proposition.

Frost & Sullivan analysis indicates that with such a complete, end-to-end platform, machine builders can now react/respond quickly to any industry disruptions and establish a foundation for agility and flexibility. With IXON's platform, machine builders no longer have to rely on solutions that offer only a few components because they can now use one platform to fulfill all their needs related to cloud enabling their machines. Moreover, IXON allows machine builders to become more successful by allowing them to build smarter machines and to ensure higher machine performance and less downtime.

With its strong overall performance, IXON has earned Frost & Sullivan's 2020 New Product Innovation Award for its IIoT platform in the European machine building industry.

What You Need to Know about the New Product Innovation Recognition

Frost & Sullivan's New Product Innovation Award recognizes the company that offers a new product or solution that uniquely addresses key customer challenges.

Best Practices Award Analysis

For the New Product Innovation Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

New Product Attributes

Match to Needs: Customer needs directly influence and inspire product design and positioning

Reliability: Product consistently meets or exceeds customer performance expectations

Quality: Product offers best-in-class quality with a full complement of features and functionality

Positioning: Product serves a unique, unmet need that competitors cannot easily replicate

Design: Product features an innovative design that enhances both visual appeal and ease of use

Customer Impact

Price/Performance Value: Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

Customer Purchase Experience: Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

Customer Ownership Experience: Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

Customer Service Experience: Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

Brand Equity: Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty

About Frost & Sullivan

Frost & Sullivan is the Growth Pipeline Company™. We power our clients to a future shaped by growth. Our Growth Pipeline as a Service™ provides the CEO and the CEO's growth team with a continuous and rigorous platform of growth opportunities, ensuring long-term success. To achieve positive outcomes, our team leverages over 60 years of experience, coaching organizations of all types and sizes across 6 continents with our proven best practices. To power your Growth Pipeline future, visit Frost & Sullivan at http://www.frost.com.

The Growth Pipeline Engine™

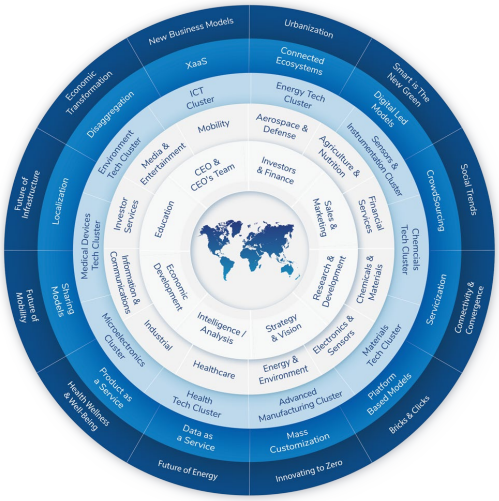
Frost & Sullivan's proprietary model to systematically create on-going growth opportunities and strategies for our clients is fuelled by the Innovation Generator™. Learn more.

Key Impacts:

- **Growth Pipeline:** *Continuous flow of Growth opportunities*
- **Growth Strategies:** *Proven Best Practices*
- **Innovation Culture:** *Optimized Customer Experience*
- **ROI & Margin:** *Implementation Excellence*
- **Transformational Growth:** *Industry Leadership*

The Innovation Generator™

Our six analytical perspectives are crucial in capturing the broadest range of innovative growth opportunities, most of which occur at the points of these perspectives.



Analytical Perspectives:

- Mega Trend (MT)
- Business Model (BM)
- Technology (TE)
- Industries (IN)
- Customer (CU)
- Geographies (GE)