



EMPLOYEE STORY | INTERVIEW WITH STEPHAN

Starting as a Professional at ITK

How Stephan started his career at ITK Engineering GmbH – from science and research to the industry

After completing his doctorate and managing a research division at the FZI Forschungszentrum Informatik (Research Center of Computer Sciences) in Karlsruhe, Stephan began his professional career at ITK Engineering GmbH. Today, he is the project leader of the medical technology project RescueWave® and, in this interview, tells us about his daily work routine, which he couldn't imagine to be more versatile.

The project. Stephan, as the project leader, works with his colleagues towards a revolution in emergency medical response.

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Four questions
to Stephan...

You work in medical systems. What exactly is RescueWave® and how is ITK taking part?

Stephan: A little bit of background: Through so-called mass-casualty incidents, such as railway crashes, first responders face the challenge of taking care of a large number of, to some extent, critically injured victims with a limited number of first responders in the shortest amount of time possible. To manage the situation, the patients are first sorted, in other words divided into categories (vitaly threatened, severely injured, mildly injured, and so on). To this point in time, this process proceeds with so-called triage tags, which are placed over those who are injured.

Because the tags are made of paper, it presents the incident commander with the challenge of establishing a structured deployment plan for the incident response team. And this overview costs time and contains uncertainties, since the information is communicated through tally sheets and voice radios. With RescueWave®, this process is substantially accelerated. Each victim is now assigned an electronic triage device, the Rescue.Node. This sends the patient status and location directly to the incident commander. Based on real time data, the incident management software Rescue.Board generates clearly prepared statistics with which decisions based on secure data can be made. The Rescue.Nodes were developed by ITK and I have taken on the task of project leader.

What does your daily activity as a project leader look like?

Stephan: My work as project leader is very versatile: It consists of much collaborative effort between the most various groups of people, such as product

designers and design engineers, but also the end users. It is exciting to exchange ideas so closely with first responders and then to develop a product that makes their mission easier. What was also especially important in the project was to be well versed in the topic of sensor networks because, for example, an individual IoT network was developed for RescueWave® with its own radio protocol and with Rescue.Nodes as the radio nodes.

What do you especially like about the project?

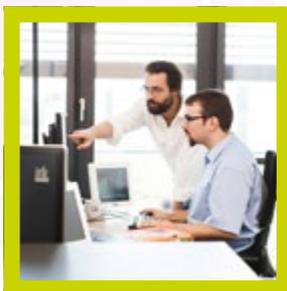
Stephan: For one thing, it's definitely amazing to be given the chance to work on a project that serves such an important purpose in society and that can even save people's lives. Another thing is that it's incredibly fun to be able to assist in a development process from beginning to end; that includes from the specification stage to the finished Rescue.Node, which I can then hold in my hands. Also, the strong solidarity of the colleagues taking part in the project at ITK and the openness of the other project partners significantly contributed to its success.

What is exceptional about the work at ITK in your opinion?

Stephan: I really value my colleagues. Aside from that, though, what appeals to me the most is that ITK thinks ahead. A lot is invested in research and because of that, exciting projects can, in turn, be earned and realized. That is especially interesting for people who had a university career before and have now switched to business. As a result, the combination of theory and practice reaches an even deeper level.

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