**Moving purposefully into new fields**

**“Yes” to research –
item teams up with CCI**

**item is entering into a development partnership with the Center Connected Industry (CCI) at RWTH Aachen University that will enable it to share expertise and also develop, test and try out new products. The focus is on smart sensors, the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), smart factories and 5G. The global market leader in building kit systems for industrial applications is using the CCI’s infrastructure to share and build on its expertise in these growth technologies. In addition to a comprehensive network of scientists and specialists, the centre also provides access to innovation laboratories and a demonstration factory. As a result, the company will be able to develop and then empirically test new, smart products for the** [**item MB Building Kit System**](https://www.item24.de/en/productworld/building-kit-system.html)**, the** [**item Lean Production Building Kit System**](https://www.item24.de/en/productworld/automation.html)**, the** [**item Work Bench System**](http://www.item24.de/en/productworld/work-bench-system.html) **and** [**item automation solutions**](https://www.item24.de/en/productworld/automation.html)**. The aim is to use intelligent systems and more flexible production techniques to make processes more efficient.**

What does the future of mechanical engineering have in store? What changes will the roll-out of Industry 4.0 projects bring? And what demands will factory equipment engineering need to meet in the future? To answer these and other future-focused questions while also proposing appropriate solutions, item recently became a member of the Center Connected Industry (CCI) on the RWTH Aachen University campus, where scientists from different research disciplines work with industrial consortia on various tasks relating to digitalisation in production and logistics. With its innovation laboratories and demonstration factory, the CCI offers the ideal infrastructure for evaluating new technology solutions. That means ideas and concepts can give rise to prototypes that can then be tested under real-life conditions. “As an innovative company, item is keen to forge ahead and pioneer new technologies. Collaborating with the CCI gives us the opportunity to reshape intralogistics and productive manufacturing processes as part of a combined industry and research network,” says Jens-Uwe Gustmann, who is responsible for product management and business model development at the company. Topics range from work bench networking and digital tools all the way through to automated guided vehicle systems. item has already established smart machine automation products on the market, such as its Linear Units with intelligent controllers and sophisticated software. The next step is to continue developing existing products and add to them with smart components. “We’re looking to strengthen our position in the data-driven production logistics segment – that is to say future logistics – and also in the assembly and production control segment – future assembly in other words. The CCI is the ideal partner when it comes to shaping the future of production and logistics together,” adds Gustmann.

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**Caption 1:** Jens-Uwe Gustmann, responsible for product management and business model development at item, is delighted about working with the CCI in Aachen. Source: item

**Caption 2:** With its innovation laboratories and demonstration factory, the CCI offers the ideal infrastructure for evaluating new technology solutions. Source: mika-photography

**Caption 3:** item will be making use of the combined industry and research network to reshape intralogistics and productive manufacturing processes. Source: mika-photography\_com

**About item**

item Industrietechnik GmbH is a global market leader in building kit systems for industrial applications and employs around 500 members of staff. It has been designing and marketing construction solutions for machinery, fixtures and plants since 1976. Today, the item product portfolio comprises more than 4,000 high-quality components designed for use in machine bases, work benches, automation solutions and lean production applications. Thanks to the inclusion of transport solutions and dynamic elements, the company’s products can cover virtually all working processes, from manual production to automated manufacturing. The highly skilled employees work day in, day out to develop innovative solutions for state-of-the-art mechanical engineering and also offer exceptional consulting services. item is headquartered in Solingen, Germany. Eleven branches and support centres ensure the company is always close to customers in Germany. The group has wholly owned subsidiaries in the USA, China, Mexico, Italy, Poland and Switzerland.

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