



Standards in support of safer and more competitive workplaces

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Because of harmonized requirements, verification and validation procedures in the safety standards, they imply:

- a potentially increased market for a given product, which also leads to incentives for product development
- increased competition, which is a driving force to develop more powerful products, as well as safer and more competitive workplaces, and
- a price pressure because of the competition and very much larger batch size of safety products and demand of safety knowledge.

When comparing a “generalized opinion” and demand from manufacturers and users before and after the 1990’s, a dramatic change is seen:

- **the “generalized opinion” before the 1990s** was that safety will be an obstacle for practical use, it decreases the usefulness and output and generates a lot of costs
- **the “generalized opinion” after the 1990s** shows an increasing level of interest and demand for safety products, practical safety principles and safety knowledge.

This dramatic change in opinion is an important market factor and demand for “*safer workplaces*”. Those workplaces are often designed according to requirements in standards – developed in the light of requirements in relevant EU directives. Today we therefore have a lot of competitive European suppliers of more and more complex safety products (e.g. safety PLCs), which require being verified/validated. The basic standards for General principles for design, Machine control systems etc and product oriented standards set out the standardized and practical design requirements and how to verify/validate the products.

These standards will also support users with qualified guidance and knowledge for implementation of safety products and principles, in order to keep the safety level of the products when installed. For the achievement of “*competitive workplaces*” the application of safety requirements needs to be combined and balanced to the practical usefulness of the product – otherwise it is often a question of time until the safety will be bypassed.