

CAN Bus Design Earns Cover Story

Dow-Key Microwave, a Dover Corporation, is the world's largest manufacturer of electro-mechanical switches. Dow Key's switches are used in many applications including military, aerospace, and satellite communications.

A target area of growth for Dow-Key is in the RF matrix division. Traditional electro-mechanical switches can require up to 38 wires for control and monitoring, and a 12x12 matrix would require 24 of these switches. This combination would yield 918 separate wires that would need to be routed from the switches to the circuit boards.

By utilizing our experience in the automotive industry, Laritech applied the CAN Bus protocol to create a distributed network of smart switches instead of one centralized processor. In this way, each switch requires only 4 wires, and is easily connected internally with simple telephone cable providing a very inexpensive and readily available solution.

This innovative CAN Bus design was given top honors as a cover story in the trade publication *Microwave Journal*. Since then, it has spawned over 30 other designs based upon this new approach. These designs have earned Dow-Key new capabilities as well as new customers.

Today, we continue to develop new designs, and Laritech now manufactures over 50 different boards for Dow-Key. For these assemblies we provide a complete turnkey solution which includes procurement, assembly, programming and test. This seamlessly complements Dow Key's own mechanical manufacturing capacity allowing them to maintain control over their product inventories.

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