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Home
On-Line Store
DCC Library
Forum
Manuals
NMRA Clinics
Press Room
Product Info
Registration
Tech Notes

Evaluation SW

About KAM
Contact KAM
Privacy Policy

History of KAM Industries

Matt Katzer, a software developer, founded KAM industries in 1991, with the vision that model railroaders want a common software standard to operate their model railroads. Software interface standards reduces the software time to market, and allows innovation to flourish. KAM's first software product was **Engine Commander** for the **Marklin** command stations.

All developers are faced with common tasks that are repeated over and over again. KAM's software is designed to address this duplication of effort. To facilitate this, in 1993, Matt joined the NMRA working group and contributed to the establishment of the **DCC (Digital Command Control)** standard for the embedded control protocol for the locomotive.

DCC established a way in which all manufacturers can use the same components on the model railroad. Matt, and Ken Rice (another member of the working group) working with the NMRA committee developed the NMRA serial command station interface. This interface led to the common command station protocol that soon become the de-facto ASCII standard interface for computers and command stations.

In 1996, Matt and Ken West introduced Train Server, along with the **proposed NMRA programming API**. The programming API was the first multi user, multi programmed interface that allows developers to create software applications that are not tied to a manufacturer's command station hardware, or any operating system.

Train Server Overview

Train Server was established as the programming standard overnight. Since 1996, KAM has shipped over 100,000 CD-ROMs to end users and developers.   Train Server is such an innovative and unique programming environment that numerous patents (see footnotes on this page) have been granted to KAM both in the United States, Germany, Great Britain, Canada and other countries.

KAM's software programs are categorized into three different types of applications. these are Manual control, Layout automation and Dispatcher operation. Each of these classes of applications are different, and require different types of capabilities to operate and control the model railroad. KAM's philosophy is foster the development of simple applications, that solve the modelers problem, instead of with a do everything solution, designed by committee, complex to operate, and designed on obsolete programming tools such like java or turbo pascal. KAM' software is open and extensible as compared to any other commercial or open source solution.

KAM's Software Overview

KAM Industries incorporated in 1998 as KAMIND Associates, Inc. KAMIND has extended the Train Server architecture adding Microsoft networked COM/DCOM protocol support and the support of Commercial Dispatcher control application from Train Track. **Train Track** developed the Windows NT version of software called

Track Driver Professional 32. KAM, along with Train Tracks extended the software application to support the NMRA DCC protocols.

This software achievement represents the first time that a commercial dispatching product has been ported to the model railroad command and control systems and DCC. This product has been released by KAM and is called Computer Dispatcher Professional (CD-Pro). KAM was the first Model railroad manufacturer to support Win 32 protocols in the operation and control of the model railroad. This advanced program development has lead to numerous patents incorporating advanced designs into KAM's Train Server.

In 1999, KAM Industries expanded in to Europe with inclusion of **Computer Dispatcher Lite** as part of the KAM's software product line. Computer Dispatcher Lite was designed for the automation conscious model railroad customers, and is a port Bouwens Engineering's Train Wizard. Computer Dispatcher Lite was later renamed to Layout Commander® software to reduce the confusion with Computer Dispatcher Pro. Computer Dispatcher pro is a professional dispatching program, while layout commander is a Layout Automation program.

Classic Panel® software was designed to fill in the missing software component for manual operation in 2000. The software was designed using Sun Java language, and was designed from a 1940's Great Western Dispatchers panel. Microsoft has stop supporting the java language in all of its products in Fall of 2004.

Classic Panel was rewritten to support the .NET runtime to improve performance and to allow portability to the handheld devices. Classic Panel version 3 was released in Winter of 2004. Classic Panel version 1 and version 2 were never production released due to the lack of java support on modern operating systems. Classic Panel 3 incorporates GUI editor, APB and ABS signals, and full interlock support. Classic Panel is the next generation 1940 dispatcher panel designed for the modeler. Classic Panel integrates new signal technology, distributed network support, location information and portability to the Windows CE PDA devices.

(Classic Panel Overview)

In 2003, Train Server reached another milestone: support for the first full duplex wireless hand held throttle using Microsoft Windows CE devices, called **Loco CE®.** Loco CE integrates commercial computer Windows CE - PDA products into the model railroad environment using off the shelf computer equipment. Loco CE is the OEM software product included in Lenz Set LI in the United States.

In late 2003 KAM introduced the **distributed XML communications protocol** designed to allow distributed model railroad clients to operate over a remote network using TCP/IP and the XML data/command protocol. The Train Server Architecture clearly extends the boundary on what can or cannot be done to support the end user and developers.

In 2004 KAM introduce The **RailDriver Commander®** remote software supporting the RailDriver computer based throttle and full scale simulators running model railroads. Rail driver interface is unique where the interface can be local to the user system, or remote across the internet using Train Server XML protocol. KAM's Train Server architecture supports the demands and performance of a user-to-hardware interface that is unique in the industry.

KAM constantly adding new technologies and introducing new products to market using these technologies. As these events unfold, we will update our companies history.

(KAM Product Overview)

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Vistors in 2005: 91,227   Vistors in 2004: 107,122
Hits in 2005:   1,523,838   Hits in 2004:   1,825,750
Page Views in 2005: 186,127   Page Views in 2004: 1,402,272

This site has serverd   1,588,399 pages since August 2004

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