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THE JOURNAL OF APPLIED SENSING TECHNOLOGY

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A New Magnetic  
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Manufacture

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Level Measurement

DA Systems and Cover Story

Getting Control  
Through

# CAN



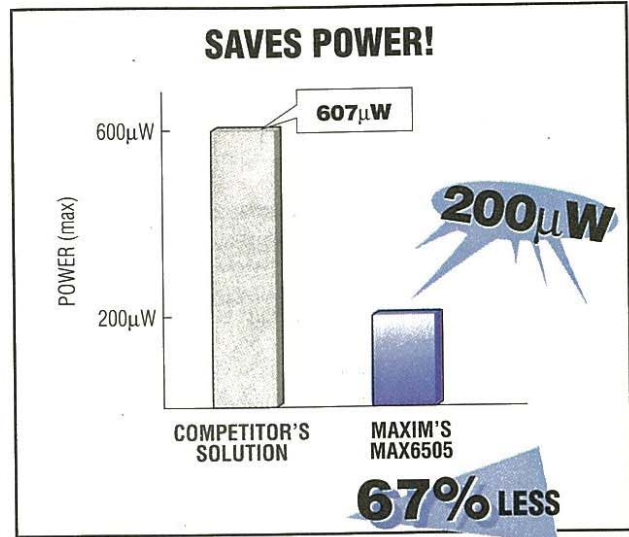
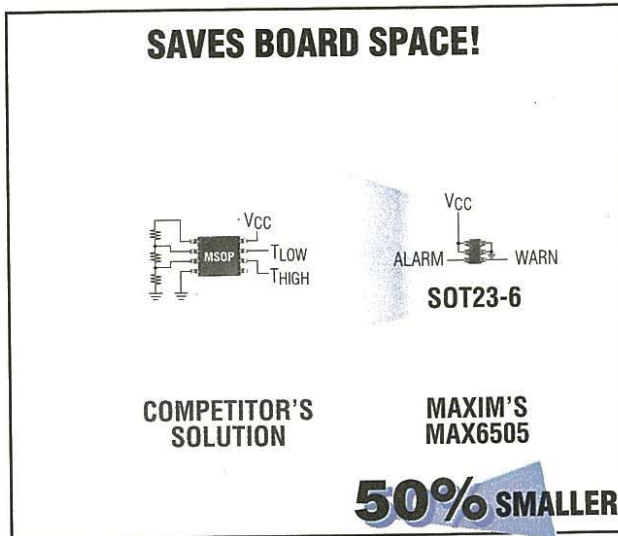
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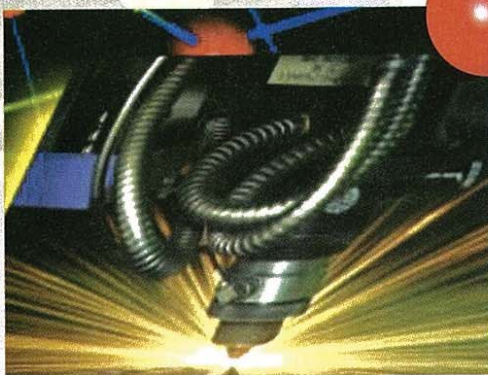
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- 4** A Smarter Way  
*Barbara G. Goode*

**COVER STORY/DA SYSTEMS**

- 18** Getting Control Through CAN The CAN protocol has gained widespread popularity not only in the automotive industry but also in the industrial automation arena. Take a look at what it can do, and see how you can extend your control capabilities. *Bruce Negley*

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**ABOUT THE COVER**

What started as a bus tailored for the automotive industry is now a protocol that has been adopted by the industrial automation, test and measurement, and medical communities. The robust Control Area Network (CAN) is optimized with sophisticated error checking and handling that guarantees that the system will continue to run even when errors and failures occur. To see just how this bus works, read the article that begins on page 18. (Cover image courtesy of Microchip Technology Inc.)

**FEATURES**

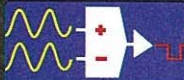
- 36** Noncontact Displacement Sensors in Automotive Manufacture Advances in noncontact displacement sensors are bringing new levels of quality and efficiency to the research labs and assembly lines of automakers worldwide. *Bryan Manning and Robert Foster*
- 42** A Short Guide to Measurement Uncertainty No measurement device produces perfect results. Uncertainty analysis is one way to define how confident you are of your measurements. *Stephen Humpage*
- 48** Uncertainty Analysis in Pitot Static Pneumatic Mass Flow Measurements The integrity of a mass flow rate measurement using a Pitot static technique should be a primary concern for low-flow applications because error in one of the calibration constants has an exaggerated effect when the difference between the total pressure and the static pressure is small. *Don Ersland*
- 52** An Innovative Passive Solid-State Magnetic Sensor A new magnetic sensor technology is based on the magnetostrictive and the piezoelectric effects. *Yi-Qun Li and Robert O'Handley*
- 55** The Principles of Level Measurement RF capacitance, conductance, hydrostatic tank gauging, radar, and ultrasonics are the leading sensor technologies in liquid level tank measurement and control operations. Making the wisest selection for your own application requires a basic understanding of how these devices work. *Gabor Vass*
- 65** Measuring Individual Wheel Noise How do you determine if your new wheel design is quieter, if the rest of the clanging, squealing train drowns it out? With a phased microphone array and intensive calculations. *Johan Van Keymeulen*



- 68** Acoustic Wave Technology Sensors Acoustic wave sensors are extremely versatile devices that are just beginning to realize their commercial potential. This tutorial addresses acoustic wave sensor physics and materials, and the various types of acoustic wave sensors and their industrial applications. *Bill Drafts*

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DA SYSTEMS

CONTROL

Bruce Negley,  
Microchip Technology Inc.

# Getting Control Through

# CAN

The CAN protocol has gained widespread popularity not only in the automotive industry but also in the industrial automation arena. Take a look at what it can do, and see how you can extend your control capabilities.

**G**erman automotive system supplier Robert Bosch created the Controller Area Network (CAN) to enable robust serial communications while decreasing wiring harness weight and complexity. The current version of the protocol, 2.0B, provides transmission speeds up to 1 Mbps.

Since its inception, CAN has moved from automotive applications to industrial control. Now technicians and engineers are starting to use it in medical and test equipment. The test, measurement, and control community is discovering just what this bus can do when it is coupled with smart sensing technology.

## How Is CAN Used?

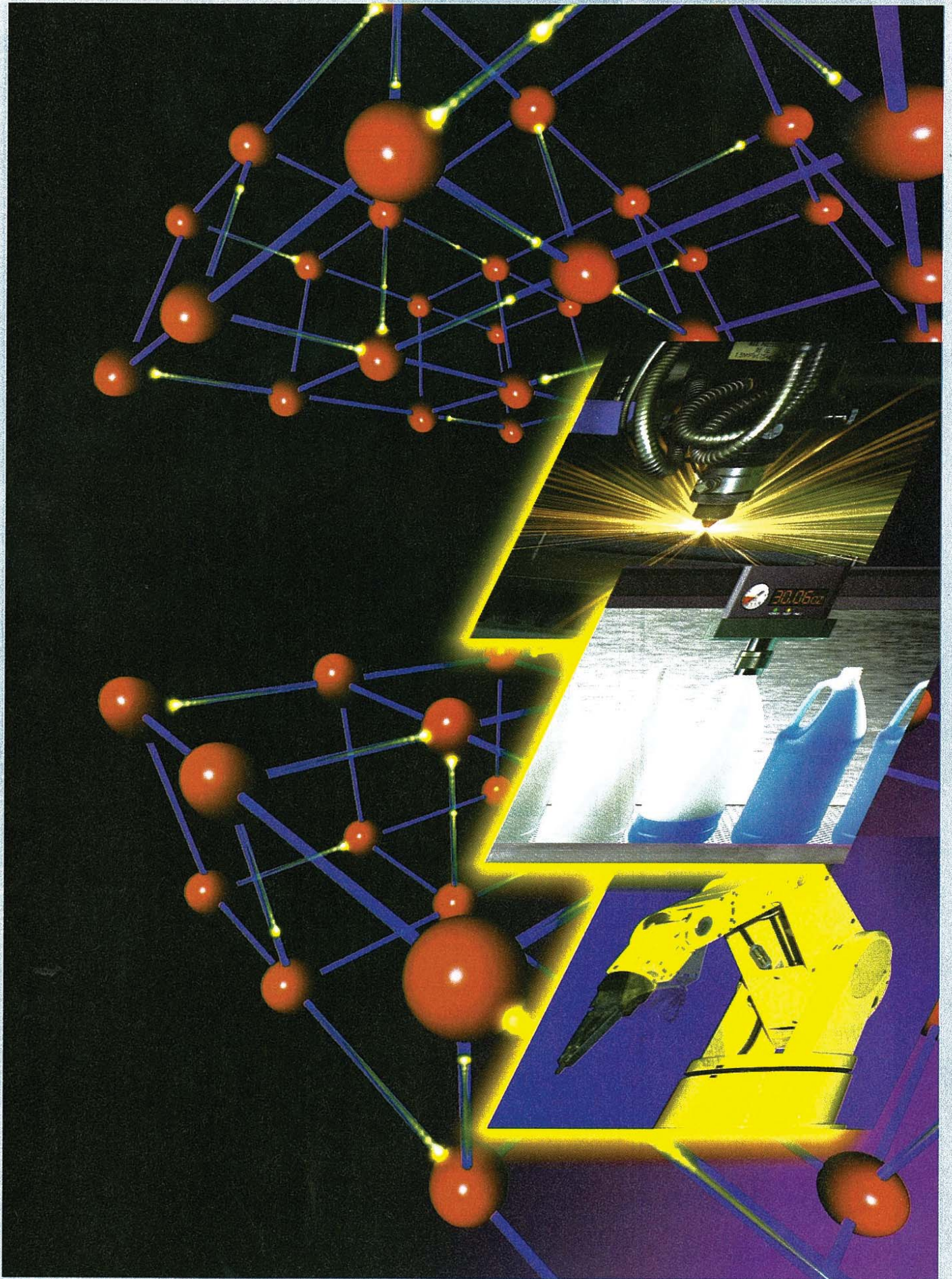
The CAN protocol creates a communications path that links all the nodes connected to the bus and enables them to talk to one another. Depending on how the designer has configured the system, there may or may not be a central, or main, node. The protocol defines aspects of how each node can respond, but it leaves tremendous flexibility to the system designer to implement the nodes in ways that suit the particular application.

Figure 1 (page 20) shows an automotive application in which several nodes in a vehicle door are connected through a door node controller to the main CAN bus. As mentioned before, the network need not have a controller node; each node can just as easily be connected to the main bus. Applying the concept shown in Figure 1 to a sensor network is as easy as changing the type and description of the nodes (see Figure 2, page 20).

## What Makes Up a Node?

The term *node* describes a portion of the overall system or network. Each node can have one function, or it can have many functions. Depending on the system configuration, different nodes may transmit messages at different times based on the function(s) of each node. For example:

- A node may transmit a message only when a system failure occurs.



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