



Life-Testing for Consumer Appliances

A large U.S. manufacturer of major appliances is using HP VEE to maintain a spotless reputation with consumers.

The company's division in Louisville, Kentucky designs and manufactures major appliances for consumers and customers around the world. One of their product lines includes state-of-the-art washing machines, which are life-tested with an advanced monitoring and control system. The test system verifies design changes by running 60 washing machines on a continuous cycle until catastrophic failure is achieved. The machines are then dismantled and analyzed.

Clean Image

An initial goal of life-testing was to develop a test system that would detect failures and shut the machine down before subsequent damage destroyed evidence of the root cause of the failure. The facility also is used to prove design fixes for recalled products, and in many cases, to detect and correct design problems before the machines reach the marketplace.

Real-time Test

The test system consists of a Sun SPARCstation connected to an HP VEE-based C-size VXI system. The HP E1413A 64-channel Scanning A/D provides 100K sample/sec high-speed scanning, which enables the company to scan 480 channels of data (including current, power, temperature, and basket RPM) without losing any failure data. That means that all 60 machines can be monitored simultaneously.

Multiplatform Support

The HP VEE test program was developed on a low-cost PC and runs on a Sun SPARCstation as the system controller.

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