

CASE STUDY

ADLINK GPIB

Life Science Instrument Testing Equipment Company Uses ADLINK GPIB Interface Card to Enable System Integration of Legacy Instruments

Challenge: Interface card supplier unwilling to support legacy instrumentation

The client was a Western company that specializes in manufacturing testing equipment for life science instruments, semiconductors, and fiber networks. The instruments produced by the company are extensively used in various industrial and biomedical applications, and are popular with companies in many countries around the world due to their excellent quality and reliability. The company's downstream vendors often carry out system integration of their instruments, which have a long history of reliable operation and use a communication interface based on GPIB (General Purpose Interface Bus). Data measured by each instrument is transmitted back to the computer system for calculation and analysis. In the past, the client used GPIB Interface cards in their instruments that were manufactured by an outsourced supplier. Pricing of the cards continued to increase over the past few years and delivery times also became more drawn out. After an evaluation of future supply reliability and costs, the client decided to search for a new supplier of GPIB interface cards.

Objective: Give new life to old machines by selecting the GPIB interface card supplier with the best compatibility

GPIB is a very mature communication interface but only a few companies in the industry are capable of supplying GPIB interface cards. One reason for this is the difficulty of finding suitable off-the-shelf GPIB controller ICs for integration solutions. The other reason is that GPIB interface cards must interface with a wide variety of instruments so compatibility issues are all too common. Suppliers must possess the required professional knowledge and tools in order to effectively troubleshoot compatibility issues for their customers.

The client had tried products from other vendors in the past when looking for a new GPIB interface card supplier. None of them could be introduced successfully due to the two reasons mentioned above. The client's life science instruments were all designed decades ago. Rather than changing the design due to GPIB card compatibility issues, it was more efficient and cost effective to find compatible GPIB products or a GPIB supplier that could help them with these problems.

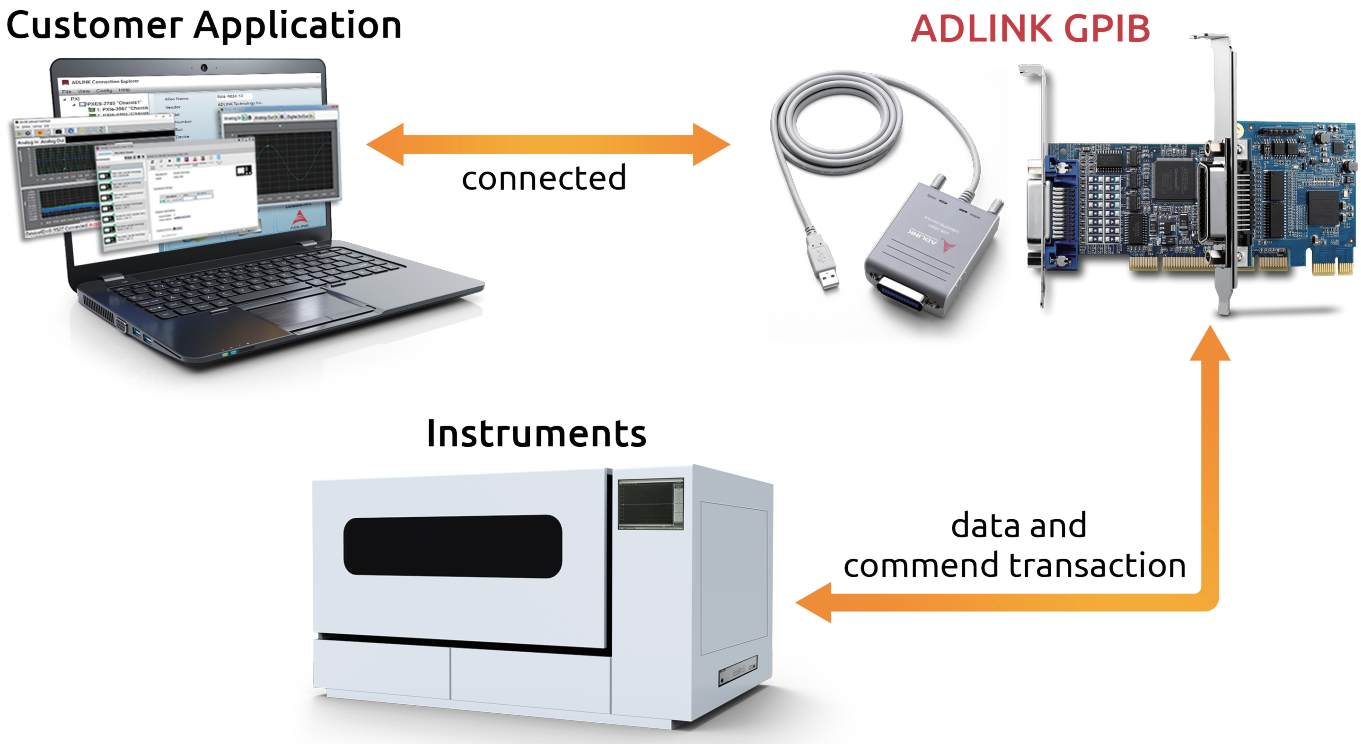
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ADLINK GPIB interface card, a trusted provider with technical expertise to solve general compatibility issues

When the client reached out to ADLINK for help with their GPIB card requirements, our professional team of application engineers carried out a detailed system integration analysis. Once the problematic communication protocol was identified, it was passed to software and firmware engineers for further examination. An optimal solution was then developed to enable the company's life science instruments to transmit data accurately and efficiently through the GPIB card. The controller on ADLINK's GPIB interface card was developed using our own IP, as was the software driver, giving us a full understanding of all protocols so that problems could be easily analyzed and resolved. This gave us an immense advantage when it came to solving the client's card integration problems. ADLINK's GPIB interface card has now been successfully introduced by the company with over a thousand units shipped over the past year or so, all already in commercial use.

For customers utilizing GPIB interface cards in their solutions, ADLINK's GPIB products don't just offer a very favorable cost-to-performance ratio. We also have the technical capability, experience, and expertise to solve the compatibility issues you encounter in your integration process.



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