Salzburg, October 7, 2025

zenonIZE 25: Orchestrating the future of automation

*COPA-DATA elevates the automation industry by bringing software-defined automation into practical use. What was once a vision has now become reality. At zenonIZE 25, the Salzburg-based software manufacturer showed how orchestration and digital transformation converge into zenon – its powerful software platform experience.*

With more than 500 attendees from across the globe, zenonIZE 25 was COPA-DATA’s largest customer event to date. Held under the motto *Composing Tomorrow: Automatize, Digitalize, zenonIZE* at the prestigious Salzburg Mozarteum Foundation, the two-day event brought together customers, partners and industry experts to explore the future of industrial automation. The central theme – software-defined automation – was showcased through inspiring keynotes, track sessions and hands-on engineering workshops.

Diverse formats and expert insights

“zenonIZE 25 featured a rich program with over 60 external and internal speakers, including representatives from ongoing customer projects, who shared their real-world experiences and success stories,” said Phillip Werr, Member of the Executive Board at COPA-DATA Headquarters. Attendees could choose from three different tracks: the Manufacturing Track, offering industry insights and keynotes from the Life Sciences and Process Industry sector; the Energy Track, focusing on virtualization, interoperability and success stories from the Energy sector; and the Engineering Workshops, providing participants interactive opportunities to explore the full capabilities of the zenon software platform.

From vision to reality: the future of automation

More than a technology showcase, zenonIZE 25 is a special customer event created by COPA-DATA to spark dialogue, share expertise and explore practical use cases. This year, the focus was on moving beyond hardware PLCs and potential vendor lock-ins toward software-driven and virtual PLC solutions.

“For decades, the automation industry has envisioned a future where processes are no longer bound to rigid hardware but orchestrated through flexible software platforms. At zenonIZE 25, we showed how our customers can leverage this approach to gain flexibility, resilience and long-term competitiveness in a fast-changing world,” emphasized Stefan Reuther, Member of the Executive Board at COPA-DATA Headquarters.

Attendees discovered how automation can be redefined through open architectures, intuitive design and a focus on operational excellence. From intelligent data orchestration to scalable production management, zenon positions companies to navigate complexity with clarity. “Software-defined automation is about moving the automation ‘brain’ from the hardware into software. Decoupling logic from machines. Giving flexibility, speed and openness. Achieving this involves containerizing plant-level software, virtualizing real-time control with virtual PLCs, replacing traditional IPCs and PLCs with thin clients and hosting everything on a software-defined and cloud-native OT architecture,” continued Stefan Reuther.

Salzburg as the stage for innovation

Salzburg, the birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and home to COPA-DATA Headquarters, provided the ideal setting for zenonIZE 25. On October 1–2, the event took place at the prestigious Salzburg Mozarteum Foundation. The elegant venue hosted two days of insightful sessions. On the first evening, attendees enjoyed a sophisticated networking dinner at St. Peter Stiftskulinarium, Europe’s oldest restaurant. In summary, zenonIZE 25 provided the perfect setting for meaningful exchanges and the strengthening of professional connections.

About COPA-DATA

COPA-DATA is an independent software manufacturer in the field of digitalization in the manufacturing and energy industries. With the zenon software platform, machines, equipment, buildings and power grids are automated, controlled, monitored, networked and optimized worldwide. COPA-DATA combines decades of experience in automation with the possibilities of digital transformation and a strong drive for solutions that achieve greater sustainability. As a result, the company helps its customers to achieve their goals more easily, quickly and efficiently. In 2024, the family business founded in Salzburg in 1987 by Thomas Punzenberger generated sales of 99 million euros with its 450 employees worldwide.

Images

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**Image 1:** Over 500 participants from around the world came together at zenonIZE 25 in Salzburg, sharing insights and experiences on the future of software-defined automation.

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**Image 2:** Phillip Werr, Member of the Executive Board at COPA-DATA Headquarters.

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**Image 3:** Stefan Reuther, Member of the Executive Board at COPA-DATA Headquarters.

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**Image 4:** During a panel discussion, COPA-DATA’s industry experts and product management explored the current phase of technological evolution – an era full of buzzwords, high expectations and practical insights for the future of automation.

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**Image 5:** The hosts of zenonIZE 25 – Barbara Rameseder, Director Global Marketing and Christoph Dorigatti, VP Global Business Development.

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**Image 6:** The elegant Salzburg Mozarteum Foundation offered an inspiring setting for zenonIZE 25.

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