

Case Study: Renesas' RealityCheck™ Motor Software Toolbox

Enabling Proactive Maintenance in Household Appliances with Renesas' RealityCheck™ Motor Software Toolkit

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Written on Behalf of Renesas Electronics Corporation, August 2023



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Household appliances are a critical aspect of modern life, providing convenience and quality. Similar to other machines, however, they contain electronics prone to wear and tear, which often leads to malfunction and failures if not detected and addressed early.

Proactive maintenance with advanced signal processing and Machine Learning (ML) models can empower electric motors with self-monitoring capabilities, enabling them to assess the health of the systems they power. This unique capability offers enormous potential in a host of consumer electronics. By minimizing downtime and avoiding costly repairs, manufacturers can enhance the lifespan and efficiency of motor-driven appliances.

Benefits of Proactive Maintenance for Motor-driven Applications

Electric motor systems powering consumer electronics are susceptible to failure over time due to regular use, stress, and occasional overloads, resulting in inconvenient downtime, expensive repair bills, or total unit replacement. Detecting faults in motor systems has typically been a reactive process, relying on noticeable performance issues or total failure to indicate a problem. Once issues are identified, it's often too late to prevent repairs or replacements.

Operational Flexibility with No External Sensors

Traditional proactive maintenance strategies often involve using external sensors to monitor equipment conditions. While effective, this approach increases complexity and cost, as these sensors need to be installed, maintained, and calibrated. Advanced software tools leverage existing operational data and offer proactive maintenance without external sensors, offering a more cost-effective and streamlined approach.

Early Fault Detection and Diagnosis

In contrast to reactive maintenance, where appliances are repaired after failures, proactive maintenance anticipates potential issues and implements measures to prevent these failures before they occur. This proactive approach delivers multiple benefits, including:

- **Reduced downtime:** By identifying potential issues before they cause a failure, proactive maintenance prevents equipment breakdowns, ensuring continuous operation.
- **Extended equipment lifespan:** By keeping equipment in optimal operating condition, proactive maintenance helps extend the lifespan of the appliances, reducing the need for replacements and lowering costs.
- **Improved energy efficiency:** Regularly monitoring and adjusting equipment conditions can help optimize energy consumption, leading to lower energy costs.
- **Increased safety:** Proactive maintenance can help identify potential safety hazards before they occur, ensuring a safer environment for users.

Renesas' RealityCheck™ Motor Software Toolkit

[Renesas' RealityCheck™ Motor](#) is engineered to create algorithms that detect and classify small fluctuations and anomalies of various conditions. The RealityCheck Motor relates these conditions to known conditions or failure modes and unknown anomalies, with its advanced algorithms then analyzing the data to find potential issues before they can cause catastrophic damage.

This innovative software applies advanced signal processing and ML models to maintain motor-driven systems proactively, offering a variety of features allowing these systems to self-monitor their health and detect faults. Parameters like temperature, vibration, current, and voltage are constantly checked, offering real-time appliance health status monitoring.

Key Benefits

This unique product detects anomalies in all motor-driven applications, even those not easily detectable by traditional sensors. The RealityCheck Motor software addresses issues like load balancing and alignment, bearing wear, and load monitoring, providing proactive care where vibration sensors or accelerometers are typically deployed.

Seamless Connections

Renesas' RealityCheck Motor software connects seamlessly with existing Microcontroller Units (MCUs) in appliances, providing a smart interface for data collection and analysis. It collects real-time data on parameters, such as temperature, vibration, current, and voltage, providing a continuous health status of the motor.

Intelligence at No Extra Cost

RealityCheck Motor provides manufacturers the benefits of intelligent motor unit monitoring without incurring additional costs for integrating external sensors. It avoids extensive design or manufacturing changes, reducing costs and enhancing appliance reliability and longevity. The ML algorithms require minimal processing power and memory.

Multiple AI models on the same MCU

The RealityCheck Motor software toolbox provides multiple ML models that can be run on Renesas MCUs, MPUs, and motor-driven applications, enabling hardware optimization and software model creation. These models have been trained to detect a broad range of anomalies and faults that might occur in motor systems, continuously monitoring different parameters and offering a comprehensive view of the system's health.

Use Cases

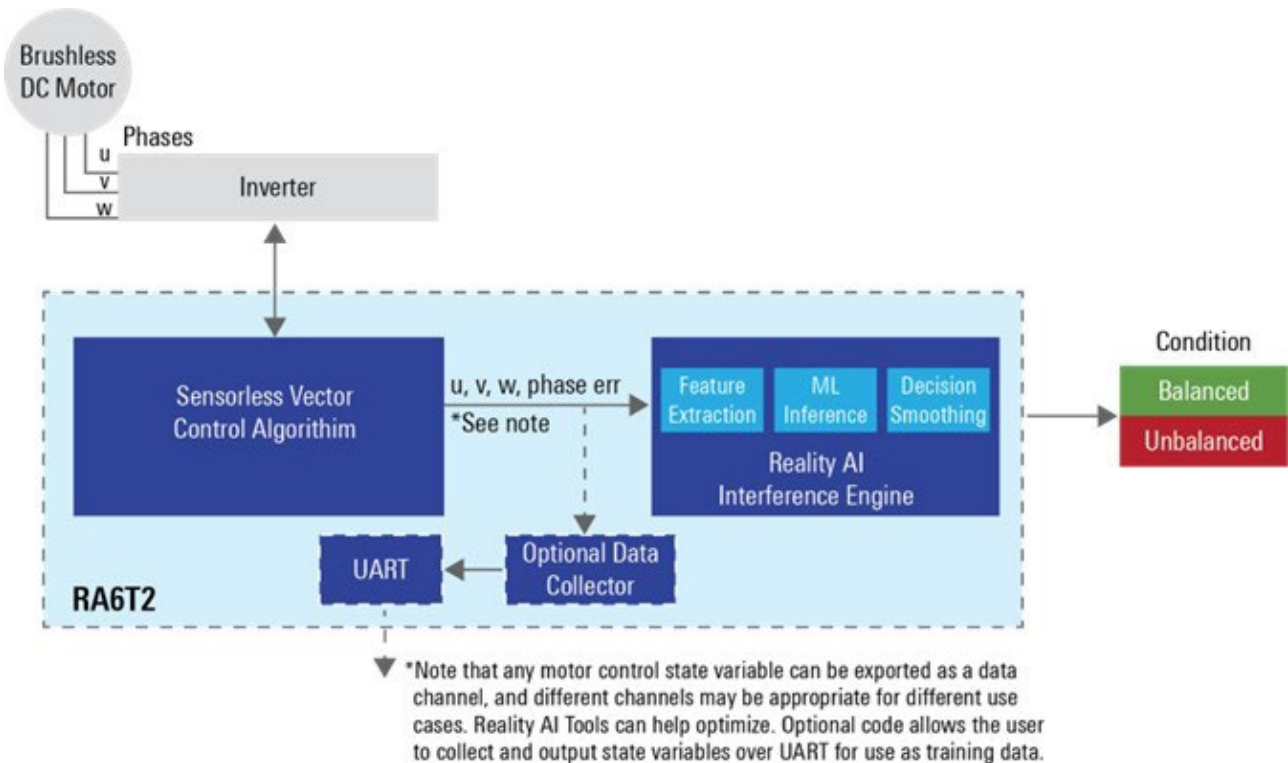


Image courtesy of [Renesas](#).

Laundry Machines and Dishwashers

In household appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers, early fault detection and diagnosis can help prevent major breakdowns and prolong the appliance's lifespan. Using the RealityCheck Motor, motor bearing wear, abnormal vibrations (such as an out of balance condition in the spin cycle of laundry equipment), temperature irregularities, and more can be detected early, enabling timely maintenance and repairs.



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HVAC Systems

Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems are critical for comfort in homes and offices. RealityCheck Motor can effectively monitor the health status of these systems, diagnosing problems such as coil frosting, low refrigerant charge, compressor or fan faults, filter blockage / remaining useful life (on indoor unit!), and uncategorized anomalies.

Vacuum Cleaners

Vacuum cleaners, particularly those with robust motor systems — robotic vacuum cleaners, for example —, can also greatly benefit from proactive maintenance. The RealityCheck Motor helps identify potential issues (such as filter life) that might lead to malfunctions or breakdowns, ensuring a longer and more efficient service life for these appliances. In addition, vacuums can incorporate intelligence such as auto-detection of floor type (hardwood vs. carpet, etc.) to ensure optimal performance.

Conclusion

Renesas' RealityCheck Motor Software Toolbox is a leading-edge solution bringing the power of artificial intelligence and machine learning to home appliances. Embracing this smart technology ensures that both the lifespan and performance of our appliances are no longer left to chance. Combining advanced signal processing and ML models with internal data to facilitate proactive maintenance through early fault detection and diagnosis will improve appliance durability, performance, and user satisfaction. With its ease of use and powerful capabilities, RealityCheck Motor is the perfect toolbox and add-on functionality for those looking to optimize their motor systems and ensure maximum efficiency and uptime.

Resources

[RealityAI Software](#)

[Reality AI Tools®](#)

[RealityCheck™ Motor Toolbook](#)

[RA6T2 Product Page](#)

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Doc Number: R11WP0004EU0100

