

CHANGE - THE ONLY CONSTANT

The times they are-a-changing. Bob Dylan mumbled these words more than thirty years ago, about the same time that Arlink's parent company, Arbell, was founded. The pace of change we are experiencing today and the uncertainty about the future must surprise even the visionary Mr. Dylan. The only managerial certainty that seems to exist today is uncertainty. What products will my company be producing in the future? In what quantities? How many different models will the market require? What kind of lead times will be expected? Where will we produce them, and what will be the characteristics of the workforce?

Managers at all levels struggle with these questions and the impact they have on their domain. Those involved in facilities management, design engineering, and production activities may be most affected by the prospect of continuous change. Trends toward smaller manufacturing lot sizes, increasing product mix, and shorter product life cycles dominate most industry today. Each purchase of new equipment becomes increasingly difficult because justification of the investment must take into consideration its useful life and its ongoing ability to contribute to productivity improvement.

How to predict the useful life of equipment in a world where seeing even six months into the future is considered difficult, if not impossible? One way to work around this problem is to specify equipment that can easily and cost effectively adapt to changing tasks, processes, and practices, whatever they may be.

By selecting highly adaptable equipment, the questions "How long will it last?" and "What tasks will it need to support in the future?" no longer need be significant factors in your ROI calculations. Rather, the questions can be re-phrased to ask: "How long do I need it to last to justify the purchase?" and "Are there any tasks that this workstation could not easily be adapted to?" A durable and truly adaptable workstation will allow these questions to be answered so that your company's criteria for an investment return can be easily met.

At Arlink, we say that our products are "Designed For A Changing World." This means that we design each Arlink product to make reconfiguration possibilities virtually unlimited using standard, interchangeable components. In most cases, all existing parts of a particular workstation layout or configuration can be incorporated into new designs. For example, when converting an in-line workstation to a back-to-back configuration, all the single-sided components can be used without any wasted parts. *Contd. on page 4*

7:11 FOR DOUBLES

At the Nepcon West exhibition, Arlink demonstrated how quickly and easily Arlink workstations can be assembled and reconfigured. We did this with a live assembly demonstration of a double-sided workstation complete with work surfaces, power beam, shelving, task lighting, and parts bin rails. Our target assembly time was 12 minutes, but the best time at the show was 7 Minutes, 11 Seconds!



Terry Milford and Jason Wooley did a great job performing the assembly demo during the show.

There was nothing special about the workstation we assembled - it was the same in every respect as those purchased by our customers every day. Our point? That Arlink provides the best workstation solution in a world where responding to change is important to competitiveness, and accommodating ergonomic needs is increasingly important to productivity.

Since most changes can be made without tools or special skills, anyone can do it, whenever needed. Arlink products go together fast and easily with no sacrifice to strength, flexibility, durability or ergonomics. See for yourself - call your Arlink representative today!

ARLINK IN EUROPE

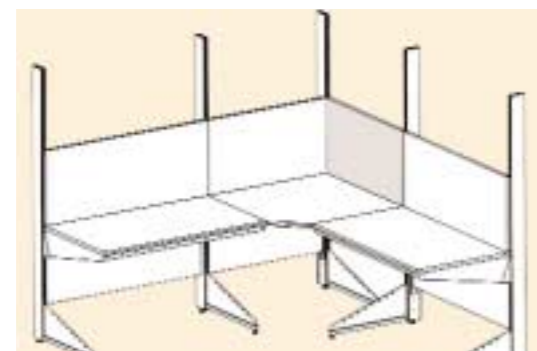
Did you know that Arlink has a European Headquarters? Arbell, Arlink's parent company, established Arbell Europe in 1994 to support Arlink product sales throughout Europe and Northern Africa.

Headquarters and warehouses are located in Deurne, The Netherlands, a few hours' drive from Rotterdam, one of the world's busiest ports, and Amsterdam, home of one of the world's busiest airports.



Distributors are established in England, Ireland, France, Spain, The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Italy, Greece, Slovenia, and Turkey. Our warehouse in Deurne stocks a wide variety of Arlink products, and we also locally manufacture items such as power beams, task lighting, and worksurfaces. Working together with our European division, Arlink is able to provide complete support to customers around the world. Multi-national companies looking for a workstation manufacturer that can provide local support wherever they establish operations can count on Arlink to be there! If you have a project in Europe, please contact Mr. Ad van Dinter, Director. (see back cover)

ENGINEERING



New Corner Modesty Panels

Arlink's new Corner Modesty panels allow the complete enclosure of a corner, and can be placed on either the inside or the outside of the corner. They are available in 36" x 20" or 48" x 20" high units that will match our existing modesty panels.



24" Workstation Module Completes System Configuration

The new 24" wide module can be used in the same manner as the other size modules of the workstation system to complete the desired floor plan. They are available in standard heights and fit all Series 8000 configurations.



PCB Pallet Carts for Circuit Card Storage and Transport

Arlink's PCB Pallet Carts are equipped with tray storage channel capacity for 12-25 pallets. Ideal for circuit card storage and transport, PCB Pallet Carts are constructed of 1" x 1" chrome plated powder coated steel tube frames, with 5" conductive casters and drag chains.

Available in single or multiple bay configurations, they can be constructed to fit a customer's pallet sizes with vertical slide spacing of 1", 2" or 3". The three basic frame sizes are 48" x 21", 44" x 21" and 32" x 21" and custom finish is available.

Parts & Information Guides Get New Look

The new Arlink corporate image has been applied to the Parts & Information Guides for the AGILE Workstation Systems and Mobile Carts and for the Solid Value Workbench Systems, Vertical Space Integrators and Adjustable Height Platforms.



For copies of these guides contact:
Arlink Sales Office at 1-888-559-4441.

ESD CONTROL

ESD Control - Important to Electronic Assembly Industry

The 90's may be remembered as the Decade of Quality in the electronics industry, in part due to increased competition and certified quality control standards programs such as ISO 9000. As we continually examine our environments for quality improvement areas, electrostatic discharge (ESD) remains a key target.

Despite a great deal of effort during the past decade, ESD still affects production yields and profitability. Industry experts estimate the cost of ESD damage to the electronics industry is in the billions of dollars annually. Clearly opportunities exist for significant improvements.



Dual wriststrap receptacle

ESD can change the electrical characteristics of a semiconductor device, degrading or destroying it. ESD also may upset the normal operation of an electronics system, causing equipment malfunction or failure.

Charged surfaces can attract and hold contaminants, making removal from the environment difficult. When attracted to the surface of a silicon wafer or a device's electrical circuitry, these particulates can cause random wafer defects and reduce product yields.

Industry demands and standards require workstations to provide a static safe environment for the control of static electricity. One of the cardinal rules for ESD prevention is to ensure that all workers handling ESD sensitive components are grounded. This is usually done by wearing a grounded wrist strap or by grounding through footwear to the floor.

ESD Control Through Common Point Ground

Arlink work surfaces are manufactured with a certain amount of conductivity. This controls the discharge of any charged conductor brought to the workstation. A ground bolt through the work surface makes contact with the conductive layer of the laminate providing a path to ground.

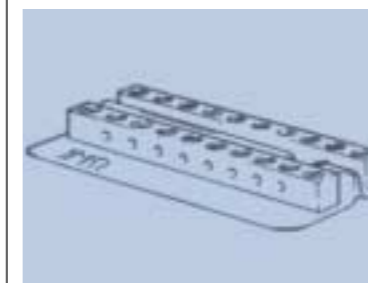
For users of work surface materials that handle very sensitive ESD devices, it is recommended that a soft work surface material be used in conjunction with a dissipative laminate. Each workstation should include a two part ESD ground block. The two parts of the ground block are interconnected either with a current limiting resistor to ground, or through direct connection to ESD ground.



Worksurface grounding kit

The ground block must be connected to the plant ESD ground. It is also important that the plant ESD ground is identical to the plant's electrical ground. The ESD ground must be separately connected to avoid an ESD disconnect when electrical maintenance work is being done.

From Arlink's extensive ESD product portfolio, technical staff can select and recommend appropriate products to evaluate and test, thus ensuring the correct selection for a particular ESD program.



Common ground block

Sales Performance Award Winners

Arlink is pleased to announce the winners of this year's sales awards. Our sales year coincides with our fiscal year which ended March 31. Awards are based on a combination of performance against predetermined sales goals and qualitative considerations such as teamwork, quality of communications, and other factors that contribute to customer satisfaction and the furthering of Arlink's business development.

Representative Of The Year
Assembly Products, Holliston, MA.
Distributor Of The Year -
PAC North, Hopkins, MN.
WOW! Project Of The Year
Tech-Ser, Irvine, CA.

Sales Achievement Award Performance to Goal
Contact East, North Andover, MA.

Winning organizations will receive a handsome award and will be hosted by Arlink at individual celebratory dinners to be scheduled at mutual convenience. Congratulations, and thanks, to these organizations and their hard working members for a job well done!



Project Focus - AMERICOM Wireless

Sometimes bad things happen to good phones and with the rapidly increasing use of cellular phones in our society, our general clumsiness when it comes to caring for such devices, and the constant upgrading that results from new technology, a booming business in wireless phone repair and service has been born. That's where companies like AMERICOM Wireless come in. AMERICOM, established in 1984, has locations in Texas, California, Maryland, and Kentucky, where broken, damaged and out-dated wireless handsets are repaired and/or upgraded.



Starting with AMERICOM'S facility in Texas, Arlink has worked closely with AMERICOM to layout and specify production cells for all their facilities using an architect's CAD generated facilities drawings in combination with the Arlink Layout Assistant, our graphical design and presentation software. By importing AMERICOM'S CAD drawings into the Arlink Layout Assistant, Arlink was able to lay out all of AMERICOM'S facilities outside of Texas without ever having to visit one of them. A complete floor layout was then e-mailed back to AMERICOM, along with detailed workstation drawings, for review and approval. Orders were placed and product shipped in a fraction of the time typical of these types of projects saving AMERICOM executives valuable time in the planning and procurement cycle.

As part of Arlink's turnkey solution, installation services at each AMERICOM facility were provided by Crenshaw Interiors, a certified Arlink installation company. Since Arlink products can be assembled and installed much faster than other workstation offerings on the market today, AMERICOM not only saved thousands of dollars of installation cost, but was up and operating faster than would have been possible if another workstation supplier was selected.

Bringing additional capacity online faster translates directly to dollars on the bottom line and an accelerated return on investment for AMERICOM. Glenn Lesley, Vice President of Operations at AMERICOM said, "Partnering with Arlink enabled our organization to move into a work cell environment, increase flexibility and add capacity in a much shorter period of time."

Whether your company or project is large or small, single site or multiple site, domestic or international, you can also benefit from Arlink's product and service advantages.



The recently released Arlink Product Brochure was a Bronze winner at the Advertising & Creative Excellence Awards. The new design is used throughout the brochure which provides for a general view of the Arlink lines: AGILE Workstation Systems, Mobile Stations, Adjustable Height Platforms and Vertical Space Integrators; with accessories.



Staff Changes

Jim Daly

New to Arlink, Jim assumes the role of Regional Manager, Eastern USA, previously held by David Low. Jim has over 25 years experience in the technical furnishings industry in sales, product marketing, and operations. Jim is located in Holden, Massachusetts.

David Low

David, a 14-year veteran with Arlink, moves into the newly created position of Business Development Manager. In this role, David will pioneer Arlink sales efforts in high potential markets where Arlink has previously not had a presence.

Anna Berg

Anna is also new to Arlink, and will provide sales support to Representatives in Asia. A graduate of Cornell University's Business Management and Marketing program, Anna will operate from the state of Alaska. Anna's day will partially overlap with that of our representatives in Asia, as well as with Arlink, providing an effective real-time bridge between the markets and the manufacturer.



Jim Daly



David Low



Anna Berg

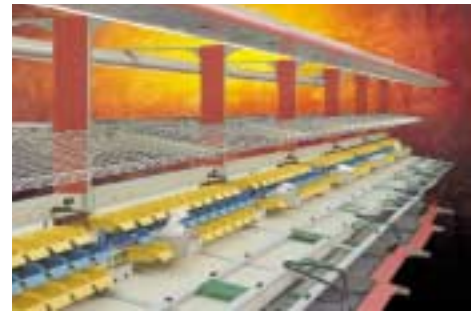
New Reps and Distributors

Production Technologies, Inc. (CO, UT, WY)
Hub Material Company (MA)
Tristate (MD)
Wassco (CA)

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Most work can be done without any tools or hardware involved, so it's easy, fast, and painless. It also means that, regardless of the physical characteristics of the workforce, our products can easily adjust to the person at the workstation, ensuring maximum productivity and minimum strain or discomfort when working at the station.



To easily make changes to production processes and plant layouts demanded by frequent new product or process introductions, you need to plan ahead, and you need to plan for what can not be planned for! A factory full of workbenches not easily disassembled or re-arranged will be a barrier to improvement. An organization and processes designed to anticipate and respond to rapidly changing market requirements is essential. Companies that change slowly often do so only because the tools they use simply won't allow them to change quickly.

In the magazine Business 2.0, an article on key drivers in our new economy asserts that "Accelerated change adopters hold the edge". It goes on to say "Companies that can readily break down and reconstruct their products and processes will be the front runners." Long before the issue of change was so prevalent in our daily life, Arlink products were positioned to make accommodating change simple and fast. This remains a key design principle at Arlink. It's gratifying to be able to provide a product to industry that is so universally needed and easily justified. What changes are coming your way? Don't know? Don't worry. Give us a call!