

AECINews



Christmas Greeting

Presidents Christmas Message

We have come to the end of another year and I want to take this opportunity to wish all A.E.C.I. members and supporters a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a very successful and prosperous 2005.

2004 was a year when the A.E.C.I. began to improve its image within the Contracting Industry: Increased Training Programmes, particularly in the area of pricing. It was encouraging for us to get feedback from the contractors and to know that we have made a difference to their business, which results in higher profit margins.

The A.G.M. held in Limerick in April was well attended and the discussion and ideas generated were positive and helpful. The Executive Council will endeavour to tackle these issues in the coming year.

The Conference held in Killarney was an outstanding success. One of the highlights of the weekend was the Trade Show, which attracted more than forty exhibitors and over 500 visitors.

We will continue to improve services to our members during 2005:

We are actively seeking new ways to help members in the coming year. The Executive Council would welcome any suggestions or comments which might assist us to improve our service to you.

In January, we will begin our programme of Information Meetings which will be delivered nationwide. It is hoped that these meetings will provide information and assistance to all electrical contractors and inform both members and potential members of the benefits of belonging to the A.E.C.I. Our aim is not only to provide excellent, professional service to members, but also to be seen to do so. Our Education Programme will also be available in January 2005. We plan to add and improve our range of courses which will be even more beneficial to the members.

Our A.G.M. will take place on 23rd April and the Annual Conference will run from the 27th to the 29th May. Both will be held in the beautiful new Radisson SAS in Athlone and we hope will be even more successful than last year.

Once again, on behalf of the Executive Council and the office staff, I offer you seasons' greetings and look forward to working with and assisting you in 2005.

Jack
Jack Hegarty
President AECI



WEEE DIRECTIVE

A forum on the Waste Electrical and Equipment Directive was held in the City West Hotel on 25th November 2004. It was attended by more than 200 delegates representing industry, state and semi-state organizations and private companies who have a vested interest in this area.

From the electrical contractors' perspective, it seems to have been more questions than answers raised, which was particularly disappointing. The exact responsibility of the Electrical Contractor relating to electrical waste has not been clearly identified. In order to clarify the situation regarding electrical contractors, a working committee consisting of the E.I.F.I., A.E.C.I., A.E.W. (Association of Electrical Wholesalers) and the EMDA (Electrical Manufacturers and Distributors of Ireland) will be formed immediately.

We will inform you fully when we have more information.



A series of meetings have taken place between the President of the A.E.C.I., Mr. Jack Hegarty, and the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mr. Michael Martin, where various issues relating to the Electrical Contracting Industry were discussed at length. Among the issues dealt with were the role and importance of the Industry in sustaining economic growth and the problems facing electrical contractors in their everyday businesses.

The meetings are being held on an ongoing basis and we're expecting that, as a result of these meetings the trading conditions of electrical contractors will improve significantly

The Minister is very interested in furthering our relationship and has kindly accepted our invitation to be the key note speaker at next years Annual Conference in the Radisson SAS Hotel in Athlone on 27th-29th May 2005.

- Project Planning and Site Management
- Managing Insurance
- Disciplinary Procedures and the Electrical Contractor
- Tax matters and the Electrical Contractor
- Effective Manager Skills for the Electrical Contractor
- Health and Safety and the Electrical Contractor
- Manual Handling
- Safe Pass
- Leadership, Communication and Motivation Skills for the Electrical Contractor.

Our programmes are delivered by qualified, experienced lecturers. Our class sizes are economic and our prices are substantially lower than all other training institutions.

Additionally, our programmes are renowned for their practical and hands-on content so that maximum learning capability is facilitated. We have a wealth of experience of training and development in the Electrical Contracting Industry in all sizes of organisations, so whatever you need, just contact us. For a comprehensive list of all Training and Development programmes offered by the A.E.C.I. and for full details contact us at 1800 671 671 or visit our website at www.aeci.ie

CER

The new CER Criteria regulating the Electrical Contracting Industry, was launched on 23rd September. The aim of this scheme is to increase the quality and safety of electrical work and to ensure standards are applied consistently across the industry.

The Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Mr. Dermot Ahern is committed to introducing legislation which will require all electrical contractors to be registered with a regulatory body.

The majority of the criteria relate to manner in which the Regulatory Bodies operate. Working procedures and record keeping are specified in detail and regular audits will be conducted on the Regulatory Bodies by auditors appointed by CER and ESB Networks to ensure compliance with the criteria. Contractors may also be inspected on occasion.

The aim of this criteria is to reduce and eventually eliminate unqualified and uninsured persons from carrying out electrical work which may ultimately lead to safety issues. Only work certified by a regulatory body will be accepted by ESB Networks when providing a connection

The most important change to note is in relation to clause 15.3.5 which states "The Licensed Regulatory Bodies shall only provide a nationwide inspection service to non-registered contractors, who are competent persons and insured, at a common fee which appropriately reflects the cost of providing the service which will be approved by the CER." The post connection tests must also be checked by the inspector on a second visit.

Please also note carefully:

Competent Person - Must possess a technical qualification (such as a National Craft Cert) that is recognised by FETAC (Further Education & Training Awards Council). A registered Electrical Contractor should only employ competent persons to carry out electrical installation work.

Principle Duty Holder - The person appointed by the company to have responsibility for maintenance of the overall standard and quality of electrical installation work.

Qualified Supervisor - A competent person with specific responsibility on a day-to-day basis for the safety, technical standard and quality of electrical installation work. The person must be well versed in the inspection, testing, certification and reporting procedures for the range of electrical installation work undertaken and have successfully completed a recognised verification and certification course.

Test Instruments - All test instruments shall be calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. In the absence of such recommendations, the instruments shall be checked for accuracy annually. Records of all calibrations/annual checks of test instruments shall be maintained.

Temporary Supply - The regulatory bodies are responsible for checking that a permanent completion certificate has been issued for every installation for which a temporary supply certificate has been issued for connection from ESB Networks. If the permanent certificate has not been issued after six months, the Regulatory body will investigate the site.

Complaints Record - Contractors must keep a record of all complaints made by their customers relating to the electrical installation compliance with ETCI Wiring Rules and to make these records available to the Regulatory Body when requested. Corrective action must be taken where appropriate and the action taken must be

documented.

Post Connection Tests - The Regulatory Body are obliged by the criteria to verify that post connection tests have been carried out by the registered contractors. Inspectors will check that white copies of completion certificates in the contractors' book are signed for the post connection tests and that no yellow certificates, which should have been submitted to the customer, remain in the book. If it is found that this measure is not sufficient to satisfy the CER that post connection testing is done consistently, then further methods of verification will be introduced.

Clause 15.8.2 states "Contractors shall not under any circumstances sell or give completion certificates to anyone, including registered or non-registered contractors". The regulatory bodies have been instructed by the CER to take strong disciplinary action against any contractor who is found to be in breach of this clause.

A regulatory body must notify the other regulatory body and the DSO (ESB Networks) when a contractor has been suspended or had self certification rights withdrawn. A regulatory body shall not accept for membership any contractor who is subjected to disciplinary procedures by another regulatory body.

For more information and a copy of the new Criteria go to www.aeci.ie or the CER website www.cer.ie.

Employing a Foreign National

Work Permits

If the employee is from an EU or EEA (European Economic Area)* member state then NO work permit is required. If the employee is not from a EU or EEA member state, then he must have a work permit.

Applications by employer for a Work Permit to employ a Non-EEA National are available from head office or can be downloaded from the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment website www.entemp.ie.

Getting Employees Certified

In order for an employee to work in the Electrical Industry, their qualifications must be certified in this country. To do this:

Contact: National Qualifications of Ireland
5th Floor, Jervis House,
Jervis Street, Dublin 1
Tel: 01 887 1500
Fax: 01 887 1595

You need to have a copy of the employees certification/qualification from their country of origin and a copy of the syllabus from the course. These need to be translated into English if necessary.

* Members of EU/ EEA :Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, UK, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia

ESB

In recent months a closer relationship between ESB Networks and the A.E.C.I. has been developed. Regular meetings, at least six times per year, are planned and factors affecting the electrical contracting industry will be foremost on the agenda.

One of the issues presently under discussion is the difficulty in contacting local ESB Network Officers. We will soon be making available to our members, contact details for all local ESB Network Officers in your area.

As we have mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter, our Information Evenings will commence in Cork on January 31st and continue throughout the country in the early part of 2005. ESB Network Specialists will be speaking at these meetings and will be available to address Contractors problems and answer queries.

AGM 23rd APRIL 2005, RADISSON SAS HOTEL, ATHLONE
9:30AM

ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW - 27th-29th MAY
2005, RADISSON SAS, ATHLONE

Recruitment

In today's industry, businesses are growing and recruitment is becoming more of an everyday scenario. Recruitment involves attracting potentially employable candidates to apply for a vacancy. On the other hand, once you have applications, the next step is the effective selection of the right candidate to fill the post. Errors in this respect can be costly for the employer in terms of retention, training and even litigation.

Advertising

In order to attract candidates, correct advertising is paramount. Most newspapers have a recruitment sections in which ads can be easily placed. There are many recruitment sites on the Internet, such as www.monster.ie. Fás also have a recruitment website www.fas.ie/jbframe.htm. The A.E.C.I. have a page on our website www.aeci.ie/opportunities.html, where you can place adverts for electricians or search for electricians looking for employment. Ads should include a short description of the job and the level of experience needed, y other relevant information.

Plan

Before the interview process begins, draw up a clear and precise description of what the job entails. This description should include the number of hours worked, the purpose of the job, all the duties that have to be carried out and who the employee reports to.

A job specification should also be prepared. This should describe the attributes necessary from the applicant and should include such things as experience necessary,

training, education, qualifications, personal information and attitudes expected.

The Interview

When deciding to interview, some basic points should be kept in mind, including the need to:

Build a full picture of the candidate's work experience and the ability to do the job.

Identify strengths and weaknesses based on previous experience.

Understand the candidate's career objectives and expectations.

Understand how the candidate relates to other people.

Understand how the candidate would fit into the existing workforce.

Understand the candidate's ability to communicate.

Interview Dos:

- Plan the interview, format questions etc.
- Prepare the interview room in advance
- Avoid interruptions
- Ask all the candidates the same questions
- Read the letter of application and CV
- Allow sufficient time for interview
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner
- Be courteous
- Make notes to remind yourself of the candidates during the selection process

Don't:

- Arrive Late
- Dress inappropriately
- Discriminate on any grounds by asking inappropriate questions
- Allow any distractions or interruptions
- Make up you mind until the end of the interview

Selection

Make sure to check all the information gathered at the interview against the information supplied by the applicant. It is important that the information contained in the applicants C.V. agrees with what was discussed at the interview.

Reference

Check the references supplied. References can be a good guide to the ability, reliability and attitude of the applicant and could provide reasons for their suitability. All reference should be checked before hiring applicants.

Hiring

Once a successful candidate has been identified, an offer of employment should be prepared. All employees, apprentices and agency workers who have one months continuous service must be provided with a written statement of the main terms of employment within two months of commencement (one month if under 18 year of age).

Terms of employment forms are available from the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment website www.entemp.ie or from the A.E.C.I. head office.

AGM 23rd April



COMPUTER SAFETY

In November this year, a national computer security campaign makeITsecure.ie was launched by the minister of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources Noel Dempsey.

We have all seen and experienced the benefits of the internet; unlimited information, instant messages, buying and selling online, these have all become a part of our everyday lives. But as with all things, we must be aware of the risks, important data can be lost, privacy can be compromised resulting in personal information such as credit card details being accessed by third parties. Your PC can even be used without your knowledge and infect other computers. This new campaign aims to advise families and businesses how to protect themselves using simple uncomplicated measures.

Use up-to-date anti-virus software

A virus is a piece of programming code which is spread through:
The exchange of e-mail
The downloading of files from the internet
The introduction of an infected CD or floppy disk

The virus is often disguised as files which users unwittingly open, thereby infecting their computers. Once opened, the virus will often set about reproducing itself via the users' internet connection. When you open and run the infected program, you might not know you've contracted a virus. Your computer may slow down, stop running, crash and restart every few minutes. Sometimes it will attack the files you need to start up the computer, that when you press the power button, there is nothing but a black screen.

To combat this threat, install anti-virus software on your computer. Because new viruses are being continuously created, you will need to update the software regularly, most of which can be done on-line. You must also run regular virus scans to ensure that your computer stays virus free. The frequency of the scans will depend on the amount of time spent on-line.

Install an Internet Firewall onto your computer

An internet firewall separates your computer from the internet and is an effective defence against hackers and other intruders accessing your PC. They hide your computer's presence from other systems, prevent unauthorised access from external sources and keep tabs on network traffic across the firewall. This is especially important if you have a broadband connection as your computer is online for long periods of time. A firewall can be software, hardware, or a combination of both

UPDATING YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM

Hackers are continuously creating computer viruses that exploit vulnerabilities in your operating system and application software running on your computer. Your system vendor is regularly writing updates called patches to the software to remove these vulnerabilities and prevent viruses attacking.

It is recommended that you download these patches to keep the operating system up-to-date and therefore protected against these viruses.

If you are running Windows®, you can automate this process via a free service called Windows® Update. This will notify you and can automatically download patches as they become available.

A FEW SIMPLE GUIDELINES

Do not download any file unless you are certain of its legitimacy. Carefully read the disclaimers, Terms and Conditions and any warnings before downloading information from the Web.

Never provide your personal information in response to an unsolicited call, fax, e-mail or Internet advertisement.

Do not supply personal details via a link in an e-mail or Internet ad. If you do not initiate the communication, do not give out your confidential information, regardless of how legitimate or genuine these messages appear to be.

Adjust your Internet Explorer (Web Browser) security setting to a sufficiently high Level – the higher the security level, the lower the risk of Spyware (Software that monitors your activity on the Internet and may transmit that information to someone else. Can also gather information about e-mail addresses, passwords and credit card numbers. It may be downloaded onto your system without your knowledge.)

Use an up-to-date anti-spyware program to help detect and remove unwanted software.

For more information on any of these issues visit www.makeitsecure.ie

Revenue Approves "Small Benefit Exemption" Scheme

With Christmas Season fast-approaching, it is useful to note that under the Revenue Commissioners' approved "Small Benefit Exemption" scheme, employers can provide employees with a gift voucher up to the value of €100 per employee as a once-off benefit during the tax year completely exempt of PAYE and Employee and Employers PRSI.

There is no requirement to make a return to the Revenue Commissioners in relation to this benefit.

Annual Conference

Home Networks – The New Skill Set

Currently we are enjoying unprecedented growth in both the self build and volume residential markets. With the introduction of broadband and the government's intention to make it available to everybody that requests it by 2007 coupled with current trends by electronic manufactures – The Digital Age has truly arrived.

During 2004 developers have realized that to add value to developments they must offer internet access in all rooms as standard, effectively a home network. In some developments at the upper end of the market wiring is also being provided for lighting controls, multi-room audio systems, CCTV and home automation. This leads to installation opportunities for progressive electrical contractors not experienced since electricity itself was introduced.

There are many who believe the computer is going to move from the edge of the house to the centre. They see the PC as the king of the home of the future, a digital hub which will control and play music, video, photographs, television and the internet for the household.

The computer in some shape or form, whether it's the desktop, a laptop, notebook, media PC or PDA, or even a computer game box, is fast becoming as common around the home as other appliances like TV'S or Hi-Fi systems. Many homes already have two or more PCs already.


Gone are the days when the family PC took an honoured place in the corner of the den or study; now they are also in the kid's bedrooms, for homework as well as for games and music.

And on the horizon we have Hi-Fi with PC connections and new media streamers that will be able to serve music collections up to you wherever you are in the home.



Into this increasingly complex scene comes networking, a solution that delivers easy shared access to all household's IT resources, and a new level of family harmony! No more the happy frustration of waiting for the kid's home work to be done before you check your email.

A network will allow every computer in your home to access the Internet connection, printer and other resources. You will be able to open files on one machine from another and share storage devices such as hard drives or DVD-ROMs.

In order to pre-wire for a network a backbone wiring



Wireless Lighting Controls



Dealer training center at the Rako UK Headquarters

Scene Setting • Building Automation • Systems Integration • Whole House Control

- Dispense with the need for complex data cabling
- Discrete dimming modules reduce installation time and cost
- True distributed intelligence avoids data loss when using centralised processors
- Full integration between audio visual and security systems
- SMS text message control of lighting, curtains and blinds
- Comprehensive PC programming suite and IP PC interface
- Logic controller for automated scene selection
- Dimmers to suit all types of load; Tungsten, LY, Fluorescent, Cold Cathode, LED
- 0-10V, DALI, DMX control interfaces

"Available from all leading Wholesalers"

Avnet Technologies Ltd, John Walsh, jwalsh@avnet.ie, 01 8901430

infrastructure must be installed at the pre-wire stage. This simply involves installing a network outlet at any location you may want a phone, computer or TV with all cables being "home run" to a central panel.

It is advisable in the pre-wire stage to use coloured network cables (cat5e UTP) using different colours for each installed technology.

Any of the network outlets can easily be configured to provide any of the available services by simply moving one patch-cord from one area to another in the central cabinet.

In summary today's clients are requesting the installation of home networks as standard and in many cases other home technologies which offer the electrical contractor added business opportunities. These technologies all require the electrical contractor to attain new skill sets which with the right training and trading partners can differentiate them from their competition.

If you require any further information please contact John Walsh, Avnet Technologies Ltd, jwalsh@avnet.ie, 086 2537065, www.avnet.ie

Tax credit certificates for 2005

A full issue of tax credit certificates (TCC's) or tax deduction cards (TDC's), incorporating any changes introduced in the December 2004 Budget, will be sent to you for all your employees in January 2005.

Until you receive these post Budget TCC's or TDC's please operate your 2005 payroll as follows:

1. Carry forward the 2004 tax credits to 2005 for all your employees
2. Incorporate the tax credit changes (if any) as per the enclosed partial issue of employee TCC's or TDC's

Employers who receive their employee tax credits on disc or through the Revenue On-Line Service (ROS) will also receive a partial issue of tax credits (where necessary) and should carry forward the tax credit details from 2004 to 2005 for all other employees.

Completion of Forms P45 Cessation Certificate

Care should be taken in the completion of Forms P45 Cessation Certificates and all appropriate sections of the form should be completed in a legible manner, using black ink. This will reduce the necessity for Revenue offices to make contact with employers, to clarify or check data, etc.

P35 RETURN - 2004

Records to be kept and returned on P35 2004

1. Taxable Benefits

Section 6 of the Finance Act 2003 provided for the direct application of PAYE/PRSI and Health contribution to many of the benefits -in-kind provided by employers to their employees. This came into operation on 01 January 2004. The 2004 P35 return is the first P35 on which you will have to return details of the total value of Taxable Benefits provided by you throughout the year. It is one entry only and is a cumulative figure for all benefits provided for all employees. Your P35 declaration will look like this and the entry for taxable benefits must be made at G:

P35 RETURN - 2005

Records to be kept and returned on P35 2005

2. Pension Products

Section 86 of the Finance Act, 2004 provided that certain information, relating to pension contributions, should be returned by employers. The details required will refer to three main pension products and these are listed below. This information will be required to be returned in the 2005 P35 return. Employers need to be aware of this change to put procedures in place to ensure that recording of these details takes place throughout 2005. This will then facilitate employers to more easily complete the new form. The details required will be:

Retirement Benefits Scheme

1. No. of employees who contributed to retirement benefits schemes by way of deduction from payroll during the year.
2. The total amount contributed by your employees to retirement benefit schemes by way of deduction from payroll which qualify for tax relief.
3. No. of employees for whom you made contributions to retirement benefit schemes.
4. The total amount contributed by you to retirement benefits schemes on behalf of your employees during the year.

PRSA Products

5. No. of employees who contributed to PRSA products by way of deduction from payroll during the year.
6. The total amount contributed by your employees to PRSA products, by way of deduction from payroll during the year, which qualify for tax relief.
7. No. of employees for whom you made contributions to PRSA products during the year.
8. The total amount contributed by you on behalf of your employees to PRSA products during the year.

Retirement Annuity Contracts (RAC)

9. No. of employees who contributed to retirement annuity contracts by way of deduction from payroll during the year.
10. The total amount contributed by your employees to retirement annuity contracts by way of deductions from payroll during the year which qualify for tax relief.

Please complete below, detach and return

N.B. This declaration can only be used in respect of the employer named.

NAME: _____

REG. No: _____

YEAR END: **31 DEC** _____

NOTICE NO: _____

G _____, _____, _____ .00

I certify and declare that all particulars required to be entered by me in this return are fully and truly stated to the best of my knowledge and belief.

EMPLOYER'S SIGNATURE: _____

PHONE NO: _____ DATE: _____

Please do not fold or write or mark below this line.

A _____, _____, _____ .00

B _____, _____, _____ .00

C _____, _____, _____ .00

D _____, _____, _____ .00

E _____, _____, _____ .00

F _____, _____, _____ .00

P35 A

90 7 104 93 288444 71

AECI INFORMATION EVENINGS

Our Information Evening programme will commence on 31st January. These meetings are a must for all Electrical Contractors. There will be a host of information, advice, education and tips available in all areas of your business including Insurance, ESB, Regulations, Accountancy and Taxation problems. Technical advice, ways to improve profitability, New Products etc. will all be discussed in detail. It will be an open forum, allowing for specific problems to be answered and debated.

The Programme dates are as follows:

Cork	Monday 31st January - Rochestown Park Hotel	- 5:30pm
Waterford	Tuesday 1st February - Granville Hotel	- 5:30pm
Limerick	Wednesday 2nd February - Radisson SAS Hotel	- 5:30pm
Galway	Thursday 3rd February - Menlo Park Hotel	- 5:30pm

The following week the meetings will be held in Navan, Dublin (North & South) and Dundalk and will continue with Killarney, Ennis, Sligo, Cavan, Letterkenny and Kildare before the end of February.

It is important that you attend the meeting in your local area as the topics discussed will have an impact on your business. Good attendance is also important because we need to know how best to serve our members and contractors in general.

These meetings are completely free and refreshments will be served on the evening.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

As you may be aware, our 2004 Education Programme was a great success and proved to be of major benefit to the electrical contractors who attended nationwide. We have had many queries from members and non-members alike as to when the 2005 programmes will commence.

We are delighted to announce that the 2005 programme of lectures will commence in early February and we plan to programmes running in all areas throughout the year. This year's programme, combined with our "Charge-Out Rate" and "Tender Estimating" programme, will be accompanied by several new modules which will assist in the smooth and profitable running of your business.

One such programme is our Management/Foreman/ Supervisory Development Programme. This series is grant aided by Fás (the fee includes the grant aid and no application to Fás is required). It covers all skills that a successful manager needs to carry out his/her function including:

- Defining his/her role
- How to get the best out of individual or group of workers
- How to keep tabs on work content, quality of workmanship
- Control of work
- Health & Safety

It will also focus on aspects of dealing and communicating with customers in an effective manner and will cover, in detail, aspects relating to accounts, budgets, costs and stock control. This programme is very cost effective and will benefit all contractors, whether sole traders or those employing numerous staff. Exact details and locations will be advised in early January

ESB NETWORKS

Market Opening

The Commission for Energy Regulation - CER and Government have set the 19th of Feb 2005 as the date for the full opening of the electricity market to competition.

Market opening for ESB Networks means liberalisation of electricity supply whereby all Customers have the right to choose their supplier in a competitive market. This means that new systems and procedures will be introduced to enable the market to operate. ESB Networks will perform a number of roles and services in the open market:

- Distribution System Operator (DSO)
- Meter Operator (MO)
- Meter Registration System Operator (MRSO)
- Data Collector (DC)

Acting in these roles ESB Networks will provide services to all Suppliers and end Customers on a non discriminatory basis. All Suppliers including ESB Customer Supply will be treated on the same basis.

The next newsletter will include a briefing on any issues the opening of the electricity market will have for electrical contractors.

CCTV – OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

Why use Closed Circuit Television?

For many years CCTV has been successful and cost effective in the delay, deterrent and detection of crime. Developments in the general quality of cameras and associated equipment and reduction in the cost of these products has made these benefits increasingly available to businesses.

Why use Digital Recording instead of Tapes?

One of the biggest changes in the CCTV industry in recent years has been the development of digital recording. Digital recording was until recently cost prohibitive and technically impractical for use in “everyday” systems. However, technology has moved on and costs have dropped and digital systems are now commonplace.

Previously the most common method of viewing and recording was the use of a Video Multiplexer together with a Video Cassette Recorder (VCR).

What are benefits of a digital system as against a VCR system?

- ◆ Most digital systems provide far higher resolution pictures than a typical multiplexer/tape system. This is true in both live and, more importantly, in playback.
- ◆ A further critical advantage is that the digital recorder will continue to provide high resolution pictures, regardless of the amount of use, without any deterioration in quality. Without continued servicing of the VCR and replacement of tapes on a regular basis, the images on such a system will deteriorate.
- ◆ One of the most frustrating and time-consuming aspects of recording onto tape is searching for information. Digital systems differ from each other but generally speaking by putting in a time and date and pressing “search” the information will be on screen in seconds.
- ◆ With tapes, to save a month will mean storing thirty-one tapes on a shelf. With a good quality digital system a month and more can be stored internally on the hard drive of the machine. A good quality system will allow further drives to be added when required. As an option these drives can be removed and stored. This means that virtually any length of time can be saved. This may be particularly important in litigation cases, where cases are brought months after the claimed incident.
- ◆ Other benefits include multi-level security to prevent unauthorised use, the ability to dial-in on a standard telephone line from anywhere and view live or recorded images and in built motion detection.

In summary a good quality digital recorder should provide high quality images, adequate length of recording and simple and quick retrieval of those images.

Are all Digital Recorders the Same?

NO! There can be vast differences in general features and in particular image quality, storage ability, search facilities and ease of use. The best recorders provide the following:

- ◆ 4,8,16, 32 and 64 camera inputs
- ◆ All cameras viewed live on screen
- ◆ A range of easy to use search facilities
- ◆ High resolution recording and playback (up to 25 frames per second real-time recording per camera)
- ◆ At least one month of recording guaranteed as standard, while still providing high quality images, with option for longer recordings if needed
- ◆ In built CD writer as standard to allow incidents to be copied. These images can then be reviewed on any PC. No special software is required
- ◆ In built motion detection: If movement is detected in a specific area, the unit will save these images separately for review later
- ◆ Alarm recording: The system will increase the recording rate when an alarm is detected
- ◆ Hidden Camera: If you do not want certain cameras to be viewed they can be simply hidden from view on the monitor but will continue to be recorded. These images can be accessed by password.

As an installer it is important to choose a system which meets many of the features mentioned above. Equally important is that the system is proven and reliable, offers good warranties and is supported locally.

There are many low cost systems which will offer short term profits but little else. Repeat business from a happy customer will be more profitable in the long run!

This is an abridged version. For the complete text go to www.aeci.ie

Industry Leading Digital Video Recorder



- 4, 8, 16, 32 & 64 Channel Recorder.
- Real- Time Display.
- High Resolution Recording (200FPS).
- 6 User Friendly SMART Searches.
- Motion Detection.
- Remote Viewing & Control via standard telephone line (ISDN, PSTN), Broadband & Network.
- Full Dome Control.
- Multi-Site Software.
- Excellent Reliability.
- Full Sales & Technical Support based in Ireland.

AS CHOSEN BY MANY IRISH LEADING CUSTOMERS

Supplied by: Bond Ltd., Airport East Business & Technology Park, Cork. Tel: 021-4323070 Fax: 021-4323027
E-mail: info@bondsecurit.com Website: www.bondsecurit.com

Contractual Matter

Did you know that 2 rates of VAT can apply to electrical work?

It was highlighted during our contractual lecture programmes that some contractors were under the impression that all electrical work is liable for VAT @ 13.5%. It is important to be aware that there are particular situations where electrical work is liable for VAT @ 21%.

2 situations where electrical work is liable for 21% VAT are:

- ◆ “TWO THIRDS RULE”
- ◆ FITTINGS (Supply, or Supply & Fit)

Contractors who fail to apply the appropriate VAT rates may be exposed to the application of penalties by Revenue Commissioners.

Details of the relevant VAT rates, and other revenue issues, can be sourced from Revenue web site, www.revenue.ie under “Tax & Duty”. It is important to be aware of the definition of fittings & fixtures as different VAT rates apply. Revenue identifies FIRE ALARMS as “alarms including smoke detectors” screwed to walls or ceilings do NOT qualify for 13.5% VAT rate.

It would be advisable to show the amounts liable for VAT at both 13.5% & 21% in quotations and tenders otherwise you may encounter difficulty in securing payment of 21% on invoicing.