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## ARGUS ADVISOR

Information for Argus Control System Owners

Over the last year we have gained many new customers and helped existing customers move forward with expansions, renovations and upgrades. The strength of our Titan platform has allowed us to expand sales in the face of a weak economy.

This newsletter is a brief update on recent developments at Argus and our plans for 2011 and beyond. If this looks a bit like a sales pitch, it is.

We are proud of our technical advancements and want to share them with you. As a technology company, we firmly believe that our systems can help you maintain your competitive edge by increasing your productivity and control efficiency.

We also want to reaffirm our commitment to provide you with the very best control technology for your enterprise.

Here's wishing you every success for 2011 and many thanks for your continued business.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alec Mackenzie".

Alec Mackenzie

### Argus 2010 Developments

Our intensive R&D efforts continued to deliver results, with significant advancements in irrigation and nutrient control capabilities, as well as a number of other enhancements to our control firmware and the development tools we use to create advanced control applications.

The Argus Titan system hardware continues to mature after a few years of successful field deployment. We implemented further design improvements to ensure the system will operate reliably even in very harsh electrical and environmental conditions. This includes enhancements to existing hardware and the addition of several new system components to provide superior electrical isolation, electrical noise immunity, and lightning protection. We are applying a multilayered approach, starting with built-in protection for all core hardware components, augmented by an array of separate protection devices that can be added incrementally according to the risks at each location.



*New Developments for 2011 on page 2...*

# Take Control With Argus

## Coming in 2011

### Ethernet-Capable Controllers

In the coming year we plan to introduce Titan Controllers with Ethernet connections in addition to our standard two-wire communications network. This Ethernet connection can be used for faster communications between the Argus Control system and the Argus Access Point PC, or as a “bridge” to connect smaller Argus Network ‘domains’ into larger control systems, allowing unified system management of very large control systems with no loss of speed.

Ethernet support will also allow us to use wireless communication links in the (rare) instances where site conditions prevent portions of the control network from being linked by cable. Wireless connections are generally less reliable, more difficult to trouble-shoot and more expensive than hard-wired connections, so we expect this feature to see only limited use.

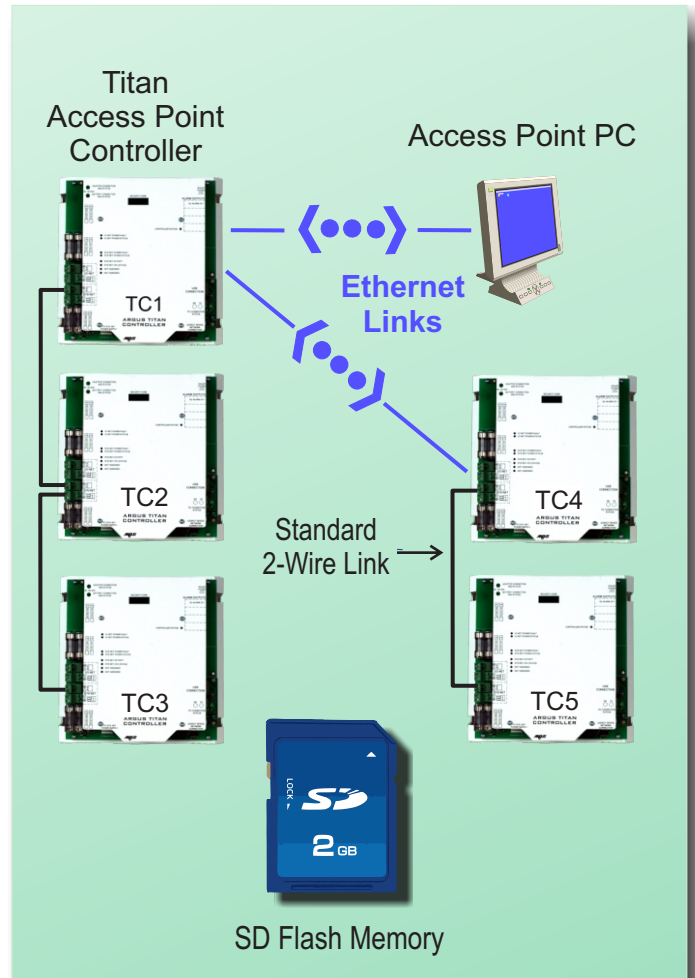
We are also adding removable, high capacity flash memory to these new Titan Controllers to simplify and accelerate firmware updates, facilitate controller board replacement and greatly increase on-board data storage, making data recording much less dependent on the operation of the Titan Access Point PC.

### System Management

We are developing an expanded alarm annunciation and reporting system that includes fault tolerant email and phone messaging alerts. While these alerts are not intended to completely replace standard (and more reliable) alarm annunciation methods, they can provide timely customized reports from your control system. These messages will be user customizable so that your alerts and messages will contain information that is most important to you.

### New Omni-Sensor Options

We will be introducing new versions of the Titan Omni-Sensor for temperature-only or temperature and humidity-only applications. These will be lower cost options for those who want the convenience and accuracy of the Titan Omni sensor but can't justify the additional cost of the full featured versions. These new versions will not have a local display, light sensor, or CO<sub>2</sub> option, but they will have the same 2-wire digital communications connection, making future upgrades a simple module replacement.



## Remote Camera Monitoring

Many growers already use time-stamped imagery to monitor crop timing and quality. This was traditionally accomplished by using standard photography tools. As remotely monitored digital camera systems continue to improve in quality while coming down in price, they are becoming increasingly suitable for this application.



For more than 15 years, the Argus system has supported digital image display in all user windows. This powerful tool was missing one thing: the ability to automatically refresh these images.

We are now developing a utility that will import and manage real-time images from third party remote camera monitoring programs.

### NEW! Argus Operator Program

New versions of the Argus Operator Program are now available for both Titan and Argus Classic systems. They are optimized for running on Windows 7® PCs and include an updated 'Autorun' feature and the new Argus **Backup and Restore** utility. **Version 700** of the Argus Operator program is available for Titan systems, and **Version 70** is for Argus Classic. For more information please contact Argus.

## We Aim to be the Best

We designed the Titan system to meet the present and future control challenges of protected horticulture and other advanced bio-climates. We are able to serve a diverse range of customers with constantly evolving requirements by using a suite of flexible and powerful control 'building blocks' to quickly configure customer control applications of almost any complexity. This strategy has enabled us to develop powerful control solutions for some of the most advanced horticulture facilities in the world.

The Titan system is capable of true process control functions, making it ideal for many monitoring and control applications that are not typically found in other environmental control systems. This includes all types of water management and treatment, heat buffering, alternate energy integration, positive pressure control, and a host of other applications. We offer advanced capabilities and features that enable us to routinely solve some of the toughest, most complex control problems in the industry.

Even if your control requirements are straightforward, there are plenty of reasons to consider a Titan system. The reliability and granular architecture of the system makes it a cost effective solution for highly repetitive applications. Our alarm monitoring and data recording capabilities are without equal, alerting you to the earliest signs of problems and providing valuable feedback information for management decisions. It's also reassuring to know that when a tough control problem does emerge, we have your back.

Argus continues to lead where it counts: in computing power, measurement accuracy and resolution, versatility, options, reliability, economy, service and support. The Titan system has a carefully planned upgrade and expansion path, extreme versatility and huge data recording capacity, all designed to support your future requirements. We seldom, if ever, have to say 'No, we can't do it your way'.

We welcome your monitoring and control challenges. Please call us anytime to discuss your control needs!

## Buying Used Argus Equipment

We are occasionally contacted by someone who has inherited an Argus system as part of the purchase of an existing facility, or by someone who has obtained Argus parts from a dismantled facility. Briefly, here is our policy for licensing and supporting these used systems.

Argus has a very generous customer support policy but it is carefully constrained within the terms of the original sales agreement. We provide remote support to the original purchaser (license holder) for the Argus Control System in its purchased configuration. This policy recognizes that you are buying an integrated solution rather than simple components or software.

We align our factory support with your application, going well beyond simple support for the Argus supplied components and programs. As such, we often assist with issues related to your controlled equipment and processes rather than the control system itself. The quality and efficiency of this support depends, in part, on the strong working relationships we develop with most Argus users.

Although this level of support is limited to the original purchaser, we often negotiate an extension to a new owner as part of a new site license agreement, or a site license transfer if the system remains intact at its original location. Fees may apply for a license transfer or a new license agreement. Training, re-configuration, equipment refurbishing and other Argus services may also be required, depending on the specific requirements of the new owner.

Whether you are buying a new or used system, we want you to get the most value possible from your Argus system. If you are considering the purchase of an existing Argus system or parts, please call us **before you buy** so that we can help you review your control requirements and options.



### Valuing Dismantled Argus System Parts

A substantial portion of the total cost of an Argus system is in the installation, custom system configuration, and application support. A dismantled system has lost all that value. Additionally, control system hardware has an operational life of around 25 years and may become obsolete in a shorter period of time, further reducing the residual equipment value. Many sensors have shorter lives and may require calibration checks to ensure proper operation.

Why go to all the effort and cost of reconfiguring and installing old hardware if it is of little residual value? If you are planning to purchase a dismantled Argus system or miscellaneous parts that may require considerable Factory refurbishing, re-programming, and operator training before you can use them, please keep in mind that we must reasonably charge for these services.