

**ELECTRONIC
SYSTEMS INC.**

LEGENDARY SERVICE
INTEGRITY, RESPONSIVENESS, & FLEXIBILITY

WWW.ELECTRONICSI.COM • SPRING 2020

40 YEARS AND COUNTING

By Gary Larson, President, glarson@electronicsi.com

“...with ESI’s production capability we are able to offer our products ... at a price point that makes us very competitive.”

— Operations Manager
Industrial Controls Company



If I’ve learned one thing during my years at Electronic Systems, Inc. (ESI), it’s that you don’t obtain success on your own. I am proud that this May, ESI will have weathered the ups and downs of the

EMS industry for 40 years — and we’re still standing strong. There are not many EMS providers who can make that claim, but we can and are proud of that fact.

True, ESI stands on a solid foundation. Our core set of values (integrity, responsiveness and flexibility) results in the “legendary service” brand that defines us.

There’s something more, though. We’ve come to understand the importance of relationships with our customers, suppliers and employees. If those relationships aren’t nurtured, if they don’t coalesce around similar values and culture, then ESI would not be celebrating four decades of business. Our company may have a solid foundation, but the strong partnerships we have built with quality customers, suppliers and employees are the nails that hold the walls of this business together.

Recently, a supplier was introducing me to another potential source. It was humbling to hear him say, “You don’t do business with ESI because you have to, but because you want to.”

There’s a huge trust factor in this business. After all, we’re putting our customer’s name on a product that we’ve manufactured for them. We also need to trust that our suppliers and employees are working toward the same goal: helping us manufacture a high-quality product at a competitive price in a reasonable timeline.

If you don’t have good relationships with your partners, your business is pretty fragile. Basing your business model on transactions isn’t a healthy long-term plan. Basing your business model on providing legendary service with people you trust makes much more sense. It has certainly worked for us.

ESI will be celebrating our 40th anniversary sometime mid-year. We invite you to keep checking our Electronic Systems, Inc. Facebook and LinkedIn page for updates. ◆

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1980-2020
40 YEARS OF LEGENDARY SERVICE
ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS, INC.

WORKING SIDE BY SIDE WITH COBOT

A new partnership between human and machine is developing on the production floor of ESI's Building #3. Early in 2020, ESI's very first collaborative robot — cobot for short — went into operation. Its current assignment: to inspect final assemblies and free operators to perform less tedious and higher-functioning tasks.

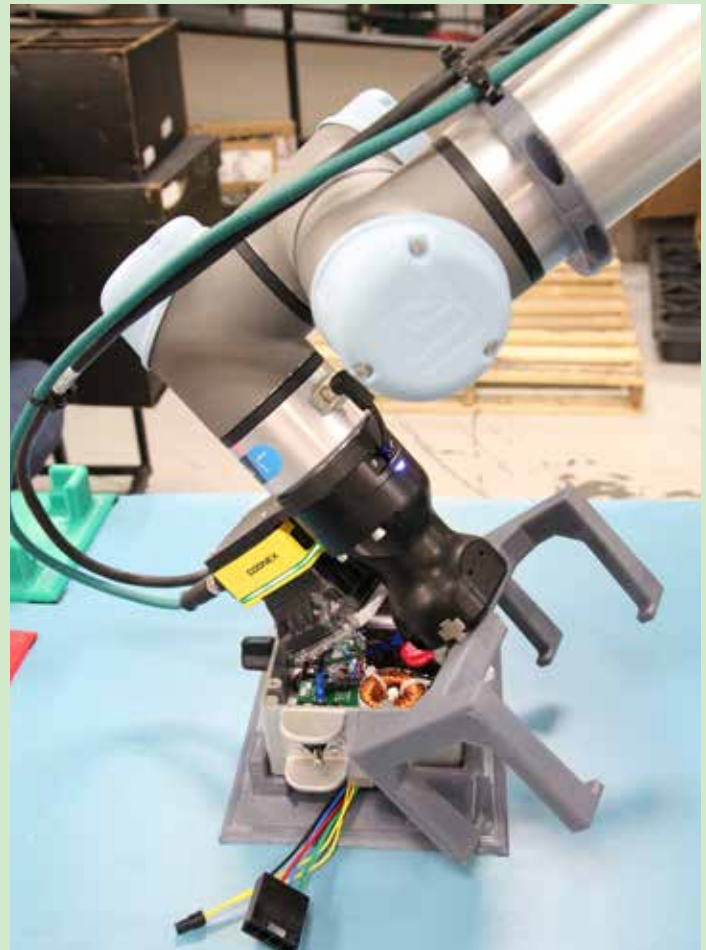
Unlike earlier autonomous robots that were not conducive safety-wise to work alongside people, cobots are designed to be safe to operate near and among people. "They operate at a lower speed and have safety features built in," says ESI Manufacturing Engineer Hans Haase. "If something bumps it, it will stop."

Not only is the cobot safe, but it can handle tasks that, when done by people, can lead to repetitive motion injuries. It also can free our associates to handle more valued-add, interesting and thought-provoking tasks.

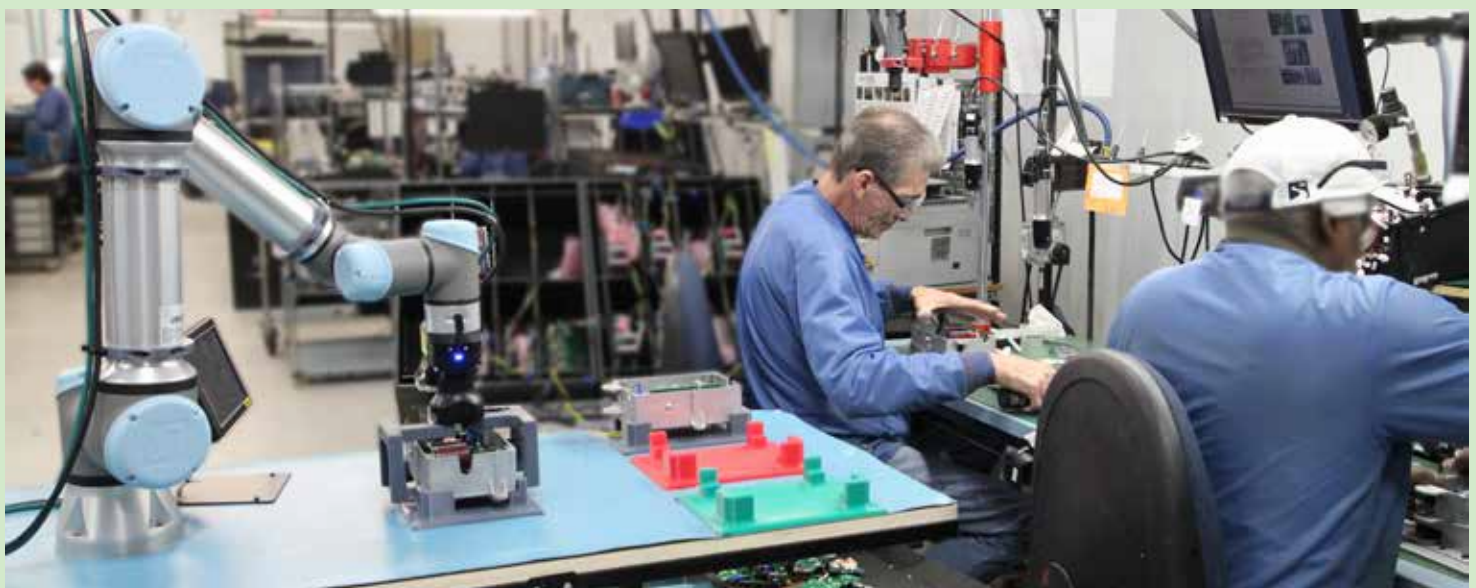
This first experience with a cobot, he adds, is an opportunity to get people more comfortable with working beside the equipment. "Employees often think robots will replace their jobs," says Hans. "That's not even close to what we're looking to do. We want to utilize the robot to help our people be more efficient and enjoy their work more — shifting the tasks that they don't like to do to the robot, and giving them more opportunities to do what they enjoy doing."

The Universal Robot 5 (UR5), equipped with a Cognex camera, visually inspects the final assembly, checking everything from wire connections to labels, and taking photographs that can be reviewed by the operator. "We're currently using this in a high-volume series of assemblies that operators are running all day every day," explains Hans. "Using the cobot allows us to shift some of the weight of the inspection process off of them to let them focus more on the electrical functional test. We're just scratching the surface as to what these can do."

"The operators have been very receptive to it," says Hans. "And it's been extraordinarily easy to work with and reliable. It's all part of ESI's commitment to keep up with technology." ♦



The UR5 positions the Cognex camera to photograph all parts of the final assembly during the inspection process.



ESI's new cobot shares workspace and tasks with our associates in final inspection of assemblies for a high-volume build.

MEET JENNY VAVRA: A PERFECT FIT

For someone who liked math and science growing up, engineering seemed a natural choice for Jenny Vavra. Jenny, who grew up in Hoven, a small town in north central South Dakota, narrowed her field even more when she headed to the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

“Industrial engineering seemed more ‘people engineering,’ dealing with process and process control,” she says, “and that was more up my ally than cranking numbers out all the time.”

Today, as ESI’s senior program manager, Jenny has found a comfortable fit — giving her a space in which to combine her interest in engineering and people. Joining the ESI team in the fall of 2019, her skill set is enriched with a career that has encompassed everything from creating efficient driving routes for UPS to her role as quality manager with a large label manufacturing company.

“When I got this job I thought, ‘This is awesome,’” says Jenny. “It’s taking the things that I liked at my former jobs and put it all into a job of its own. It’s perfect for me.”

Today, she works with ESI customers, coordinating and directing activities associated with those customer’s products throughout the manufacturing process. There are timelines and challenges, but, she says, “I like that side of it — coming up with solutions. Maybe it’s my engineering background, but I enjoy taking the information I have, compiling it and making it easier for the

customer to understand in a quick and efficient manner. It’s all about making sure our customers are happy.”

Jenny says her engineering background also exhibits itself at home. That’s not surprising since her husband, Tim, is a fellow industrial engineer and vice president of manufacturing for another local company. The two met in college and have two daughters, ages 10 and 14. “My girls do load the dishwasher back to front,” says Jenny, laughing. “We do talk about assembly lines, and they definitely know what a bottleneck is.”

The girls are also involved in competitive soccer. “Yes, I’m a soccer mom,” she admits with an easy smile. The family travels to matches regularly — playing indoor soccer throughout the winter and outdoor in the summer.

Why soccer? “First, just for the exercise,” she explains. “But I also like what they learn: that they’re part of their team and they need to do their share, and that when they commit to something, they have to finish it and do it well.”

It’s a lesson this program manager brings to work with her every day. ♦



Q4 PREFERRED SUPPLIERS' LIST:

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Future Electronics Corp.
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Active Sales Associates, Inc.
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PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Anyone who runs a business understands it’s a big deal when people show up to work each and every day. That’s why, each year, ESI recognizes those associates who had perfect attendance. In 2019, more than 40 associates met that high standard (top photo, day shift; bottom photo, night shift). Congratulations everyone! For names of our associates who were honored, go to www.electronicssi.com, click on the News/Events link and look for *ESI Recognizes Perfect Attendance for 2019*. ♦





**ELECTRONIC
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ISO 13485:2016 Firm

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Details: <https://www.electroniccsi.com/news-events/>



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EXPERIENCE & RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

By Colin Sabby, Materials Manager, csabby@electroniccsi.com



Anytime a major news story breaks, especially one impacting the Asian Pacific Rim countries, we receive questions about if and how it is impacting supply management at ESI. That's the case with the recent outbreak of Covid-19, the coronavirus that has caused deaths, illness and quarantines, along with slowing the manufacture of electronic components.

The impact of the virus outbreak has certainly been felt in the electronic manufacturing industry which depends heavily on parts coming out of China. ESI is not immune, but an EMS company that's been in business for four decades has learned a thing or two about minimizing risk.

Over the past 40 years, ESI has weathered the impacts of tsunamis and earthquakes, political uncertainty, tariffs and disease

outbreaks like SARS and now Covid-19. In other words, lots of things can happen that impact supply chains. Challenges will always exist. The key is that with each challenge over the years we have learned ways to adapt. Every time there's a new obstacle it's been an opportunity to make sure our work processes are sound and improved.

We have learned that we can't have too much exposure or risk — and that partnering with suppliers who have risk mitigation plans in place is critical. Because of the way ESI does business, we build strong relationships with suppliers who have enough stock on hand to handle the challenges. We continue to grow our list of additional sources outside of China. In other words, ESI is always pushing to get better and to successfully navigate the sometimes-choppy waters involved in supply management. Experience matters and relationships matter. You can be confident that ESI has an abundance of both. ◆