

# CurrentAffairs

News and views from Ergo Consulting Ltd

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## Building Teams

Writing a feature article for Current Affairs never comes easy for me. It requires careful thought to determine a topic which is relevant, topical, and newsworthy. Based on these criteria, and as I reflect back over the last six months, the topic of 'teamwork' continually comes to the fore.



Consulting is a balancing act between sourcing work and ensuring there are the resources to deliver. Staff changes at Ergo over the past year posed some challenges in this regard, but I maintain it is our strong focus on teamwork that continues to be the heart of our success.

Ergo is made up of four distinct teams: Power, Control, CAD and Support Services. The goal is for each team to function well individually and also collectively as a company. I certainly am not claiming to be an expert, but I thought it was worth sharing what seems to work for us here at Ergo:

1. Define your Vision and promote strong value in it i.e. remember and reaffirm the 'main thing'.
2. Provide feedback regarding performance at both an individual and company level.
3. Develop leadership. This requires training and involvement in strategic planning.
4. Communicate. This does not always need to be a formal affair. It's about checking in with each other so we all stay on the same page.
5. Create an atmosphere of fun and success.
6. Undertake team building exercises. This can be as simple as regular morning teas together.
7. Take away the worry by providing the tools to do the job.
8. Hire the right people. Protect the team, be selective of who you let in - they have to fit.
9. Lead i.e. be positive; be supportive; encourage; be thankful and say it!
10. Continually explore ways for improvement.

We are not perfect and this will continue to be a growing process. However, because I have confidence in our teams, I am convinced our company is heading in the right direction.

**Nigel Stevenson**  
Director - Control Systems

## New @ Ergo

Ergo has four new staff members:

**Craig Brown** started in December, taking on the newly created role of Commercial Manager. Craig is working for Ergo on a contract basis, something he has done for numerous companies over the past twelve years. He has a strong background in financial control and systems analysis, and has been tasked with creating a five year strategic plan for the company.



*Craig Brown: Support Services*

**Sheldon Lin** joined Power Systems in December last year. He will graduate with a BE, (Hons) from the University of Auckland in May.



*Sheldon Lin: Power Systems*

**Raj Chand** joined Power Systems this March. Raj gained his CPEng status in 2012, and has experience in New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom in project & design management, protection & controls and business development.



*Raj Chand: Power Systems*

**Alex Soong** joined Control Systems in February this year as a senior engineer. He has extensive experience in water and wastewater in New Zealand and Malaysia.



*Alex Soong: Control Systems*

**ERGO**  
CONSULTING

**10<sup>th</sup>** Anniversary



Sam Hooper-Smith (Hawkins), Raj Valabh and Christopher Knight (both AWT)

## Ten Year Milestone

Ergo celebrated its 10th anniversary in November last year with a staff dinner at Euro and a client function at Urban Café.

At the client function Directors Chris and Nigel reflected on the past ten years of Ergo, crediting success to great relationships both within the company and with clients, as well as the Ergo team continuing to be passionate about what they do. Yet again Urban excelled with the tapas, and Great Little Vineyards with the wine. Ergo thanks everyone who was able to attend.



Nigel Stevenson (Ergo) and Steve Carne (GHD)



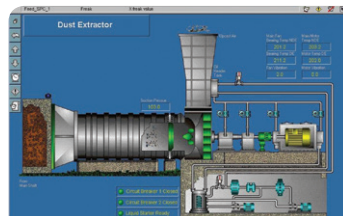
Chris Turney (Ergo) and Yaylene Tobeck (Alstom)

## Human Centred Design

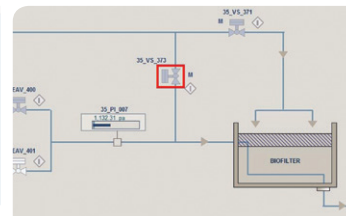
In this edition of Current Affairs Richie Murray highlights the emergence of Human Centred Design (HCD) as a recent trend in Control Systems design and implementation.

### What is HCD?

The HCD approach focuses on the human element, particularly the way operators access information from a control system. By emphatically displaying abnormalities and faults only, the aim is to better alert operators to their presence.



Traditional SCADA screen



HCD SCADA screen

### Managing complexity

Modern control systems can be extremely complex. As a result SCADA screens and switchboards have become increasingly cluttered. Competing colours and movements can make systems difficult to monitor, with critical information easily overlooked.

### HCD screens

The HCD approach removes all unnecessary colours, movements, and 3D graphics. HCD SCADA screens predominantly use neutral colours, such as greys and browns. Only abnormalities and faults are displayed in bright colours. This allows them to stand-out and quickly catch an operator's attention.

The HCD approach can also be applied to motor control centres. Debate has raged for years over what colour should indicate when a motor is running. In some industries red is used (to indicate danger) but green (like a traffic light) is used in others. Technically both approaches can be correct. However without a universally accepted colour code, the subjective interpretation of the operator comes into play. The HCD approach can help remove possible confusion.



Traditional switchboard motor starter



HCD switchboard motor starter

### Summary

Because HCD is new and quite alternative it may not be suitable for all applications. However it is worth considering for new plants and upgrades, particularly where processes are predominantly alarm-driven.

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