

Outlook

The more things change, the more they stay the same

Many of you know that the study of history is one of my passions. So, this year's calendar issue of *QwikConnect*, with its many fabulous pictures from the heyday of Southern California aerospace, is particularly enjoyable for me. And speaking of history, I would be remiss to not offer up a four-fingered salute to our cover model Chuck Yeager for his many contributions to our nation and industry during his momentous life as a United States Air Force officer, flying ace, and record-setting test pilot. General Yeager, who passed just this last year, served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, but of course is best known as the first aviator to travel up to and beyond the speed of sound.

Paging through the issue, I can't help but feel gobsmacked that so many of today's giants of aerospace were born right here in our Southern California backyard. Douglas Aircraft, Lockheed Vega, Northrop, Hughes, North American—they all got their start right here. And I would be willing to bet that the same core business principles that drove these original giants of aviation are driving their many successors here in the southland. What do I mean by that?

Only that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Especially when it comes to the aerospace industry's expectations for quality, responsiveness, product performance, and availability from its key partners and suppliers.

One of the things we pay unfailing attention to at Glenair is managing our customer service deliverables in accordance with the customer's own expectations and convenience. For example, we have made it a practice to never require dollar or quantity minimums for any product we sell. Why do we do that? No one could ever argue that selling single piece parts is convenient or efficient for Glenair. In fact, we would rather (like everyone else) sell handy quantities of bagged and tagged components—say 50 or 500 pieces at a time—than hassle with single piece orders. The reason we don't do that, plain and simple, is that it is inconvenient and expensive for our customers.

No organization building such complex equipment as airplanes can succeed by accepting poor-performing technologies, late orders, unresponsiveness, or any other such failings in customer service. Our product mix, as well as our people and production facilities, have undergone massive change over the past 65 years. We got our small start in one of the old Grand Central Terminal hangers right here on Air Way. Today we manufacture and assemble our interconnect solutions in over 2 million square feet of factory space and employ thousands of So-Cal residents. Despite all this change, we have never wavered from our commitment to "bow to the customer's convenience" in all our business practices. Like I said, the more things change, the more they stay the same. Especially here at Glenair.

Chris Toomey

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