

# Re: Arrow Electronics

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In article <pan.2007.03.24.20.52.23.781235@xxxxxxxxxxxx>, Rich Grise wrote:

On Sat, 24 Mar 2007 11:55:04 -0700, Richard Henry wrote:

On Mar 24, 8:57 am, David Leshar <wb8...@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

Dirk Bruere at NeoPax <dirk.bru...@xxxxxxxx> writes:

The distributors.

I have not come across a more useless bunch of wankers in the distribution business.

Me: Hi, do you have this part xxxx?

Them: Do you have an account?

Me: No, but if you have the part we will open an account to purchase.

Them: You need an account.

Me: I just need to know whether you stock the item.

Them: You need an account.

I used to have to spec parts from "Hamilton Have-Not"....

Salesdroid: "Oh yes, we have 128 of those in stock."

Moi: "Great; I'll be over to pick up 30..."

Salesdroid: "They're not here...they're in Dallas.."

Moi: "No problem; ship 30 here & I'll come pick them up - Tuesday?"

Salesdroid: "Err....."

By the time I left that assignment; even the procurement folks were using my version of their name...

I remember the good old days (81-3) when distributors really distributed things. There was one small disty (Kierrulf, I think) who

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shared our parking lot. And they had a will-call window. And we had an engineering account. Typical response time: get the Chief Engineer's secretary (the account was in his and her names) to call to confirm availability and place the order, then walk across the parking lot and pick up the parts.

And on the other side, there was a little beer, pool and burger joint where I got lunch several times a week for under \$5: Little Red special w/ cheese (1/4 lb burger with fries), plate of nachos and pitcher of beer (the nachos and beer split with a coworker). We went there so often that the waitress would just point at us, we would nod, and the pitcher and nachos would be right up.

Oh, the good ol' days! <Rich wipes away a small tear -;- > I once had an AMP rep hand me a \$250.00 or so crimper, just because he had it. Another time, I was teching at a place where they were using bleeding-edge ADCs and DACs, and there was a Burr-Brown rep there, and he handed me a couple of 12-bit ADCs, at a time when new ones were about \$25.

And you could call reps and ask about a part, and they'd say, "Want some samples?" and they'd show up the next day by priority mail or FedEx.

Sigh.

Oh boy!

Sometime in the early 1990's I got samples of InGaAlP LEDs in red, the usual reddish shade of "orange LED orange", and amberish yellow from HP, 6 each. They asked me my application – LED bicycle lights.

It should have been obvious that chances were high that no more than one bicycle was being outfitted with these.

So I mentioned some of these fairly favorably in my website (to this day), bought 100 of them later on from Newark, and later still when they were Agilent or Avago parts I bought maybe 60 more from DigiKey.

Nowadays, now that Digikey stocks them, I suspect that for sample quantities of at least some of these get some from DigiKey. Back in the early 1990's, purchase of these through distributors often involved a minimum order of 500 pieces – and I suspect a lead time close to a week-plus for many of these via backordering unless you pick a specific part popular enough for a distributor to stock bags of 500 of them. I was not able to buy 10 back then – for less than 500 all I could do was get 6 free samples! (It appears to me that 6 is or was a traditional free sample quantity for electronic components of cost in production quantities in cents rather than dollars.)

I feel that the mid 1980's were the crest of electronic product and

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component manufacturing in the USA, and that "fairly good times" in USA for electronics was from the beginning of "The Golden Age of Radio" (close to 1920) to whatever was the last year that Intel made most of its processors in the USA (I think late 1990's).

Even in mid-late 1980's electronic technicians often had to work for less than twice minimum wage, often less than 1.5 times minimum wage if there were benefits. (There were some notable exceptions of much better pay for technicians even then. Even in late 1980's top-5% of tech school graduates competed for those good jobs!)

Hour count in workweeks for engineers in this area since upticked – I have heard a few horror stories. Those looking to get into engineering jobs in this area – please check out risks of not getting time-and-a-half for working over 40 hours a week, or even being paid a salary by a time unit of at least a week while there is lack of upper limit of hours per pay period that you need to work to stay in good standing!

– Don Klipstein (don@xxxxxxxxx)

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