

OPTO 22 PRODUCT PHILOSOPHY: HERE TODAY, HERE TOMORROW

Introducing Opto 22 Products

In 1974, engineer Bob Engman started Opto 22 with just 22 products: optically isolated solid-state relays (SSRs) manufactured for better reliability using a new potting process he helped invent.

Today, more than 45 years later, the company still sells and supports all 22 of those original SSRs—plus [hundreds of other reliable products](#) for control, monitoring, data acquisition, and industrial internet of things (IIoT) applications.

Over these decades we've introduced products that helped usher in the future of industrial automation:

- In 1978 we developed digital I/O modules with plug-in racks for microprocessor-based control, introducing the red-black-yellow-white I/O module color-coding scheme that's still the standard today.
- In 1988 we designed the first graphical flowchart-based development environment for the PC, so control programs could be more easily developed.
- In 1998 we introduced the first commercial Ethernet-based I/O unit.
- In 2007 we brought automation into the 21st century with SNAP PACs (programmable automation controllers), with more capabilities than PLCs.
- In 2018 we built the world's first edge programmable industrial controller (EPIC), designed from the ground up for both real-time control and simplified IIoT data communication using standard internet protocols.

But during those 45+ years, we've also continued to manufacture and support our legacy products.

Why? Because they're still running—still doing the job in some dusty cabinet, like the 30-year-old SSR in the photo above—and customers all over the world still count on them.

How We're Different

In the automation field (as in many manufacturing fields), most companies introduce a product line, sell it for a few years, and then declare it obsolete. They may still support it for a while, but soon you can't buy replacements or new parts for adding onto your system, and the older products won't work with new ones. There's no path to upgrade and take advantage of new features. You're either stuck with the limited systems you have, or you tear them out, purchase and install new hardware, and begin all over.

We don't work that way.



After 30 years of service, this original "Optrol" SSR (left) manufactured by Opto 22 still passed all load tests for our newest SSRs (right).



groov EPIC System for IIoT and automation applications



We're engineers ourselves. We know what it's like to face this dilemma: to have an idea for a better process, see a new product that can do it, but not have the time or budget to replace a whole system.

So at Opto 22, **we design new products for the long term**, with features you'll need tomorrow and concern for what you're using today.

We provide upgrade paths, so your existing systems will work with new ones.

We keep building older products until we can no longer locate required components, and even after that we may re-engineer a product.

And we support all our products (for free) as long as you have them.

The Bottom Line

In practical terms, what does this product philosophy mean for you as a customer of Opto 22?

It means:

- You can still buy the [reliable SSRs](#) we've been manufacturing and improving since 1974.
- Current stock includes [G1 I/O](#) (introduced in 1978) and [G4 I/O](#) (from 1989), and you can still [contact Product Support](#) about your legacy [Optomux](#) and [mistic systems](#).
- If your obsolete B1 and B2 brains need replacing, it's OK. You can buy an [E1](#) or [E2 brain](#) as a drop-in replacement. We re-engineered these serial brains 15 years ago when we could no longer get parts, and for flexibility added Ethernet networking to the serial networking that was already there.
- The [SNAP PAC System](#), while an older product family than [groov EPIC](#), is not at all obsolete. If you don't need the newer capabilities of EPIC or just prefer to stick with PACs, the entire SNAP line of controllers, brains, accessories, and guaranteed-for-life I/O is available and ready. Add to the system you have or build a new one: field-proven SNAP is an excellent choice.
- You can take advantage of the integral touchscreen, modern ports and protocols, local processing power, data communications, and industrial specs of one of our latest products, [groov EPIC](#), for your IIoT or control application—and program it with a language you already know. And exchange data with legacy PLCs. And use it with the SNAP PACs you already have installed.

So rest easy. Whether you're looking for a product to take you to the next level of control and data communications, wanting a reliable automation system proven over many years, or just need a replacement SSR for that dusty one in the back closet, Opto 22 is the place to come.



Contact us

Pre-sales Engineering and Product Support are free, and our experienced engineers like to hear about your projects and help find the best solutions.

[Contact us today](#) with your questions or comments.