



# Centurion Systems: The Story so Far

Centurion Systems turns 28 this year, and we thought it might be fun to take a leisurely stroll down Memory Lane and reflect on some of the crowning achievements and benchmark moments that line the path of our almost three decade-long story.

**1986** A company is born. But not just any company, one that would go on to embody the very essence of the proud Roman warrior from which it borrows its name. With their sails to the wind, the journey is begun by Pat and Anne Dickens. Pat's main order of business during these early days is the sale and service of UPSs, with gate automation being done part-time with another great Roman warrior – Richard Rohman, that is.

**1987** As the old adage states, 'You just can't keep a good man down', and the same proves to be true about a good idea because, in 1987, Centurion Systems starts the manufacture of gate automation, with Richard Rohman joining full-time as Marketing Director. The first gate controller, the CP3-111 is sold with a ground-mounted rotary swing gate operator.

**1988** The first pedestal-mounted rotary swing gate operator – the AUTO MATE – is released.

**1989** The first sliding gate operator – SUPA SLIDA - is released. Pat and Co. Start spreading their wings and prove to the world that they are truly the Automatic Choice by starting to sell to other markets in South Africa.

**1990** A new decade heralds a new premises, with Centurion Systems renting a 200m<sup>2</sup> factory and 60m<sup>2</sup> office. 1990 also sees the launch of the AUTO MATE's big brother – the MAXI MATE – a rotary swing gate operator for light industrial applications.

**1991** A new addition to the Centurion Systems family comes in the form of Ian Tingle, who is tasked with

developing the production facility. He is now the Production Director. Not satisfied with just one new addition, Centurion Systems also introduces the entry level sliding gate operator known as the MINI SLIDA.

**1992** With innovation and technological advancement being the names of the game, Ian 'Roz' Rozowsky – now the R&D Director - joins Centurion Systems to head up product development. He proves to be invaluable as the first microprocessor-based controller for AC motors – the CP90 – is introduced.

**1993** The very first branch is opened in Pinetown, Kwazulu Natal. The first microprocessor-based controller for DC motors - the CP77 – as well as Centurion Systems' very

own DC traffic barrier – the CENTRY – is also released during this particularly fruitful year.

**1994** Like any healthy 8-year old, Centurion Systems soon grows too big for its confines and we start building our own 800m<sup>2</sup> factory and 400m<sup>2</sup> office in Kya Sands. The cost-effective motor controller for gate operators, known as the CP87, is developed proving that Centurion Systems has the client's best interests – and bank accounts – at heart.

**1995** 1995 sees Centurion Systems opening a branch in the Far East (well, Johannesburg's Far East, anyway). This is the year that the Bokke take home the World Cup and Team Centurion Systems aren't resting on their laurels, either, with the advanced single motor controller for AC motors – the CP91 –

being released.

**1996** The sliding gate operator that is still a Centurion Systems staple even today – the revolutionary D5 – is launched and is the first motor in the world to use a polymer injection-moulded gearbox. Barely a year after opening the Jet Park branch, a third branch is opened in Menlyn, Pretoria.

**1997** We develop our own set of remote controls – the aptly-titled SMART range – which is unique



for its self-learning technology, as well as the CP79 generic timer board.

**1998** Safety – specifically when it games to gate automation – has always been one of Centurion Systems' main priorities and we live this philosophy by developing our own infrared safety beams, the i5. We introduce a sliding gate operator for lighter gates, known as the D3.

**1999** Three innovative new products is launched in 1999, namely the CENTOR high-volume automatic traffic barrier, the CENTINEL manual traffic barrier and the SupaSMART multi-user receiver.

**2000** The new millennium – sees Centurion Systems outgrowing its bounds and this time building a new 1800m<sup>2</sup> factory and 1400m<sup>2</sup> office in North Riding. One of our brilliant engineers develops the CP107 battery-saving module.

**2001** The Lowveld is the site of Centurion Systems' latest branch, with the fourth branch being opened in Nelspruit. A plethora of new products see the light during the course of this year, including the SMARTGUARD access control keypad

and a brand new range of remote controls – the Classic, SMART2 and NOVA, the latter of which uses revolutionary code-hopping technology. Centurion Systems receives the coveted SABS Design Institute award for design excellence.

**2002** A unique data logging and time-barring module for keypads and remotes – the ChronoLog – is developed as well as the R3 rotary swing gate operator.

**2003** A further 4500m<sup>2</sup> is added to the North Riding factory and the mighty A10 industrial sliding gate operator, unique for its use of a custom-made inverter to drive a single-phase operator, is released. It remains a favourite for its ability to carry massive loads and work tirelessly without a limited duty cycle.

**2004** A battery backup module DC converter is developed for the A10, keeping it fully operational during those pesky brownouts.

The upgraded rotary swing gate

operator for light-industrial applications, the R5, is launched.

**2005** Blending simplicity, style and functionality has been a Centurion Systems trademark from the very beginning, and nowhere is this more evident than in the POLOphone two-wire intercom system, first unveiled in 2005. The D3 and D5 are upgraded, and a Bootloader Interface Device is added.

**2006** Technology is an ever-changing, ever-evolving field and Centurion Systems encapsulated this basic truth with the introduction of the SOLO and Lattice proximity access control systems. This was, however, only a fraction of the mammoth achievements yielded in 2006, with another branch opening in Observatory, Cape Town and the release of the CP93 dual AC controller.

**2007** The VECTOR is added to our swing gate motor range. Its revolutionary design earns the DISA prototype excellence award.

**2008** Centurion Systems develops a new controller utilising a user-friendly

LCD interface to facilitate easy setup and diagnostics, and upgrades the VECTOR operator. Ergo, the VECTOR2 is born.

**2009** Another busy year for Centurion Systems with a sixth branch opening in Bloemfontein and new sliding gate operators are released - D5-Evo and D10, which boast onboard LCD interfaces. The SECTOR high-volume traffic barrier with onboard LCD controller and ChronoGuard (a world first) timer technology is released. Even the colossal factory at 148 Epsom drive couldn't contain the constantly-growing Centurion Systems family for long, and we move to 15700m<sup>2</sup> premises.

**2010** The D2 Turbo, an affordable sliding gate operator for light gates, is launched and Centurion Systems is named as an IFSEC UK finalist for the D10. Once again, the competition is blown out of the water with the introduction of the G-SWITCH-22 and its associated web interface, G-WEB. A new branch is opened in the windy city, Port Elizabeth.

**2011** Innovation, innovation, innovation sums up 2011 perfectly,

with Centurion Systems further raising the bar in the world of access control and gate automation.

The speedy D2 Turbo is launched and summarily becomes a finalist at the IFSEC UK security exposition in Birmingham, England. We also give traffic barriers CLAWS (our own range of barrier spikes), develop a barrier fence - called TRAPEX – for the SECTOR barrier, and answer the prayers of installers with the SMARTGUARDair - a completely wireless keypad. And, finally, we took all the pain out of installing ground loops with our own range of loop detectors.

**2012** Centurion Systems takes automated gate safety to the next level with the introduction of Photon photocells. Featuring a wireless transmitter for easy installation and effortless alignment, Photon has become the installer's best friend and has made gate safety achievable and affordable for homeowners.

**2013** We expand our GSM range to include two brand new GSM devices. For the very first time, we

introduce low-voltage variants of our popular D2 Turbo and D5-Evo sliding gate motors for the DIY market.

A growing team and increased operational capabilities necessitate the moving of the Nelson Mandela Bay branch to bigger headquarters.

**2014** We are into the Year of the Horse and there is a palpable sense of excitement around the office. The electricity in the air, the twinkle in the eyes of our engineers, it can only mean one thing:

Something big is coming... Watch. This. Space!

With 28 years of innovation, company growth and more than a few fond memories behind us, we feel rather confident that Centurion Systems will continue to be the Automatic Choice for generations to come!





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