

Surge Protection Hall of Fame



François Martzloff

April 2008

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François Martzloff has more than 50 years experience in engineering with 40 of those in the surge protection industry. He is perhaps the most prolific author in this industry for the past 50 years, and perhaps for all 150 years of this business. There was a rumor a few years back that said François had retired, but it is not obvious by his action. Even as I was gathering this information from him, he was in the middle of an email-flurry on a surge subject with colleagues from the Surge Protective Devices Committee (SPD).

When asked to offer words of wisdom for those that follow us in this business, he offered these:

Guidance #1

After concluding your own experiment, or reading someone's else, before drawing any conclusion, always apply the criterion: "Does it really make sense?"

Guidance #2

Never, never -- or hardly ever, -- take NO! for an answer, even the second time. However, be aware that the world has two different definitions when

reviewing the same initiative: if finally accepted, you have been perseverant; if still rejected, you are merely obstinate, period.

François started his surge career working for Southern States Equipment Co. in their power lab in 1953 after receiving his masters in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech.



1954 using his first scope a "Dumont"

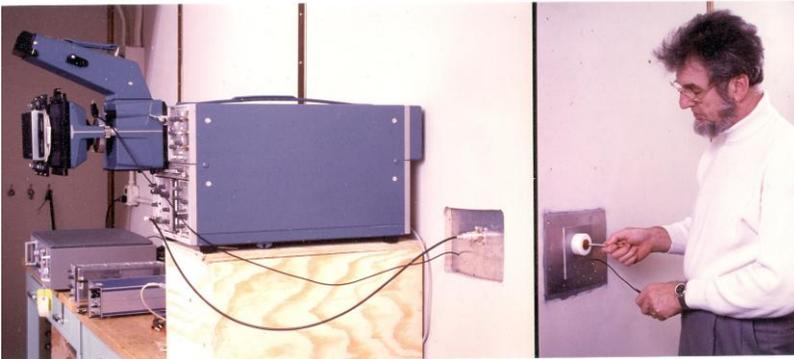
In 1956, he started his prestigious career at GE in the test lab learning more and more about surges. I am sure he would agree that there is no better place to learn about transients than in a lab.

By 1970 François had found himself in the GE Research center for 9 years when he embarked on one of his most significant contributions to the surge industry, commercializing the recently discovered zinc oxide material into a product for surge protection of low voltage circuits. Because of that effort, GE was the first to

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introduce an MOV device for surge protection. This paradigm shift from silicon carbide varistors era marked the beginning of the commercial MOV era in the surge protection industry. Also during this time at GE he became active in the AIEE (later IEEE) Surge Protective Devices Committee where he remains active to this day.

In 1985, many papers and many patents later, François transitioned to the National Bureau of Standards where he continued his surge protection career with work in the Electrostatic Discharge area.

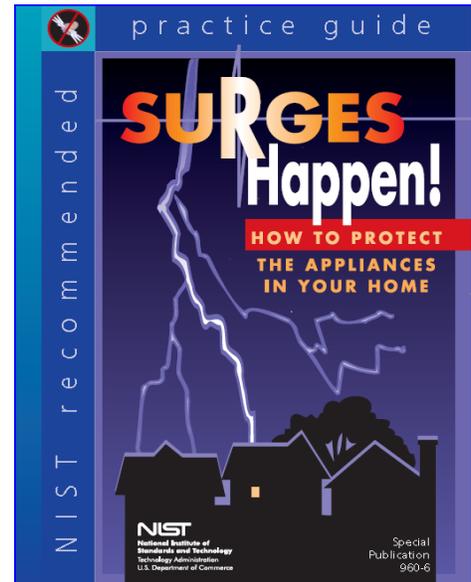


Working on ESD at the NBS in 1986

In 2003 after 50 years in the corporate industry, François retired from his position at the now called National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and became a part time consultant in surge protection. Just prior to becoming a consultant, François wrote a very well accepted booklet on behalf of NIST and EPRI on transients titled “[Surges Happen.](#)”

A more recent writing activity has been the assembly of significant publications in the surge protection area on a website

maintained by NIST. François has titled this site the “[SPD Anthology](#)”. This has to be the most substantial collection of surge protection literature anywhere on the net.



I, along with my colleagues in the SPD and throughout the surge protection industry, salute François Martzloff for his significant contribution to the surge protection industry.

By
Jon Woodworth
ArresterWorks.com

A Fast Take

François Martzloff

Born 1929 in Strasbourg, France
Studies from K through college in Paris
BS, EE from École Spéciale de Mécanique
et d'Électricité, Paris, 1951
MS, EE from Georgia Tech, Atlanta, GA
1952 (Fulbright scholarship)
MS, IA from Union College, Schenectady
NY, 1972
Upon termination of college deferment
(French law), drafted in the French Air
Force, 1952-1953.

As "green card" holder, came to the US "for
a few years to gain working experience in
the US" in 1953 – still here and US citizen
since 1959.

Career:

1953-1956: Lab Engineer, expulsion fuses,
Southern States Equipment, Hampton GA
1956-1985: General Electric
Lab Engineer, High Voltage Lab and
Bushings, Pittsfield, MA 1956-1959
Fuse Designer, Switchgear Dept
Philadelphia, PA 1959-1961
Research staff, General Engineering, later
Corporate R&D, Schenectady NY 1961-
1985
Electronics Engineer, NBS, later NIST,
Gaithersburg MD 1985-2003
After retirement from NIST, active as
consultant in "Surges Happen"

Industry:

AIEE Member, 1956
IEEE Fellow, 1983
Member, WG Chair, Tech Editor IEEE
Surge-Protective Devices Committee 1965-
2008

Member, WG Chair, SCC 22 Chair (Power
Quality) 1986-1992
Technical Editor, IEEE Std 1100™-1992
IEC TC77 WG Secretary, 1988-1995
IEC SC78 WG Convenor, Subcommittee
Chair, 1990-1998
IEC TC81 WG Member, IEEE Liaison,
1990-1999
IEC TC64 Technical Editor, IEC 610026,
1994-2000
UL 1449 Member, IAG/STP, 1978-2007
EPRI-supported initiatives on Power
Quality, 1986-2000
13 US Patents, mostly on surge protection

Publications

110+ papers, collected in NIST-hosted,
public domain "*SPD Anthology*"
Contributor to four editions of the GE
Transient Suppression Manual