

# Acopian: Powering the World Behind the Scenes for 60 Years

In every industry and market, one thing will always be needed: a source of power. Whether it be for audio, video, airplanes, spacecraft, infrastructure, lighting, power plants, military bases, or all the electronics that enable telecommunications, the Internet, and computing to function, the need for power is universal. Yet sometimes the power supply is an afterthought in the building of, for example, a new data center, airplane, or power plant, but it is very important because the power supply works in the background to enable everything to function.

Acopian Power Supplies may not be a household name, and you won't find the company developing anything flashy such as an electric car or the latest iPhone, but it has been steadily and reliably manufacturing power supplies for decades, working with brand names every day to power the world. The Easton, Pennsylvania-based company celebrated its 60th anniversary last month—no small achievement in the electronics market, which is wrought with turnover, takeover, and flashes in the pan. Acopian Technical Company was founded in Phillipsburg, New Jersey in 1957 with only a handful of workers. Today, the company

employs 110 employees between its Easton facility and its facility in Melbourne, Florida.

Acopian was years ahead of its time when its founder, Sarkis Acopian (Figure 1), who received his B.S. degree in mechanical engineering in 1951,



**FIG 1** The late Sarkis Acopian, the founder of Acopian. (Photo courtesy of [www.acopian.com](http://www.acopian.com).)

developed something that is in wide use today—the solar radio. It was the first recorded solar-powered radio ever manufactured for commercial use. Since then, Acopian's power supplies have been used in ground support for NASA; in mission-critical test equipment for Boeing, Raytheon, and Northrop Grumman; in nuclear power plants such as Westinghouse, Duke, and Dominion; in major amusement parks to power rides; in automotive companies Tesla, Ford,

and others; and in stadiums and arenas to power audio and lighting. Acopian even bailed out the National Football League one year to power lighting equipment at the Super Bowl, and assisted in the Times Square New Year's Eve ball drop!

## Unparalleled Support

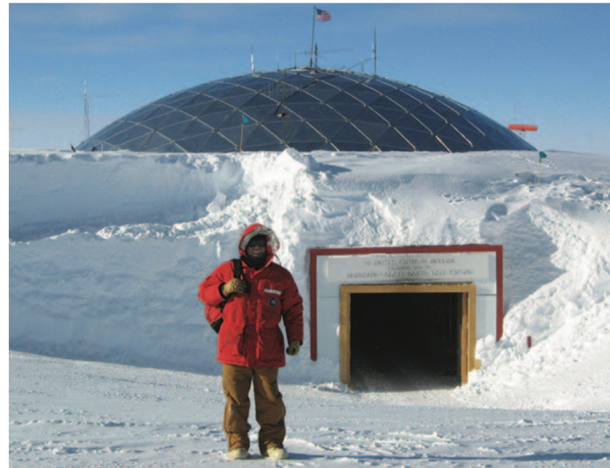
As a third-generation family member working at the company (Alex Karapetian) confirms, while Acopian Technical is a small business and most of the work occurs behind the scenes, it has a global footprint. Two things that truly make the company stand out, however, are that Acopian never discontinues a product and continues to service and repair its power supplies that have been in operation for decades—a rare trait in an industry that is continually in search of the next big thing. For example, Acopian continues to repair and support

power supplies manufactured as long ago as the 1960s! This contrasts sharply with almost any other product sold these days when typically the solution to repairing a broken device is to purchase a new one instead of repairing the one in operation.

Acopian is also one of the last companies that still manufactures linear power supply models. While classified as an older technology—they are heavier, bulkier, and produce



**FIG 2** (From left) Alex Karapetian, Jeff Acopian, Greg Acopian, and Ezra Acopian, all family members who work for Acopian. (Photo courtesy of Armen Elliott Photography.)



**FIG 3** The IceCube Neutrino Observatory researches massless subatomic particles in the South Pole. (Photo courtesy of IceCube Neutrino Observatory.)

less power than newer variations—there are still certain industries that demand a source of linear power because of its low electrical noise. And because it has fewer parts, it means that there is less chance of something going wrong. The audio industry needs low-noise power supplies for recording studios. The medical industry needs linears for quiet atmospheres. Energy and power industries request linear power because they need clean, reliable power supplies. Acopian continues to meet these needs.

### Still Evolving

The fact that Acopian still produces and services older technologies does not mean the company hasn't evolved. Acopian has millions of different power supplies (linears, switchers, programmable, redundant, high voltage, unregulated, and more) and continues to adjust to the changing nature of electronics. The company recently introduced a new family of programmable ac-dc power supplies, dubbed *IU*, that provides flexible and reliable power available at 720-W power levels with single-output voltages ranging from 3.3 V to 135 V and current capabilities up to 70 A. These power supplies are offered in rack-mounted or bench-top versions for different applica-

tions. What sets these power supplies apart from other products is that there are a host of à la carte options available in addition to the standard features.

### Built to Order

As more designs become extremely complex, vendors often ask for specific options or features in their power supplies that aren't available in an off-the-shelf model. Acopian can modify existing products to meet the customer's specific needs. This customization has become a popular option for the energy and power industries because retrofitting is a huge headache and very costly.

While much of what Acopian does may be unknown to many, one of the intriguing projects it has contributed to is the IceCube Neutrino Observatory (Figure 3). IceCube searches for massless subatomic particles called *neutrinos*, which provide information on violent astrophysical forces such as exploding stars, gamma-ray bursts, and cataclysmic phenomena from black holes and neutron stars. The observatory aims to answer questions such as the nature of dark matter and the properties of the neutrino itself as well as how cosmic rays interact with Earth's atmosphere. Led by the National Science Foundation and the University of

Wisconsin–Madison, the observatory receives contributions from 300 physicists from 48 institutions across 12 countries to study the cosmos from the cold, often completely dark South Pole. Acopian power supplies help keep the facility operational in extremely harsh conditions.

### Core Values

The industry expert in power supplies, Acopian plays a major role in much of the world's workings. The family's principles and nature have made possible multiple environmental and educational missions to create a better world. As a company dedicated to service, Acopian will continue to “power your way” in the years ahead. The company founder, Sarkis Acopian, has also funded Lafayette College's Acopian Engineering Center. The state-of-the-art center houses Lafayette's five engineering programs and computer science major. The 90,000-ft<sup>2</sup> center was donated in 2003 and ranks in the top 15 engineering programs in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*.

