



## Frequently Asked Questions • Workstation Integrator

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### **What is a Workstation Integrator and how does it work?**

A Workstation Integrator is an electronic appliance designed to enhance the performance and strategic output of operators in Control Rooms and Operations Centers. Those performing mission-critical functions in Command and Control Centers become more effective and efficient.

With a Portalis Workstation Integrator, you can organize and display critical information from multiple systems in a way that enhances you and your operators' ability to recognize and act upon that data. Simultaneously, you now have a more natural way of directing control input to the various systems, as needed.

### **How easy is installing a Workstation Integrator?**

You'll find the installation of a Workstation Integrator to be unbearably simple. Place the Workstation Integrator in a suitable location, run a few standard video and signaling cables between the operator's work position, the Workstation Integrator, and the systems being controlled. Plug in the power cord. The Workstation Integrator turns on automatically.

### **What new software, drivers, or downloads do we need to install?**

You need NO new software, NO new drivers, and NO downloads. Using a Workstation Integrator requires absolutely NO changes to the systems being monitored and controlled.

## **How does using a Workstation Integrator improve Control Room operations?**

Human operators are often required to notice small changes in complex operating environments. Detecting these changes is often very difficult when multiple displays are spread all over a work area. Typically, the operators in a traditional control center are not always able to position system displays to be most conducive to effective workflow. Even if the displays are arranged optimally for one particular task, as operational requirements change and evolve, often over the course of a single work session, the same display layout can become awkward and inefficient for the operator.

With a Workstation Integrator, an operator can create multiple views of the various systems by scaling and positioning display information on the integrated display. As work requirements change, the operator can quickly change to a layout that is most efficient for the task at hand. (Do more, work faster, spend less, be happier.)

## **What systems can I accommodate with a Workstation Integrator?**

The Workstation Integrator will work with any system that provides a standard VGA or DVI video output, and that can accept standard USB keyboard and mouse inputs.

Operation of the Workstation Integrator is independent of the system being controlled.

Some of the many systems that can be used with the Workstation Integrator include: Unix, Linux, OSX, DOS, and Windows. The Workstation Integrator will also work with custom control systems with standard VGA/DVI interfaces.

Remember that different operating systems can be connected to the same Workstation Integrator. For example, you could be operating a linux, a DOS, and a proprietary system all from the same workstation.

## **How many systems can I route through my Workstation Integrator?**

You will need a "system interface card" for each system you wish to monitor and control from a Portalis Workstation Integrator. The standard system comes ready to interface to three separate systems.

## **How do I handle more systems?**

You can add up to five additional system interface cards allowing you to monitor and control a maximum of eight different systems.

## **Why is a Workstation Integrator important to a control room manager or operator?**

In countless operations and control centers around the world, the proliferation of computer and control systems has created a nearly chaotic crisis of information overload. Many of you working in control centers are required to monitor and control three, four, or

more separate systems in order to perform your work properly. Information that you and your operators need to perform your tasks is scattered across various display devices and control panels.

With a Workstation Integrator, you, your operators, and other control room professionals can finally organize, save, and recall layouts of information from multiple systems that facilitate efficient operation.

Using real-time thumbnails for overviews and scalable sub-windows for focusing on details, you and your operators can create multiple views of the information on all systems. With a Workstation Integrator, you can facilitate much more efficient operations.

Your newly-developed ability to instantly switch between saved layouts make adapting to changing operating scenarios so much easier.

### **What additional functionality does a Workstation Integrator provide over a traditional KVM switch?**

A Workstation Integrator is to a KVM like the Space Shuttle is to a horse and buggy. While they are both in the transportation industry, they clearly serve different objectives, operate at different speeds, and possess completely different capabilities.

Using a Portalis Workstation Integrator you control functions and features far beyond traditional KVMs. You can accomplish much more than just monitor and control multiple systems from a single keyboard, mouse, and display. You have a broader and different set of tools enabling your operators to perform their control center tasks better, faster, and easier.

A KVM enables a person to switch between systems. A Workstation Integrator enhances the decision-making capability of operators by presenting information from multiple sources on a single workstation and allowing the operator to interactively manage those systems. If your control center employs KVM switches in your operation, you can easily wrap their usage into your Workstation Integrator, thus increasing the value of your KVM.

### **What additional functionality does a Workstation Integrator provide over a traditional Monitor Wall or Video Processor?**

The Space Shuttle analogy from above applies here as well. Workstation Integration raises the bar on existing technology and creates a new, sophisticated, and strategic product category.

A Workstation Integrator treats multiple systems much like traditional computers treat multiple applications. The various windows on a computer monitor represent different applications; the various windows on an Integrated Workstation monitor represent different systems.

Control Room and Operations Center operators, using Workstation Integration, perform their strategic core functions better — accessing data, managing systems, using various

computers to make decisions. They can manage, interact, and manipulate data from multiple systems to do their jobs better; and they do this from a single, Integrated Workstation.

Image processors provide static video display from various sources for viewing and monitoring; they do not provide for strategic, interactive management of systems or computers.

Workstation Integration certainly includes the sub-technologies of KVM, video processors, routers, and other similar capabilities, but elevate the use of computers to a much higher and more strategic level. While these individual, existing, and more traditional technologies are worthwhile and provide valuable service, they are in a different product category.

### **How does the Portalis Workstation Integrator provide additional functionality over Web Browser technology?**

Many new systems present information using HTML. Some control centers are using Web Browser technology to integrate the monitoring and control of multiple systems. While this trend may persist, it does not solve the problems created by the many legacy systems that will continue to exist in most control centers. The Workstation Integrator provides a powerful and useful way to combine both worlds in a single, efficient, operator station.

The Workstation Integrator creates a novel, fundamental, and transformative change in the way humans interact with multiple computers and control systems. The product eclipses existing technology in this regard and expands the operators' paradigm and competencies.