

North American  
Assemblies Ltd.





# North American Assemblies Ltd.

*Caribbean company makes key components for the world's cable TV industry*

Arcom Labs is a 35 year-old company, based in Syracuse, NY. It produces a wide range of products for the worldwide cable industry. In 1993, the directors of the company were looking for a lower cost alternative for the production of some of its hardware and so they scouted a number of islands in the Caribbean, including St. Lucia and St. Kitts, as well as some other locations in Latin America.

They finally settled on St. Lucia for a number of reasons: the island was in the same time zone as com-

pany headquarters; it had an adequate infrastructure; and, perhaps most importantly, the St. Lucia government, in order to attract business to the island, offered a generous corporate tax holiday - for the first fifteen years, a company would pay no income taxes at all, and afterward would pay at a very low rate (maximum of 8 percent) that could even be further reduced (up to 2 percent) by employing a certain quota of island employees.

The new company they formed was called North Amer-



ican Assemblies Ltd., which, today, operates as an independent contractor for Arcom Labs. Roston Taylor is North American Assemblies' Managing Director, and he came to his position in a most interesting way. Before running the new company, Taylor worked in the field of investment promotion, meaning that he was responsible for searching for and inducing businesses to set up on St. Lucia. In fact, he was the contact that initially got Arcom to move to the island in the first place. Six months after the new facility opened, he was hired to run it. And he's been there, ever since.

North American Assemblies makes only one product and has only one customer: Arcom Labs. The product that it makes is a filter for cable TV. Taylor explains: "On the cable lines, you have a hundred percent of all channels. But based on the package that you pay for, the cable company will put a filter on your line, and it

## AT A GLANCE

**WHO:** North American Assemblies Ltd.

**WHAT:** Maker of filters for the worldwide cable TV industry

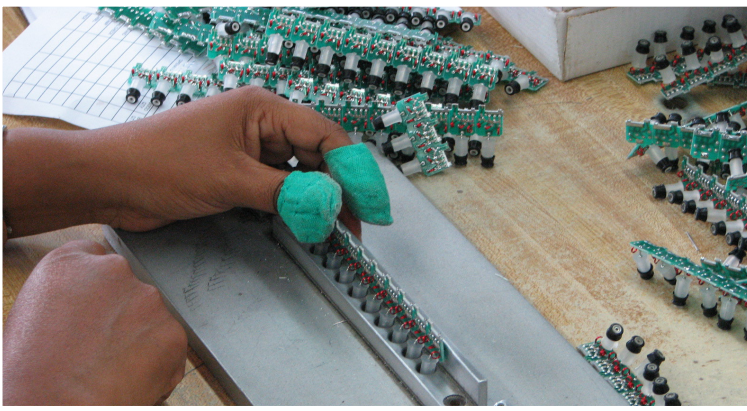
**WHERE:** St. Lucia

**WEBSITE:** [noramer@candw.lc](mailto:noramer@candw.lc)

would only allow you to see the television stations that you pay for." In other words, North American Assemblies makes the filters that make it impossible for cable customers to freeload off of their cable company.







Taylor's 200 employees create specific filters based on orders from the home office. While his company ships only to Syracuse, Arcom distributes its products globally. North American Assemblies gets its metal work from the home office and its component parts from various U.S., Chinese and Taiwanese suppliers. Its boxes and bags come from local, St. Lucia businesses.

Arcom has other products that it manufactures in its Syracuse plant, including what's known as a CPD Hunter, which is a cable network interrogation and predictive maintenance tool that helps its customers quickly locate the root cause of network impairments; and a Snare, which can pinpoint with great accuracy where there is a break, or a loss of signal, in a cable line. (More information on Arcom's product line can be found at [www.arcomlabs.com](http://www.arcomlabs.com).)

According to Taylor, there are only a few companies in the industry, but his stands out because, as he says, "We're the innovators. We always come up with new

designs." In addition, North American Assemblies is a responsible company that is committed to St. Lucia. A lot of its employees have been with it since it started and even during tough economic times, Taylor says that there have only been two layoffs in 20 years. The company even pays local teachers to come in to educate its workers. In recognition of its achievements, North American Assemblies won the "Implementation of Standards and Best Practice, Platinum Award" from the St. Lucia Manufacturers Association, in 2012.

While the workload is currently steady, Taylor sees technological shifts coming and his company is attempting to stay ahead of the curve. "We actually have moved over the last several years into more digital technology. Analog technology is almost out the door." The company now produces digital filters for cable companies that provide services for the internet. "We're also going to see less and less hardwire and a move to more wireless technology," says Taylor. He adds that the parent company is looking to expand its markets in Latin





America, Europe, and Asia.

So, the next time you surf through the channels on your cable TV at home, it's quite possible that the ones that you aren't getting are being filtered out by a component made at North American Assemblies Ltd., in the heart of the Caribbean. It's just another example of the world's shift to a truly global economy.

## PREFERRED VENDORS

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