

FlatWire Background →

Entrepreneur Robb Sexton conceived FlatWire in 1986, envisioning a high-performance, ultra-thin, surface-mounted wiring product to replace traditional round wire products and their expensive, invasive, in-wall wiring installation requirements.

Sexton founded FlatWire as DeCorp Americas, Inc., filing its first patent in 1995, and began final development and introduction of FlatWire to the market five years later. In 2004 FlatWire presented its innovative product solutions for data, cable, and other audio/video applications at the Consumer Electronics Show. FlatWire was named Best Product in its category at CES.

In 2005, Southwire Company, the largest manufacturer of electrical wiring in North America, acquired DeCorp, citing FlatWire's potential for creative uses and electrical opportunities as the foundation for the acquisition.

Product Milestone →

The wiring methodology behind FlatWire received approval for standard 120VAC electrical wiring applications in the 2008 National Electric Code (NEC), the governing entity that establishes requirements for electrical wiring and oversees electrical installers and inspectors. Concealable Nonmetallic Extension (CNE) was approved under Article 382 of the 2008 NEC. Inclusion in the 2008 NEC establishes that FlatWire CNE technology is approved for use in commercial and residential wiring projects.

Southwire Headquarters →

One Southwire Drive
Carrollton, GA 30117

Employees →

4000+

Leadership →

Stu Thorn, president & CEO
Jack Carlson, president Electrical Division
Charles A. Garris III, MSME, Director, FlatWire Technologies

FlatWire Patents →

5,804,768; 5,807,141; 5,899,774; 6,107,577;
6,492,595; 6,688,912; 6,774,741; 7,145,073; 7,217,884

FlatWire Products →

FlatWire is currently selling wiring and interconnect devices for low-voltage lighting, audio/loudspeakers, voice/data lines, high performance video, voice/data lines Cat 5, and other low-voltage and signal applications, with all products available online at www.flatwireready.com.

FlatWire Future Products →

HDMI and data cables, 120V AC, 15 AMP/14 AWG gauge wire, remote switching and dimming for low voltage lighting, CAT 6, second-generation pattern wire, and control wires for Smart Homes, including security and thermostat applications.

FlatWire Mission →

To offer professionals and consumers new and aesthetically pleasing options when it comes to incorporating devices requiring a wire connection(s) into their home's look and design. FlatWire Technologies Division of Southwire is the world leader in high-performance, surface-mounted wiring and related interconnection, safety, and installation products for a range of uses: low-voltage lighting, audio, video, data, low and standard voltage AC electrical.

Web Sites →

www.southwire.com
www.flatwireready.com
www.flatwirestore.com

General →

Q: What is new with FlatWire?

A: Southwire's innovative FlatWire methodology, which is ideal for aesthetics, design and affordability, received approval for standard 120V AC electrical wiring applications in the 2008 National Electric Code (NEC), the governing entity that establishes requirements for electrical wiring and oversees electrical installers and inspectors.

Q: How did the company get started? How was FlatWire invented?

A: Entrepreneur Robb Sexton conceived the FlatWire concept in 1986 when he envisioned an innovative, high-performance, ultra-thin, surface-mounted wiring product that would render obsolete many traditional round wire products and their requirements for expensive, invasive, in-wall wiring installation techniques. Sexton founded FlatWire as DeCorp and filed its first patent in 1995. DeCorp teamed with some strategic partners in 2000 and began final development, then introduced FlatWire to the market. FlatWire presented its first-generation Speaker FlatWire, Low Voltage FlatWire, and a variety of other flat cables that provide solutions for data, cable, and other audio/video applications at the Consumer Electronics Show in 2004 and won "Best in Show" in the accessories category.

Q: What is FlatWire's mission?

A: To give professionals and consumers new and aesthetically pleasing options when it comes to incorporating devices requiring a wire connection(s) into a room's look and design. Southwire's FlatWire Technologies Division is the world leader in high-performance, surface-mounted wiring and related interconnection, safety, and installation products for a range of uses: low-voltage lighting, audio, video, data, low and standard voltage AC electrical.

Q: How have sales been to date?

A: Thousands of customers have installed FlatWire products to date.

Use →

Q: Can I combine FlatWire with existing devices or round wire projects?

A: Yes. FlatWire and FlatWire Ready® Connectors work with existing wiring in new and older structures with any type of wiring application. The FlatWire Ready® Connectors make it easy to install anything requiring wiring.

Q: Can I use FlatWire anywhere I want?

A: Yes, and that is the beauty of these products—they truly represent wiring without limits, anywhere in your home. FlatWire represents new opportunities for the professional as well as the do-it-yourself installer, merging functionality and aesthetics. FlatWire lowers project cost and improves efficiency, giving electricians and installers the opportunity for additional capacity and new options while advancing safety.

Q: Can FlatWire be used outdoors?

A: Currently, FlatWire products are for indoor use only. FlatWire is working to develop products that can be used for outdoor applications.

Q: Can existing products plug in to FlatWire?

A: Yes. A FlatWire Ready® interconnect makes the transition from FlatWire to a standard plug or device.

Q: How cost effective is FlatWire compared to traditional round wire?

A: The real cost of any wiring project is the complete installed cost, especially when the project meets even the most basic aesthetic and design standards. The cost of the wiring itself is competitive, and FlatWire is much more affordable when installation is a factor. Because FlatWire is installed on the surface of walls and/or ceilings instead of inside the walls, there is no cost associated with drywall or plaster repairs – and the associated time, scheduling, privacy, mess and general hassle of a conventional professional wiring install.

Use Continued →

Q: Do the products carry a warranty?

A: Yes. FlatWire products are covered for material defects for a period of one year from the purchase date. However, FlatWire products are designed to last the life of the structure.

Q: How do I change directions with FlatWire?

A: Most installations do not go in a straight line without any bends, and FlatWire products were designed to give you the flexibility to have a wire run anywhere. Simply bend the FlatWire and crease it onto itself. You may make multiple bends as needed and it still does not affect performance in any way.

Q: Is professional installation required for FlatWire products?

A: Both contractors and do-it-yourselfers can install the FlatWire and FlatWire Ready® products with basic redecorating techniques and a minimal understanding of wiring.

Q: Will FlatWire offer authorized installers who can perform installations?

A: Yes. Even though the FlatWire Ready® concept offers easy and professional-looking installation for do-it-yourselfers, FlatWire will have a nationwide network of authorized installers who can perform installations. In addition, certified installers undergo training to eliminate an on-the-job learning curve, but contractors and consumers who are not certified will be able to purchase and install the product quickly and easily.

Q: How is FlatWire training electricians and installers?

A: Installers and inspectors wishing to receive training information are encouraged to visit www.flatwireready.com/prod-electrical.htm and sign up to participate in a tutorial course.

Q: How are FlatWire products installed?

A: FlatWire installs in four easy steps: map it, stick it, click it and make it disappear. FlatWire products attach to the surface of walls and ceilings using FlatWire Ready® formulated spray adhesive. A professional installation would use standard wall or joint compounds and techniques to blend the minor thickness differential into the wall. Once installed, it is then painted or wallpapered to become virtually invisible. Installation instructions for wire and interconnects are available on the FlatWire Web site.

Q: Does FlatWire require any drilling or in-wall installation?

A: No. FlatWire products are installed directly on the surface of walls and ceilings using adhesives; no drilling or in-wall installation is necessary.

Q: How is FlatWire attached to the wall?

A: FlatWire products attach to the wall with FlatWire Ready® Spray Adhesive, which is sprayed to the wall before the wire is attached. The adhesive is tacky enough to provide 10 to 15 minutes of readjustment time if necessary. A professional installation would include standard wall or joint compounds and techniques to blend the minor thickness differential to the wall. Once finished, the product will be virtually invisible when blended and painted or wallpapered.

Q: How can the wiring be “invisible” if installed directly on a surface?

A: FlatWire products are so thin, they are nearly imperceptible by sight or feel when installed properly. The wires range from 4/1000 of an inch to 16/1000 of an inch, or about as thin as a business card. Once attached to the wall, the product is painted or wallpapered to become virtually invisible. Before painting, we recommend that installers use a traditional “blending” compound over the wire to blend it into the wall.

Q: Does the wiring cause paint to chip or wallpaper to buckle?

A: No. Because the adhesive sticks the wire directly and completely to the surface, it lays flat and does not affect paint or wallpaper. When properly installed, the wire blends in with the paint or wallpaper, and becomes invisible.

Q: Can you use FlatWire products over a textured surface?

A: Yes – and they will still be unnoticeable. When installing FlatWire on a textured ceiling, for instance, installers will