...ncy implements infrared communications system

...ployees in Lancy International's ...quarters and engineering buildings, ...are located approximately eight ...s apart in Zelienople, now are com-...cating with each other more efficient-...anks to a new infrared system.

...e new LightLink system, the first of ...nd to be installed in western Penn-...nia, was developed by Datapoint ...of San Antonio, Texas. It uses dual ...mitters/receivers installed on the ...of the two buildings and pointed ...ly at each other. Information in ...ced form is transmitted between the ...nits by non-laser infrared light.

...cording to Gerald E. Rogers, Lancy ...oller, the system is being used ...arily to transmit up-to-the-minute job ...information to project managers ...d in the engineering building. It also ...d to transmit purchase order data ...the purchasing department, which is ...d in the engineering building, to the ...al computer installed in the head-...ers building.

...he system enables project managers ...tter control costs since they now can ...n data directly from a computer ter-...l rather than wait for the information ...printed and hand delivered," Rogers ...The LightLink system also enables ...eparate computers in each of the ...ings to function together, thus ...ding their overall capability.

...gers said he expects Lancy to even-... expand use of the system since it is ...le of transmitting data at a rate of up ...ir million bits per second. He said the

company selected the infrared system over microwave, laser or direct cable systems because it was less costly and more easily installed.

The LightLink system was acquired

through Data Logix, a computer hardware and software sales and service firm located in the North Hills of Pittsburgh, which installed, programmed and maintains the system.

Lancy International, Inc. designs and manufactures wastewater treatment systems and markets a line of standard products applicable to industrial waste treatment and resource recovery.

Computers save Westinghouse money

An advantage is that employees can switch over their telephones when they are not in the office or when they don't want to be disturbed and still be able to receive messages fast and efficiently.

Employees can also enter into the message center terminal using their own office PC an agenda of their day or a message to a particular party. The operator can simply enter in the employee's name and view on the computer screen any messages.

McDonough said, "The message center is good for the corporate image, telephone calls are always answered."

Although these particular positions have been filled by technology, the people have not been replaced by computers. McDonough said, "We would never replace people with computers, we work more productively through the use of computers."

Aynardi said that the purpose of technology is to increase productivity, the quality of information, and give people tools to do jobs better.

Lichtenfels said there have been new jobs which have opened as a result of the technologies, such as technical support

positions and training, as well as positions in applications planning and design. He said Westinghouse used to go outside for maintenance, but now has an in-house technician who maintains the hardware.

Aynardi said while a major displacement could take place with factory workers being replaced almost entirely by automation, office workers are using automation to augment their skills.

"This is a headquarters, strictly administrative," said McDonough, "our needs as managers differ from those of the production worker. We need to respond quickly, to produce a quality document and to reduce the turn-around time in the decision making process."

Technologies which facilitate speedy decisions include Westinghouse teleconferencing rooms, which total 18 throughout the United States, including the one at the Westinghouse Building corporate headquarters.

The major goal of the teleconferencing rooms is to reduce travel time and expenses. Teleconferencing includes audio as well as still-frame video communications through the use of video cameras, monitor, and Bell modem telephone lines.

Other equipment includes coaxial

cables, which is a network system allowing a terminal or PC to access computers world-wide, or to access printers and file servers, Aynardi said. A feature of this is being considered which will enable one PC to access another in order to share files, as well as hard disk drives and software programs — if legal, and carry pictures.

Westinghouse's filing system is already a standard uniformed system building-wide, and ways of sharing information are already implemented. A personal computer users group, which meets monthly, discusses topics like particular software usefulness. A hotline, which receives 700 calls per month, takes care of a lot of trouble-shooting, said McDonough.

Westinghouse has also tried to standardize software packages, which enable faster, more productive ways of reaching decisions, throughout the corporate headquarters building, said Aynardi.

Some include Westinghouse designed electronic mail, LOTUS 1-2-3 (spreadsheets, graphics), Multimate (word processing), Condor III and dBase III (data management), Harvard Project Manager (project management), Crosstalk (general communications), and Execuvision (presentations and graphics).