

## Before Designing In a Barrier Strip Connector Consider This Terminal Block Alternative

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Barrier strip technology has been around a long time. There's nothing cutting edge about it but people have lots of experience with it, the customer interface is intuitive, and most importantly it's an economical choice. We still sell a lot of barrier strip connectors here at Heilind.

More and more though, we're seeing more engineers design in terminal block connectors. One key reason for this is that terminal block pricing has gotten more competitive. That, combined with performance benefits, is driving this trend. At least that's what I think.

I've had success in recent years helping customers transition to terminal block connectors and these customers have been pleased with the results. One of them has since bought probably a quarter million terminal block connectors. So in today's post I'm going to make a case for why the terminal block connector – specifically the 862 Wago terminal block – should be a serious design consideration for your next project.

There are three sound reasons: (1) lower total applied cost (2) better performance in high vibration applications and (3) touch-proof feature eliminates a liability concern.

1. **Lower total applied cost** – As you know, with a barrier strip you make the connection with a screw using a slotted screwdriver. Of course, sometime you get a shipment and the screw's not backed out. So you have to back out the screw to make room for the wire, cut your wire, strip it, insert the wire and tighten the screw. Or let's say you use a spade terminal. In this case you cut your wire, strip it, crimp on a spade terminal, back out the screw, put the spade terminal in and tighten the screw. Finally, you have a connection. Now multiply that effort 500 – 1000 times over, or more.

With the 862 Wago terminal block you cut the wire, strip it, press down on a lever, and insert the wire. Release the lever and a cage clamp fastens down on the wire to provide a constant connection. No muss, no fuss, you're done. Fewer components, less labor, lower total applied cost. What's not to like about that?

2. **Better performance in high vibration applications** – Take, for example, a generator application. There's a constant vibration when it's running and in due time that vibration will, in many instances, cause the screw to back out. In which case the wire can become loose and gradually pull away. Eventually you may have to send a maintenance person to tighten up all your connections to make sure you don't have any failures. (More labor costs.) This isn't a concern with the 862 Wago terminal block because its cage clamp provides a continuous gas-tight connection to the wire. In fact, over time, as the wires fray, the connection will only become tighter. And that's a distinct advantage.
3. **Touch-proof feature eliminates a liability concern** – If you have people fishing around with a screwdriver or you have live circuits and someone touches the screw head with their finger or with a screwdriver, they could be shocked. And as we both know, we live in a sue-happy society. That's one less thing you have to worry about when you design in the Wago terminal block connector. Because it's completely covered, it's touch-proof.

There you have it. Those are the three key reasons, as I see it, to consider specifying the 862 Wago terminal block connector for your next project.

Are there other considerations, for and against specifying a terminal block connector? Certainly. Does Heilind sell other brands of terminal block connectors? Sure, we carry ten different lines: Adam Tech, Amphenol, Cooper Bussmann, Curtis Industries, FCI, Molex, RIA Connect, TE Connectivity, WAGO and Weidmüller.

I've focused on the 862 Wago terminal block in this post because, as I wrote earlier, I've had success in recent years helping customers transition from barrier strip connectors to terminal block connectors. And I've found the 862 Wago to be an excellent transition product. In addition to the performance benefits it offers, the pricing on this product is virtually the same as a good quality barrier strip connector.

Got a question or questions about any of this? Give your Heilind representative a call or post your question here in the comments section and I'll answer it for you. Or, if you have something you'd like to add to this post leave that in the comments section as well.

Thanks for reading.