



Philip King, MD, Newbury Electronics reviewing the work of the new selective soldering machine*

Newbury Electronics continues its investment programme with the installation of a selective soldering machine.

*** New machine solders on both sides of a PCB**

Newbury Electronics has responded to the changing demands of PCB manufacturing and invested in a Ersa Eco-Select 1 selective soldering machine from Blundell Production Equipment. An increasing number of customers were requiring the company to solder PCBs with SMDs (surface mounted devices) on both sides, and big production bottlenecks were building up due to the need to hand solder these boards. It was also difficult to accurately price jobs as hand soldering times were unpredictable and good hand soldering operators are increasingly hard to find.

Philip King, Managing Director at Newbury Electronics, comments: "We opted for a batch machine as we don't need in-line capability at the moment, although I can see that happening in the future. Being a CEM we have a high mix of boards and we already have dozens of programs set up in the new machine. The shop floor staff have no problems with selecting the right program, loading and unloading the machine and performing routine maintenance." Once programmed, the machine can be left to get on with the job with little operator intervention, freeing them to continue with other tasks.

Newbury Electronics also uses a Blundell CMS 400 wave soldering machine and will continue to do so for boards that do not have double sided SMT content.

"However there are an increasing number of boards that we simply can't wave solder;" says King, "and the Eco-Select gets on with the job with the minimum of fuss."

Much of electronic assembly is now automated. Parts which are simply mounted on the surface of PCBs are machine placed and soldered. These are surface mount devices (SMD). However, if a PCB has a mix of SMD and traditional parts with wires which are mounted through holes in the PCB, and soldered from the underside, then these leaded parts are frequently laboriously soldered by hand. A selective solder machine addresses this problem. The SMD placement process is completed as normal by machine, and the leaded parts are hand inserted into the PCB. Once the component leads are cropped to the right length, the PCB is placed in the selective solder machine, and each wire connection is individually soldered by a computer controlled solder head, precisely avoiding all the previously mounted SMD parts. The selective solder machine will typically solder three times faster than a human, and the machine never gets fatigued. Quality is consistent from first to last joint.

Background

Newbury Electronics Ltd started trading in 1956. A management buyout took place in 1987 and Philip King took on his role of Managing Director in 2011. The company offers a full electronic design, PCB design and layout service alongside PCB manufacture and assembly in Newbury, West Berkshire. It employs 65 staff and is dedicated to small and medium batch PCB assembly, specialising in electronic design and manufacture incorporating SMD, SMT, surface mount, BGA, through hole, box build, soldering, test, & rework. Customers can select from electronics design and CAD layout through to printed circuit board design and fabrication, assembly and test, and the company is happy to undertake single, bespoke projects through to the design and supply of manufacture lots of up to 10,000 pcs on its automated SMD assembly lines.

As a contract electronic manufacturer (CEM), each year, the company produces in excess of over 15,000 different PCB designs for its clients, who benefit from the economies of scale built from the volume of orders processed.

For more information visit www.newburyelectronics.co.uk

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