

SPEEDBOARD NEWSLETTER

July 2014

For the latest Speedboard news and current developments

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The screenshot shows the Speedboard Assembly Services website. The header includes the company logo, contact information (01753 746700, sales@speedboard.co.uk), and social media icons. A navigation menu lists Home, About us, Services, Tech, Jobs, Login, and Contact us. The main content area features a section titled "Electronics Manufacturing" with a photo of a man and text describing the company's history and services. A search bar is located on the right. Below the main content, there is a "LATEST" section with two news items: "January 2014 Newsletter" and "£2553 raised for DoE Award Charity". A "Signup to receive your free guide" section is also present, with a search bar and a "SUBSCRIBE" button. The footer includes the Speedboard logo, the slogan "Delivering Success", and logos for Carbon Trust, IPC, and the UK flag.

Running on a Wordpress platform the new site is easier to navigate, has a search facility, embedded video and a blog style technical section.

For the first time we have also introduced a "customer only" page. Here we have various pieces of useful information that you can download. To access this you will need a login and password which you can obtain from your account manager.

With everyone being as busy as they are, we know many of you can't get out to see us. Having completed our factory refurbishment early last year and having added new equipment, it is important that you take a few minutes to see what we are now offering.

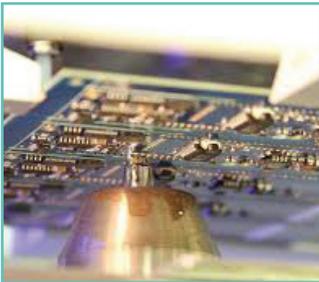
So please take 5 minutes to scroll down the tech-blog pages for a quick and easy summary of what we can and are doing these days.

Continual Investment

Last year we invested time and money into the building. The new layout is working exceptionally well and has proven to be popular with new and existing customers.

Over the next 12 months you will see further enhancements to our equipment. In SMD we are replacing two of our older machines with newer models, replacing all of the SMD line computers with a new platform and later in the year will be adding two additional machines. Once complete all 5 lines will have 3 P&P machines. Add to this our single prototype machine and we will have 16 SiPlace Pick and Place machines in all.

This will increase our general capacity and specifically the number of lines that can place 0201 components. At Inspection we have just added a bigger and better X-Ray machine to cope with the increased demand for BGA, uBGA and QFN work and in TH we are currently trialling a selective soldering machine that will help us with high density TH parts such as sensors and connectors.



Why Forecast?

Forecasting what you think you will need over the next 12 months is never easy. Sales staff will often overstate what they are going to sell, operational staff will play it down and somewhere in the middle is what actually happens.

However, forecasting, even with its inherent inaccuracies, is an essential part of good supply chain management. We have recently upgraded our QL Materials Management System to speed up the process of taking customer forecasts and turning them into piece part forecasts for our suppliers.

Now that the general market seems to be picking up the next challenge is likely to be component allocation and extended lead times. The best way to mitigate these issues is to have forecasts lodged with the suppliers so that they are telling the component factories what the demand is likely to be.

You will increasingly hear us asking you about this so we can add your figures into our system. As a side issue this also helps us manage excess stock in a timely fashion as and when you drop older product lines. Your forecasts are for guidance only and are non-binding so you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.



Kanban helps to ensure you get what you want when you want it.

Holding stock is a necessary evil for most businesses. Not only is it costly, it can also be extremely difficult to get right. One week you are overstocked, the next you can't get enough. However, it does not have to be such a major issue if your product lends itself to being supplied via a kanban system.

So what is a kanban system and why should you use it? (Here is a link to Wikipedia for a definition <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanban>) Kanban has many advantages including reduced lead time, reduced stock holding, improved cash flow and reliable delivery when you need it. A Kanban system "pulls" stock through the process. Self-regulating the stock and when to build more. It is often linked with Just-In-Time (JIT) and Lean Manufacturing.



One of the simplest examples are fast food outlets such as McDonalds. There is a small kanban stock of burgers held on the slide. Customers "pull" orders on demand. As the quantity of burgers reduces on the slide the kitchen produces more. Each days sales will deplete the stock of parts i.e. burgers and buns, which in turn means orders / call offs are made on their suppliers ready for the next day.

So instead of burgers in McDonalds, think of PCBAs going through our SMD ovens to go onto the shelf ready for you to call off. As you "pull" these in more PCBAs (or finished assemblies) we pull in / buy more materials and then assemble more boards ready for you to "pull" when needed.

So what is the catch?

There has to be commitment on your part to underwrite the supply chain and to ensure you talk to us regularly about possible changes, ECNs and new designs. Not one system fits all. That is why we develop unique systems for each of our customers.

Currently we have 6 unique kanban systems in place for PCBAs and Final Assemblies accounting for approximately 40% of all our work. So stop pulling your hair out and let us look and see if a kanban would work for you.

Account Managers



Jo Seymour is our newest recruit in Account Management. Jo was previously working for MSC prior to them being merged into Avnet. Consequently Jo has excellent component and industry knowledge as well as general account management experience.



Enza Atreya joined us last Summer having been an account manager in the printing industry. With many similarities in the way production works at Speedboard to what Enza was used to with printing it has made the transition much smoother. Enza is from an Italian family which will make the world cup an interesting topic within the office.



Lesley Stokoe as some of you may know went on maternity leave a month or so ago. We are delighted to tell you that Lesley is now the proud mum of Edith. Mum, Dad and little Edith are all doing well and we wish them every happiness.

Long service awards

Having celebrated our company's 30th anniversary last year and awarded two members of staff their 25 years' service awards, it is our great pleasure to be awarding two more staff their long service awards.

Bhupinder Burmi (on the left) has reached her 20 years of service. To recognise the time Bhupinder has spent at Speedboard working very hard day in day out, it only seems fitting to reward her with some time to enjoy herself. Consequently we give an extra week's holiday to all staff who get to 20 years of service.

Jagir Wran (on the right) celebrates 25 years of service. Now working part time, Jagir has worked in Through Hole since she joined the company back in 1989. Over that time even hand soldering has changed. We now have no-clean fluxes, lead free solder and fancy new soldering irons that help to regulate power and temperatures. But you still need someone to do it.

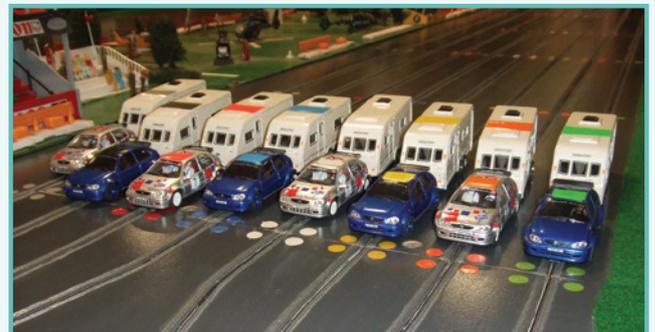
So to say thank you to Jagir for her dedication and loyalty we gave her a healthy budget and asked her to pick out a gift that she would cherish for years to come. Like Jas last year she chose a beautiful gold necklace.



Coming up...



Our management team have entered a Dragon boat competition at the Olympic venue - Dawney Lakes near Windsor. It might be a bit late for the Olympics, but should be a fun event for the team followed by one or two Pimms!



Our company party is booked in for the summer. This year staff and partners are being treated to great food, a disco, casino tables and an 8 track mega scalextric. These are normally fun evenings with a bit of something for everyone and we will publish some of the pictures next time.