

NOTE™

YOUR MANUFACTURING PARTNER

Technology for home schooling

In January 2021, when schools closed again in England, there was a national drive for companies and people to donate unwanted technology to help those families in need of technology for home schooling.



Since our computer upgrade last year, we had a good number of unwanted computers, screens, keyboards etc. We were pleased to have been able to donate 21 computers to our employees and their families to support their children's home schooling.

In addition, we have donated 10 computers to local schools in need of assistance during the pandemic.

Emerging from the storm

Whilst we have all been in the same pandemic storm, we have not all been in the same boat. The pandemic has affected us all differently and we are emerging feeling so many emotions. Whilst we have had our challenges, we are really proud of our staff, who have



kept to our rules and as a result we have not had a single COVID case either in or coming from the factory.

We are pleased that it looks like we can now see clear blue skies ahead.

Is Your Supply Chain Covered?

Significant long-term challenges facing the electronic components supply chain

Whilst the lock down restrictions ease, the electronics components supply market continues to face significant challenges; prices are going up and lead times are still increasing for all product technologies and late/failed deliveries are now commonplace. In addition, several manufacturers have experienced raw material cost increases which are being passed on and we expect this trend to continue.

The combination of the pandemic and strong economic factors in the market are driving demand to significantly exceed supply. Wafer fabs including test and assembly are now at or beyond full capacity.

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Capacity and Lead Time Issues

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On average, demand versus supply is in the range of 120%. For some materials, capacity is now critical, leading to unprecedented manufacturing lead time increases.

The latest market updates predict that electronic materials will remain in crisis for at least 18 months as capacity is put in place to meet demand.

To compound these challenges, the industry has had storms, earthquakes, manufacturing factory fires and freight reductions to contend with.

Managing the Supply Chain

Through our key supplier relationships and NOTE's Central Sourcing division, we receive regular manufacturer updates from our strategic distribution partners and forecast the forward trends.

For years we have worked on supply solutions that rely on "normal" lead times being sub eight weeks, backed up with buffer arrangements for lead times greater than eight weeks. Kanban, forecast and schedules have helped us build strong

and reliable supply chains. However, these are not enough to protect you (and us) from shortages today.

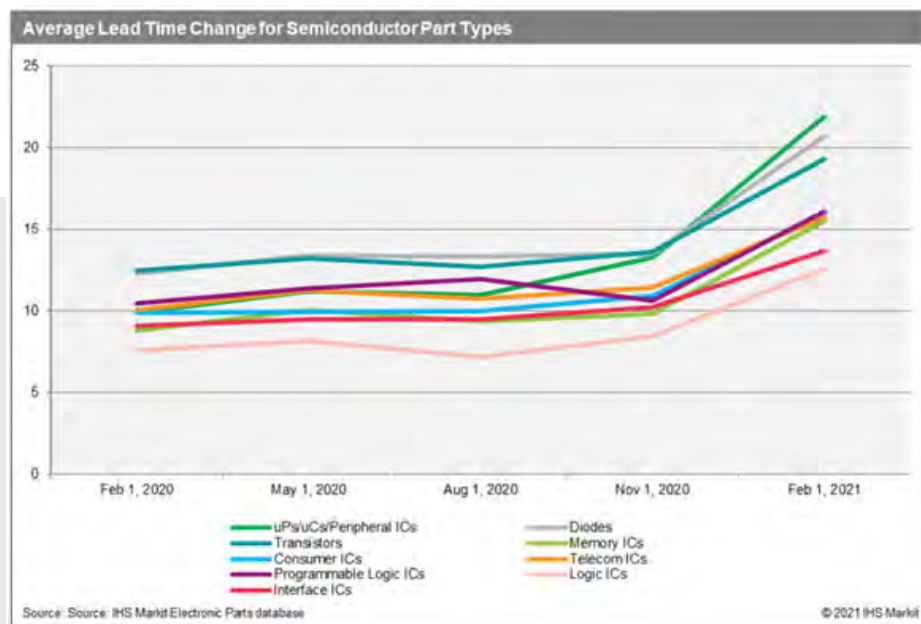
Placing orders and timely decisions

We continue to emphasize how dire the situation is. We therefore encourage our customers and OEMs to review their requirements to accommodate these increasing lead times.

If you have orders to place, please place them with some urgency going out 12 months on a rolling basis. We need timely decisions and approvals regarding price rises that clear shortages.

If you can provide us with long term visibility, the more we can plan and forecast, updating you with changing market conditions including price increases and lead times.

If you are in design stages for a project, then please include us in your discussions so that we can look at purchasing long lead time items in preparation for the final release of your product data.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
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Continued investment in new machinery

In a culture of continuous improvement, we take pride in supporting our customers by delivering the right quality through the best technology. To achieve this, we continue to invest in new machinery and have recently taken delivery of several new machines.

As part of NOTE Group, we are able to further strengthen our customer offering, enabling us to make these investments in technology. There are more investments planned for upgrading machinery in the coming months, which will further increase efficiency and capability.

New Ersas Hotflow 3/14e Convection Reflow Oven



We have taken delivery of a second new reflow oven, widely regarded as the best in its class, with the 7 zone heat tunnel and a process length of over 4 metres. It offers the highest throughput, optimised energy balance, best process control and maximum machine up-times, with the "e" standing for efficiency.

The equipment gives us the manufacturing capabilities to continue to deliver consistently high-quality, whilst PCBs get increasingly complex. It gives us stable processes, reproducible parameters and ensures high standards when it comes to quality costs and delivery performance.

Siemens Siplace SMT machines



We have taken delivery of three Siemens Siplace SMT machines.

This is a significant investment in capital equipment and will ensure that we have the correct capacity and capabilities to meet our growth strategy.

The major benefits of upgrading the Siemens Siplace SMT line to digital machines from the analogue machines, is that the machines are more modern, reliable and repeatable.

Key features of the Siemens Siplace SMT machines include:

- Fast and flexible gantry machine
- Flexible head combinations to meet every need
- Optimised transport conditions with the flexible dual conveyor
- Incredibly fast NPI with external set-up preparation and vision teaching.

DEK NEO Horizon screen printing machine



We have recently invested in another DEK NEO Horizon screen printing machine. With advances in machine design and technology, the new machine is far more accurate in the alignment of the stencil to the board. The coplanarity presentation of the board to the stencil is greatly increased across the board surface area giving a superior gasket seal between the board and stencil resulting in improvements in printing. The process repeat accuracy of the system is up to +/-20µm.

With the options we have equipped the machine with, it will enable us to keep a tighter control over the process resulting in higher yields:

- Hawkeye inspection
- Stinger
- Roll Height Monitor

Riddle

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What can point in every direction but can't reach the destination by itself.

Welcome back

We have been working hard behind the scenes during the past few months, continuing our journey as part of NOTE Group.

We're excited that the renovation of our reception and meeting rooms in Windsor is complete –it's all looking fantastic, the result of great teamwork.

We can't wait to be able to welcome you back when our doors reopen from 17th May.

Please give us a call to book a visit to see all the changes.



Tribute to HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

We were saddened to hear of the passing of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh. Our condolences to Her Majesty The Queen and the Royal Family.

On 22nd March 2013 we were delighted to have His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh visit our factory in Windsor as part of our 30 years of British Manufacturing celebrations. It was a day to remember. Prince Philip was exceptional, he was very interested in what we and our customers do, he chatted to staff and guests, made numerous jokes and comments, and demonstrated a remarkable talent for retaining information. We have very fond memories of meeting HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, may he rest in peace.



Our employees step up with donations to The Trussell Trust Food Bank Charity

It's a challenging time for everyone as the coronavirus pandemic continues. Food banks are grass roots, community organisations aimed at supporting people who cannot afford the essentials in life.

We have previously supported the Trussell Trust, which was set up in 1997 to bring communities together, regardless of faith, to end hunger and poverty in the UK.

Once again our employees have been very generous in their donations (made in a Covid secure way), filling the boot of Brendon Jones, NOTE Windsor's Logistics Manager, car – with tinned food, cereals, pasta and more.

The donations were gratefully received by volunteers Ana (left in photo) and Penny (centre), when Brendon (right) delivered them to the Kerith Community Church Food Bank which supports the Trussell Trust, in Bracknell on Friday 5th March 2021.



Celebrating 80 years of combined service

We are proud to have Peramjeet Basson, Rajwinder Bains and Pasbinder Basra on our team, as alongside our MD Neil Owen, they have all recently celebrated an impressive 20 years of service with us.

That's an amazing combined 80 years of service! We thank you all for your hard work, loyalty and commitment and hope you enjoy your well-deserved extra week of holiday.

Photo left to right: Peramjeet Basson, Rajwinder Bains, Pasbinder Basra and Neil Owen.



**Riddle
Answer**

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Your finger.