

Norcott EMS offers Rapid Prototype Assembly Service

Demonstrating its commitment to innovators of all sizes, Norcott EMS has come to ESS 2005 to showcase its new Rapid Prototype Assembly Service.

Developed in recognition of the pressures placed upon innovators bringing new products to market, frequently under onerous timescales, the Cheshire company's Rapid Prototyping Service offers high levels of service and support to customers - and unlike many organisations, often pre-contract.



Coming from a design background with the ability and expertise to assist in every stage of the process, Norcott EMS has developed the service to support product development programs, providing a valuable resource at every stage from the initial design right through to the final delivery of the finished prototypes.

As Managing Director, Pete Lomas, comments, the company's philosophy is all about flexibility and experience. He says: "We recognise that every project is different and that to deliver effectively on any challenge, we have to be able to offer the right services, at the right time, with consistent performance.

"For prototype volumes of between one and a hundred, our standard service is 3 to 5 days, but for critical projects we can manufacture within 24 or 48 hours, depending on the product complexity and the number of processes required. Our front end engineers work closely with the customers' engineering team to ensure that all procurement and engineering data is prepared ahead of the build date. Then, once the PCB is released for manufacture, we can finalise the bill of materials before commencing production."

Typically, components can take between 8-16 weeks to arrive, meaning that customers will have already secured long lead component procurement. Pete continues: "Our customers secure their key silicon as early as possible and then supply this 'free issue' along with any other long lead time items. That said, where necessary, we can identify and source the best component parts for a particular prototype ourselves. This takes the pressure off our customer from the early stages of any given project and we keep stock of other likely components from our standard inventory.

Offering both lead based and RoHS compliant (lead free) assembly processes, Norcott EMS recognises that quality and flexibility are paramount. All products, including single prototypes, are machine built, providing quality and consistency that cannot be matched by hand assembly methods. Pete adds: "Machine assembly has the added benefit of identifying potential volume production issues which can be rectified at an early stage. This can potentially save a design iteration, reducing development costs and reducing time to market."

A production engineer is always allocated to every project to ensure that everything flows smoothly and to give customers a key point of contact throughout the process. Any problems or changes in delivery time are anticipated and communicated straight away, ensuring that key decisions can be made with the benefit of a full appreciation of the project and the way in which it is progressing at any time. Pete continues: "Thanks to our efficient change management system, we can accommodate any late modifications and our experienced production engineers can advise on proposed changes to minimise the effect on product delivery."

With a placement capacity of over 3million components per month, Norcott EMS is capable of handling mid-volume production runs. Pete concludes: "We understand that many of our customers have their own manufacturing facilities or established high volume production routes via off-shore partners. Where that is the case, we can provide strategic in-fill manufacturing whilst this capacity is brought on line to cover unexpected production requirements. We are prepared to be there as a contingency should a customer need to produce a short run of a product - we will always work around our customers' requirements and be as flexible as possible.

"Our whole philosophy is based on service, quality and flexibility. Our Rapid Prototyping Service is part of that and we know that through our holistic approach, we can make a significant difference and help our customers to achieve their goals."