

Cutting time, cost and complexity with lean, the JJS way

Following recent economic challenges, lean principles are now more relevant than ever – a fact not lost on JJS Electronics which has long been fully committed to the principles of lean manufacturing. Today, the EMS provider has built its reputation on an ability to save customers time, cost and complexity, a move which is proving an important differentiator as the industry emerges from the recent global downturn.

Based in the UK and Czech Republic, the JJS Electronics Business is focused on diverse prototype through to medium volume assembly work. When the company opened its additional manufacturing facility in Chomutov in the Czech Republic, it offered customers the dual benefits of offshore manufacturing and the security of working with a UK company. The resultant success of this model has been driven by the effective implementation of relevant lean philosophies. Operations Director for the JJS Czech facility, Derek Williams, explains: “Our view is that people are the key to business success; it was from that cornerstone that everything in our plan was progressed. Language was recognised as an immediate challenge and so that too became a significant plan component. To this day, the significance of our recruiting methodology and the roles that JJS personnel play remains key to our lean lines philosophy and in turn, our overall business model.”

Today, JJS possesses a special proficiency in non-electronics based precision mechanical assembly techniques, known as mechatronics. Added to PCB, cable, electrical and system assembly, this activity represents an integrated manufacturing service beyond basic PCB assembly. Naturally, complex mechanical assemblies demand high levels of skill. At JJS, this is the product of a lean process that includes the continuous breakdown of all build procedures with the objective to ‘de-skill’ each element to boost the scalability and consistency with which complex electro-

mechanical systems can be produced. In the context of line balancing, this includes time trials and the analysis of work content present in each process step.

NPI and short run manufacturing projects demand a special balance of set-up and production skills and are not conducive to extensive and potentially unreliable assembly documentation. JJS has developed a training process which promotes step-by-step analysis supported by pictorial guidance, ideal for assembly operations involving mixed model lines. JJS also rewrites customer documentation as standard, incorporating BoM analysis to process map and balance workflow. Other lean practices include an integrated closed loop test strategy focused on fault prevention rather than repair. Derek concludes: “Thanks to our implementation of lean, our international direct order fulfilment and distribution capabilities enable customers to outsource logistics and after-sales responsibility to us. This often means they don’t touch their products before they are delivered to their customers - reducing lead-time, improving inventory efficiency, minimising material storage and cutting logistics costs.”

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About JJS Electronics Ltd.

JJS Electronics Ltd. is a UK-based EMS company with facilities in Lutterworth, England and Chomutov, Czech Republic. With an established record of providing reliable and cost-effective electronics, electrical and mechanical contract manufacturing services, JJS delivers a full range of EMS services including design for test, design for manufacturing, PCB assembly, mechanical assembly and system assembly. The company’s comprehensive EMS portfolio is supported by robust material procurement, inventory management, component engineering and test services. Serving a wide range of industries, the company has a strong presence in market sectors including communications, industrial controls, IT, medical and scientific instrumentation.

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