

Find the perfect NPI partner

The key to successful new product introduction (NPI) with a CEM partner is early involvement at the design stage, says managing director of Elite Electronic Systems, David Allen



Managing director at Elite Electronic Systems, David Allen

Supporting customer innovation is familiar territory for Elite Electronic Systems, which has developed a continuously improving new product introduction (NPI) process.

Elite's most successful customers avail of a full turnkey service, which allows them to focus on research and development, ongoing product development and continuously launching new products in the market place. This progression has placed demands on production schedules.

For example, In July 2013 Elite built a total of 37 prototypes for existing customers. This included new products, redesigns and engineering changes and upgrades. Add into this mix the prototyping and product

development Elite provides for a range of start-ups that will hopefully become key long term partners. NPI is therefore an integral part of the manufacturing set up at Elite.

David explained: "We work with customers to deliver their products on time and within budget. NPI is vital for new customers, so is a vital element of any manufacturing strategy we provide for them."

Design expertise

Throughout NPI, Elite will work with the customer's design team, collaborating on two key elements of any project: design for manufacture (DFM) and design for test (DFT).

David said: "This may seem like putting the cart before the horse, but experience has taught us that the most effective and efficient transition to commercial manufacture happens when DFM and DFT are included in the concept and design phase. We have developed processes that we know will result in a seamless transition to volume manufacture."

As the norm during NPI, Elite's customers can expect prototypes of a high standard. All prototypes are programmed into the

system as if they were being programmed for a production run. This includes creating a bill of materials (BOM), material order, Gerber files and all manufacturing files.

Smooth transition

A comprehensive project file is accrued using this detailed documentation. This file becomes an invaluable resource as Elite's customers bring products through NPI and hand them over for volume production. Since time to market is vital for prototypes, Elite utilises a specially designated surface mount line to assemble prototypes and smaller volumes.

The key to Elite's success is an early involvement in design and initial product production, identifying the manufacturing difficulties that will become expensive and time consuming to treat further down the production plan.

Elite is attending ES Live this year, following a successful show in 2013, and looks forward to talking with any companies looking to bring new products to market in partnership with a responsive and flexible electronics manufacturing service (EMS) provider.

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