

# REASONS TO KEEP YOUR MANUFACTURING BRITISH

SMS Electronics' sales and marketing director, Chris Hunt, offers electronics buyers five strong reasons to retain their manufacturing services on British shores



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**The Real Costs:** The hidden costs of manufacturing offshore are seldom recognised when choosing a contract electronics manufacturer. Some think it must be cheaper to buy offshore, yet in many instances it's simply not the case. The cost of a modern SMT placement line purchased and operated in the UK is the same as an offshore facility. Some companies focus on the cost price per unit, rather than the full cost of ownership once other costs are added: including packaging, shipping, advance payments and travel for engineering support staff.

**Time to market:** A UK manufacturer can be invaluable during the development and introduction of a new product. Take for instance rapid prototype builds where SMS offers customers machine built prototypes in five-days (standard) or three-days (fast) from receipt of materials, plus the ability to talk to engineering staff about any last minute design issues and changes. Try doing this in an offshore environment involving a different language, different time zone and extended logistics. What is the cost of delaying a prototype when software engineers are waiting for hardware?

**Future proof manufacturing:** The UK has some entrepreneurs with exciting concepts who require a full array of manufacturing technologies and capabilities. Engineers need to be able to select components knowing their manufacturing partner can process them. A UK manufacturer with modern equipment and processes developed across a range of challenging applications and sectors

can add real value. Even if companies don't require all the capabilities now, they may in the future. When required, it's available on an activity based cost model so they only pay for what they use.

**Flexibility:** UK Manufacturing has obvious flexibility advantages. Customers often have constantly changing needs, particularly product variants and quantities, where it's impossible to predict what configurations their customers will want when placing the original order. For example, a standard product can be built, with configuration taking place the day prior to shipment. This eliminates the need to stock all variants. This is the opposite of offshore suppliers who typically fill a container with finished goods, prior to six weeks transit to the UK.

**Cradle-to-grave service:** Choosing a UK manufacturing partner who offers services from design to direct shipment to the end customer is one thing. However, add full lifecycle support, including repair facilities, service stock holding, logistics, refurbishment and controlled WEEE disposal and you have discovered something you are unlikely to find outside the UK.

 [www.smselectronics.co.uk](http://www.smselectronics.co.uk)