



SURFACE MOUNT TECHNOLOGY (HOLDINGS) LIMITED

Steadfast and Service Minded

From Southern China's industrial boom through Hong Kong's economic difficulties, PROFESSOR CHAN KEI BIU has ensured the electronic manufacturing services provider stays in peak form.

The Pearl River Delta was a godsend to Chinese industry in the latter part of the 20th century, as a major global manufacturing base. In the 1980s and 1990s, a surging demand for contract manufacturing services, including electronics, created many opportunities for newly established enterprises. Among them was Surface Mount Technology (Holdings) Limited (SMT), founded by Professor Chan Kei Biu in 1986.

The Asian region was highly attractive for its cost competitiveness, and strong, well-developed supply base. Many electronics and telecommunications OEMs in Japan, South Korea, USA and Europe made use of contract manufacturers. By the mid-1990s, the compelling advantages of the electronic manufacturing services (EMS) concept, evident in its rapid growth, led OEMs to begin outsourcing printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) in large scale. Attaining and sustaining a distinguished position in the business, SMT now prides itself in offering a full spectrum of electronic production capabilities and solutions.

Lean and Green

"Our corporate DNA can be summed up as 'Measuring and Questioning'. It is a long-term sustainable strategy," says Professor Chan. "Measuring is not just a system of measurement. It relates with a relative comparison of entity performance of a peer group. We are always measuring all kinds of things against peer and industry. Questioning can result in creating our own assessments. We always ask how we can improve it. Besides – environmental concerns, community, business ethics and people should also be



SMT Founder, Chairman
and Senior Managing Director
Professor Chan Kei Biu.

considered in the business."

In line with this, SMT made the shift to a digital factory. This takes advantage of continuous real-time measurements, analyses and in-line quality inspections. Faced with the pressures of global competition and rising costs of materials, SMT has also been adopting lean and green manufacturing. Combined, these approaches further contribute to the company's competitiveness.

With over 25 years of experience in electronic manufacturing services, the company promises better components, logistics and support, having established reliable supply sources, good relationships with vendors and an efficient infrastructure and logistics network. It also consistently introduces the newest equipment and offers materials management as well as thorough design reviews before and after any prototype build, preventing costly manufacturing problems.

Fine-tuned to move forward

As with all Hong Kong's enterprises, the company's resilience was tested in



the region's consecutive economic downturns between 1998 and 2008, and requiring many adaptations and adjustments. SMT's current business model concentrates on sustainability, focusing on industrial and commercial applications including industrial controls, automotive electronics, beauty and healthcare, retail technology, security devices and industrial power supply.

Having established a reputation for reliability, integrity and quality management systems, the company looks to remain perfectly competitive for the long run. "SMT must not be left behind and should build unique characteristics which make it different from others and become a business game changer," says Professor Chan. "We could be revenue-driven but still centered on growth and innovation." ■

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