

# BLUNDELL

## PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT

NEWS

## Blundell Newsletter 2024

### Welcome to our January 2024 Newsletter!

We hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year! We are pleased to report that 2023 was another strong year for investment in capital equipment within the UK. One of the negatives was that lead-times from order placement to onsite delivery were extremely protracted, which followed the trend of 2022. We know this is a Global problem that runs across all manufacturing sectors but of course, this doesn't make it any easier to manage. However, we hope things will improve throughout the Year.

### More Focused Technology Events for 2024

Our decision to run three focused technology events was very well received by customers. We ran an [Ersa Selective Soldering](#) event in March, [Schunk Automatic Depanelling](#) event in May and a [PBT Aqueous Cleaning](#) event in October. Based on the success of these events we are pleased to announce that we will continue with this theme during 2024. Our first event will be two, one day seminars ([12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March](#)) in partnership with [Kurtz Ersa on SMT Rework](#). Further events will follow and be announced in due course.





We can confirm that once again Blundell will be exhibiting at Southern Manufacturing. However, this year we will be on a larger stand in a different location to previous years. We will be showcasing a **Kurtz Ers** Smartflow Selective Soldering system, a **Yamaha YSi-V 3-D, Hi-speed, high dual beam AOI system** and **PBT CompaClean III fully closed loop aqueous cleaning system**. In addition, we will have some **Optical Inspection** aids from **Visus Technology** and a **HR550A SMT Rework system** from **Kurtz Ers**, all on stand **H120**. Our Sales Team will be looking forward to meeting both existing and new customers to discuss how our extensive product portfolio could assist them with their own process equipment requirements.



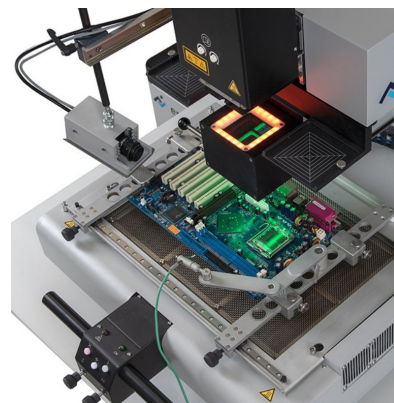
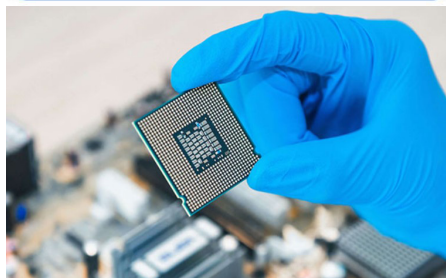
## Demand for SMT Rework Increasing kurtz ers

A positive trend throughout 2023 was the increased demand for rework systems. One such company is Reading based **Quick Circuits**, who specialize in quick turnaround prototype work with their own in-house manufacturing and assembly facilities, which they have been doing for over 48 years. They offer turnaround of PCBs in 3-5 Days, and PCBA's in 10-15 days (quicker if needed)

Darren Smith explains their reason for investment: "Noticing that BGA's have become more and more frequent in assemblies over the past few years, together with being asked more and more often from our customers if we are able to replace or to retrofit various components from BGA's to fine pitch connectors, we took the decision to research automated rework stations to further increase our production efficiency.

Blundell subsequently invited us to their premises to give a demonstration of their Ers HR 550 which was very informative and the professionalism from Keith and David was second to none. What quickly became apparent was how simple and user friendly the software was together with the smoothness and precision of the machine itself. It really was a no brainer, the Ers HR 550 was exactly what we wanted, and an order was swiftly made.

Having had the Ers HR 550 for a couple of months now it has lived up to our initial evaluation and has proved to be a real asset to Quick Circuits. It provides us with absolute confidence to carry out certain processes with complete accuracy and the quality that Quick Circuits Ltd strive to deliver."



If you would like to find out more about the services **Quick Circuits** offer, Please give their sales team a call on 0118 950 8921 or send your request to [sales@quick-circuits.com](mailto:sales@quick-circuits.com) and they will be able to assist you.

## Closed Loop Aqueous PCB Cleaning

Since becoming **PBT's** UK sales partner at the start of 2021, we have seen a significant increase in companies wanting to clean post-soldered PCBs. Czech based PBT offer a wide range of closed loop, batch aqueous systems.

Located on the South Coast, CEM **Fermionx** purchased a SuperSwash III during 2023. Marketing Manager, Sarah Kneath expands on the reason for this investment:

As a company we're always looking to improve the services we offer to our customers and minimise quality issues. Our extensive testing protocols ensure perfect electronics manufacturing consistency on higher quality jobs. Whether it's a critical instrument in the medical and laboratory industry or a display unit in a military helicopter. And as a result, Fermionx wanted to invest in a cleaning machine which was more efficient, performed better and was suitable to work with jobs requiring conformal coating.

Having worked closely with Blundell on a number of purchases over the years and knowing their team well, we approached them with the view to upgrade to a new machine. After discussing our requirements with Keith and the team, they provided us with a comprehensive review with a number of options.



Blundell's knowledge and expert advice is truly valued here, and we were confident in the decision we made based on their recommendations to purchase the PBT Super Swash machine.

The aftercare we receive from Blundell is the reason we continue to work with them and they were on hand throughout the process. From initial quote, to installation and training.

Surface Mount Manager, Chris Rhodes has been incredibly impressed with the SuperSwash saying:

"It's very user friendly and takes no time at all to train someone how to operate it" adding that the "programming is also very simple and can be done in a few easy steps. When operating in a busy production facility this time saving is vital to us."

One feature that attracted the team to the SuperSwash III is that it is able to clean both PCBs and stencils.

This not only removes the need to have two machines taking up a lot of space, it also uses a lot less energy.

The ability to clean stencils has also improved first time printing as they are left extremely clean after washing." Production Manager, Neil Irving explained why this is important to us.

"The reliability of the machine makes it much easier to plan the cleaning process into the build schedule and helps us keep to delivery dates. Further adding to the excellent service we can offer to our customers."

If you would like to find out more about the services **Fermionx** offer, Please contact their sales team [sales@fermionx.com](mailto:sales@fermionx.com) and they will be able to assist you

## Productronica 2023

Some of the Blundell Team travelled out to **Productronica** during November. Normally, this biyearly show is one we never miss but because of the constantly changing Covid situation during November 2021 we took the decision not to attend. We are pleased to report that the Show was extremely busy and it was great to spend time with our OEM Partners and also see many UK customers too.



The Team from CEM **Newbury Electronics** on the Erska booth. Newbury recently took delivery of a **four pot Versaflex™ Versaflow 455 Selective soldering machine** and also a **PBT CompaClean III**.



With our OEM partner, **EMT Electronics**. The demand for their **X-treme** Range of humidity cabinets has been growing rapidly over the past couple of years. Replenishing our stock levels has been a constant theme through 2023!

## Blundell CMS400 Update

As many of you are aware, because of component obsolescence we had to make the difficult decision to discontinue the manufacturing of our own wave solder machine. This was not a decision we took lightly but there was absolutely no choice. Rest assured that we will do our very best to support existing, direct Blundell customers with their CMS400s in the field. Many of these machines were originally sold in the 1990s, so they have definitely stood the test of time. Whilst we have been very successful with the larger **Powerflow** range of Wave machines from Kurtz Erska, and in parallel with this, the ever-growing demand for Selective Soldering machines (also from Erska) we do recognize that the size of the CMS400 is still desirable for some UK customers. Therefore, we are working with our partners to introduce something similar to the size and spec of the CMS400. We hope to release more information in the next few months. We are aware there are some machines of Far East origin being offered to current CMS400 users at the moment, but we really do believe the new Erska machine would be a better option and it would

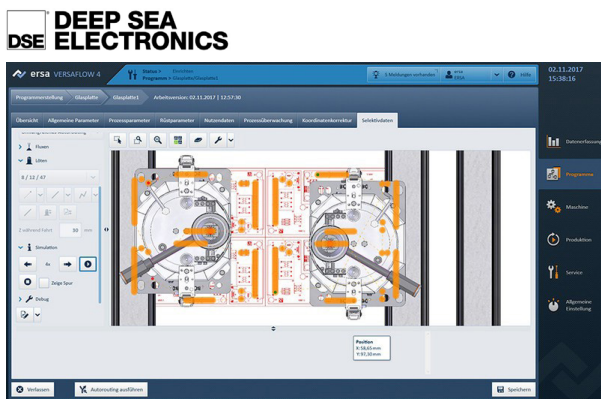


be disadvantageous to choose a lesser known brand because of support and longevity issues associated with these lower cost alternatives. We saw similar activity in 2006 with the introduction of lead-free systems and machines imported from the Far East. However, many of those customers who were tempted by these supposedly low-cost machines did come back to us in just a few years – in some cases, even sooner so we expect the same again here. Please bear with us, it will be worth the wait!

## Selective Soldering Growth kurtz ersa

Whilst the UK Electronic Industry is a mature market, more and more companies are recognising the benefits of selective soldering for PTH components as a majority of PCB designs incorporate SMT devices mounted on both sides. Not only has 2023 been a record year for us with Ersa selective machine sales, we are now not only selling to first time selective users, but we are also replacing existing machines from our competitors.

## DEEP SEA Electronics dive deeper into selective soldering



After extensive evaluation trials where high throughput and solder joint quality were the main criteria, we are proud to be selected by **Deep Sea Electronics** to supply and commission the next generation of ERSA's flagship **Selective soldering machines**. The **ERSA Versaflow 4** configured with two **VersaFlex™** dual pot modules (giving a total of 4 solder pots, all working independently), further enhances Deepsea's manufacturing capability as well as adding to their already growing portfolio of ERSA Machines.

Deep Sea Electronics is one of the world's top manufacturers of generator controllers, auto transfer switch controllers, battery chargers and vehicle & off-highway controllers. They employ over 200 people across four continents and sell products to 150 countries direct from their UK head office and manufacturing facility in Hunmanby, North Yorkshire.

Quality has been the cornerstone of their business since the journey began 40 years ago. The ERSA Versaflow 4 Selective soldering system gives them the capabilities to manufacture with the quality they demand with even higher throughputs than previously obtained.

## Other News



It has also been another good year for **IBL Vapour Phase** machines and **Yamaha Placement** with some large turnkey installations.

For the first time we have actually produced a full, hardcopy Blundell Product catalogue – these can be requested or picked up at Southern Manufacturing!

Lastly we'd like to thank every customer for their continued support over this past 12 months. We really appreciate your business and never take anything for granted. Furthermore, we continually strive to improve our levels of both pre and post sales support. You will notice that we have increased our service team to 12 engineers and also have a dedicated Service Manager. Whilst many customers contact engineers directly, we now have a first point of contact for all service-related enquiries which is [service@blundell.co.uk](mailto:service@blundell.co.uk) Of course, for extremely urgent assistance, the telephone is still the most direct route.

We hope to see many customers in February at SM2024 and also at our Focused Technology events throughout the year. We wish all our customers a very happy and healthy 2024!