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Contax Installs 10+ ATF Wave Soldering Systems

Production automation system specialist, Contax Ltd, has just installed more than 10 ATF wave soldering systems throughout the UK and Ireland. One new user is Henkel, the worldwide conglomerate, who are using it at their global centre of excellence for soldering product development. Other users include Europe's largest domestic fan manufacturer, Manrose Manufacturing Ltd, and manufacturer of audio and video equipment, TV One Ltd.

For some organisations, the ATF system was a replacement to handle lead-free fluxes, whilst for others it was an upgrade to provide greater consistency and flexibility. However, both Manrose and TVOne commented that service and support was also a key factor in their decision.

TV One

TV One purchased the ATF 23-33 system in order to comply with the lead-free directive, as upgrading their existing system was not cost-effective.

“We chose the ATF for a number of reasons,” commented Cassandra Laslett, Production Manager at TV One. “It had all the features we needed including a chip wave for double sided circuit boards and a spray fluxer for water-based and alcohol free fluxes. Added to this, it was reasonably priced and it came from Contax.

“The latter was important to us,” she continued. “We had purchased a Contact Systems placement system from them, and we knew that Contax provided an excellent level of support.

“This proved very useful to us, as we had a learning curve with both a new machine and lead-free processes. Contax helped smooth the way by responding very quickly to any teething problems, and ensuring that we were happy. They are very reliable and have been fantastic,” said Cassandra.

Manrose

Manrose selected ATF's finger conveyor 23-33F system, again partly due to the features of the system, but also because of the service received from Contax.

"We wanted a system that was easy to work on, fitted within the space available and offered the necessary features," explained Simon Figg, Electronics Production Manager at Manrose Manufacturing Ltd.

"We identified 2 machines that could do the job, but the ATF had the advantage. It has a large pot of solder, which is removed from the front of the machine rather than the back, so servicing is very easy. This also means that the unit can be placed against the wall, so saving us space.

He continued, "Another factor was that we knew Contax was a reliable and sound supplier. We have been dealing with them for about 5 or 6 years, and the service has always been beyond the call of duty. One of our systems is obsolete, yet Contax found us another machine for spares. They needn't have gone to all that trouble, but they wanted to look after us. We value that level of service.

"Needless to say, the ATF is working well, and Contax have another happy customer," he said.

Henkel

Henkel purchased one of the largest ATF models, the 33-40, as it needed a robust machine that could be used to develop liquid fluxes for the electronics industry.

Explained Steve Cooper, Facility Manager, RD&E at Henkel Technologies, "We are Henkel's global centre of excellence for soldering product development. The wave solder is therefore be used for the development, evaluation and testing of liquid fluxes. We have been lead-free for a while, but wanted to upgrade our old system as it was small and rather basic".

Henkel's primary requirement was for a strong and reliable system, that was easy to maintain and needed minimal adjustments. Other criteria included consistency of results and flexibility.

Continued Steve, "We looked at a number of machines. Some were unsuitable as they had a large footprint, and others were over specified. Some looked good on paper, but when we discovered that they were manufactured in the Far East, we were concerned about the UK support network.

"We were very impressed by the build quality of the ATF machine and accessibility – there are facets of the machine that make maintenance very simple and straightforward, and that was key for us. The machine has lived up to all our expectations and we have been very happy with our choice of machine and supplier," he finished.

About Contax

Contax is one of the UK and Ireland's most comprehensive suppliers of automation equipment. Products range from PCB assembly, automatic optical and x-ray inspection, reflow solder, screen printing, precision liquid dispensing, cable preparation, robotic soldering and robotic assembly as well as cleaning systems. All of this is backed up by Contax's after sales operation and an extensive second user department to fully support their installed base.

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Note to editors: Please email: Angelina@arturi-pr.co.uk for a high resolution photo of the ATF-33 wave soldering system below.

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