

Company Article
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Smart Made Simple (SMS) Discusses The impact of Coronavirus on Quality, Health & Safety

Interview with Andy Jones, QHSE Manager for Smart Made Simple (SMS)

In electronics manufacturing, the Quality, Health & Safety, and Environmental (QHSE) Manager typically oversees conformity, and stability of product quality. Skilled in Quality Management (ISO9001:2015 & ISO13485:2016), and Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA), Andy Jones has been performing this task for SMS, Smart Made Simple, for the past 15 years.

We took some time to talk to Andy about what's involved with SMS' approach to quality control and monitoring, and how SMS differs from the typical contract manufacturer.

Q – Hi, Andy, please share with us what you do –

Andy: I look after our Quality Management Systems, that are certified by BSI to ISO 9001:2015, and ISO 13485:2016 (for Medical Devices) – making sure that every procedure that we follow meets our own requirements, and also the requirements of these standards. The QA Team at SMS makes sure that the guys performing these manufacturing activities follow the defined procedures correctly.



Q – What markets do SMS build for?

Andy: We are manufacturing high reliability product for Communications, IOT, space, medical devices, transportation and also for offshore wind farms, places that are not easily accessed to fix products that require repair. So, the products manufactured by SMS need to be right first time, and they need to work continuously.

Q – Please describe your approach to quality control and how you handle customer requests.

Andy: In my role, it's important for SMS to have a figurehead who is responsible for making sure that what we're doing is correct and meets all our customers' requirements, as well as regulatory and standard requirements. I'm also responsible for ensuring that we're doing the process audits, performing the checks; and that we're doing what we say we should do as well as providing all of the matrix for our customer quarterly business reviews..

We get a lot of requirements from customers, and many of them are cosmetic requirements. The product needs to meet certain cosmetic criteria, since they (the Customers) have an expectation from their marketing team. Part of my department's role is ensuring that the products we make, meet those requirements.



Q – How is SMS improving on product design and process efficiency?

Andy: We’re looking to continually improve what we do, take what we do already and doing it better, more efficiently, and smarter, whilst maintaining the effectiveness of what we do. So, any actions that we take, we want make sure they are not detrimental to the conformity of the product.

Q - Can you give us an example?

Andy: One of those improvements is the Analysis Lab. The X-ray machine is one of the investments we made several years ago when we started to look at smaller components, BGA type components where you can’t see the solder joint. The only way you can do that is to use nondestructive visual inspection such as the X-ray machine. We’re also looking at the surface mount placement process itself. We’ve done continuous improvement in working with the manufacturing machine to look at how can we place those smaller components, and also how do we rework them. How do you get to the point where you can actually replace a component that’s the size of a grain of sand?

Q – How do you maintain high quality whilst managing costs effectively?

Andy: The way we can achieve this, we like to standardize across the board. We’ve got standard acceptance criteria; we work to the IPC-A-610 standards. Normally to Class 2, but we have capabilities to go up to Class 3 for high-reliability product. So, everyone on the shop floor has received that training. What we try to do is take away the variable that a product is low volume or high mix, high or low complexity – it’s a standard price for a product with standard criteria that we accept.

We do have individual product work instructions that we use for our colleagues on the shop floor, to tell them how to put together individual products, because we have customer-specific requirements. But generically, it’s all standard work for SMS.

Q – How has the Coronavirus pandemic had an impact on SMS’ ability to operate?

Andy: SMS have been very fortunate to have been in a position whereby we have been able to continue operations throughout the pandemic. We have implemented “working from home” for as many office-based colleagues as possible. For those of us who have continued to come to work in the factory on a

daily basis, we have implemented processes and procedures that have ensured all of our colleagues have been able to Keep Safe by maintaining Social Distancing at all times. We are continually reviewing these processes and procedures, and updating our Coronavirus Risk Assessment, in line with changing Government Guidance.



After all, it's SMS – Smart Made Simple! Watch our short film with Andy Jones here: <https://youtu.be/KLkSu9HGoXY>.

About Smart Made Simple – SMS

The U.K.'s leading Manufacturing Service Provider.

From concept to creation, to commercialisation, to customer, for all technology companies. Whether you are a start-up, or an established household brand name, if you have a design, engineering, manufacturing or supply chain problem, thanks to the diversity of our experience and scalable service, SMS has the solution.

Since 1920, SMS has manufactured electronics products from the same home in Nottingham, U.K. For over 100 years, we have been the company behind the ideas, offering agile and adaptive supply chain solutions, that bring products to market faster, smarter and simpler.

Leader in the specialist low volume, highly complex manufacturing services market space, SMS has earned critical industry facility certifications, that brings full viability and credibility to the aerospace & defence, communications, industrial and medical markets. SMS brings the right scale, capabilities and competitive solutions to customers needing high-reliability attention, product realisation and supply chain optimisation.

For further information, visit www.smartmadesimple.com.

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If you have any questions about this article or any services/solutions that Smart Made Simple (SMS) offer, please contact Director of Sales & Marketing, [Steven Blyth on 07972308037](mailto:Steven.Blyth@sms-electronics.com).