

RISE OF THE SPECIALIST DISTRIBUTOR

Specialist distributors share a common attribute - expertise in their chosen technology. That's why everything about DMTL is passive, except its customer support

With most component manufacturers looking to increase their policy of dealing only with larger accounts, it is left to distributors to work alongside small to medium sized companies and help them with their component selection, design and integration.

Specialist distributors come in all shapes, sizes and disciplines but they almost all have several things in common: expertise in their chosen area of specialisation and a willingness to help customers with their design and component application issues. This is why many specialist distributors have enjoyed sustained growth over the past two years while many of their larger, broad-based counterparts have been pretty much flat.

Such distributors are often long established and staffed not by mere 'order takers' but by qualified and experienced individuals capable of helping customers make the most of the products on offer. Remember also that not every specialist distributor operates at the so called fashionable end of the product spectrum.

Distributed Micro Technology, better known as DMTL, has been operating for almost 25 years, working alongside a number of component manufacturers helping customers to integrate the latest passive components into their designs. These suppliers include AVX, Kyocera, Coilmaster and Keko Varicon.

As a result, DMTL is now recognised by many as a leading supplier of circuit protection devices, frequency control components, resistors, capacitors and specialist connectors as well as a variety of ceramic devices and sensors.

Design is key

According to DMTL, its specialist design and component integration expertise is what suppliers look for in the UK and Europe. This is important since there has been a seemingly unstoppable trend towards moving high volume manufacturing from Europe to the Far East and to other emerging economies.

This is not the case, however, for product design and development and DMTL is currently helping many UK OEMs and

their global CEM partners with all manner of design initiatives. While many of these projects have been in development for several years, the past couple of years have seen a rise in what the company calls 'express' development projects. Customers have recognised that to compete globally they must continually redesign current models or develop entirely new products on an increasingly regular basis.

DMTL's role, specifically as a design distributor, has been acknowledged by these companies, many of whom are market leaders in sectors such as power supplies, automotive systems, lighting, medical electronics and aerospace and defence.

The long view

DMTL's commercial manager, Pete Jones, said: "DMTL's ability to help facilitate entirely new designs can often go relatively unrewarded for several years since new products can take a while to enter full scale production. Our suppliers recognise this investment and work alongside us supporting DMTL with their newest technologies to ensure we give our customers the best technical help around.

"Supplier support is also important at times like these when extended component lead times are a significant issue.

"We have worked with the majority of our suppliers for many years and continue to add new lines to ensure we can always offer the very latest technology across our areas of passive components expertise."

DMTL is ideally placed to benefit from the growing importance placed on design in the UK and Europe. Typically, passive components occupy a huge percentage of a circuit board in quantity if not in value and those distributors who are true specialists will continue to play a vital role in propelling customers' end products to market.

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