

Brief

Stamping Ideas Into Reality

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Smarter Cars Born of Intelligent Processes

In October, Die-Tech Business Development Engineer, Matt Conaway, attended the 2007 Vehicle Dynamics and Automotive Testing Expo in Novi, Michigan. His goal was to obtain market research that would help Die-Tech keep abreast of market trends. "We try to identify the design changes that will affect our customers", relates Conaway. "When they come to us for a manufacturing design, we want to be in a position to offer options up front."

Two significant market trends discussed at the exposition were the emergence of new Electronic Stability Control Systems (ESC) technology and the move from ceramic substrates in control modules to the use of higher temperature printed circuit board (PCB) materials.

One challenge for auto designers is to maximize the safety, comfort, handling/response, and traction of vehicles with the use of sensors that provide feedback to vehicle controls systems. ESC, which is mandated by NHTSA to be designed in 2012 and later model years, will add vehicle positioning components to the vehicles network of sensors and control modules. Automotive suppliers are likely to see increased demand for sensors and control modules to support the need for ESC data and processing.

Conaway reveals that a technology common to several manufacturers is likely to change as lower cost manufacturing methods are becoming apparent. With the advancements in higher temperature resistant plastics, the lower cost PCB materials such as flame retardant PCB are targeted as a cost improvement opportunity. The materials themselves might be cheaper and their less-brittle nature makes attachment technologies less costly. This could



also result in a reduction in the number of stampings within each module.

Die-Tech engineering is already considering connector designs that will enable customers to respond and capitalize on new market trends quickly and with minimal pain through some standards Die-Tech will offer. Conaway explains how new designs will help their

customers save money. "Our expertise in helping to ensure the manufacturability of a design will reduce our customers' risk, time, and expense to get their part to market by working alongside our customers when they need a completely custom interconnect, and by offering pre-designed options where appropriate. The pre-designed options have the potential to save one week or more in building a die and we believe it will reduce total design time by 30% per connector," relates Conaway.

Does your current stamping supplier keep their ear to the ground to help you stay on top of trends in your market? Perhaps it is time to start a conversation with Die-Tech, we take your challenges seriously.

Win a gift certificate! Send your suggestions for Die-Tech product improvements to ideabox@die-tech.com and you will be entered in our quarterly drawing for \$50.00.

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