

SAE Circuit's Dan Spencer, Director of Operations

Dan B: Dan, Thanks for doing this this. First tell us something about SAE Circuits.

Dan S: Dan, SAE Circuits has been in business at the same Boulder Colorado location for 45 plus years. The company was founded by San Jose based entrepreneur Ben Yates to respond to the emerging data storage companies in Colorado in the 70's. A little known fact is that APCT in San Jose was a sister division of ours and has been reborn by Steve Robinson and grown into one of North America's premier board manufacturers.

Dan B: What makes your company outstanding? What do you do well?

Dan S: There are two things that really make SAE an outstanding circuit board manufacturer to partner with; our people and our commitment to customer service. I realize that everybody always claims these attributes, but at SAE we truly do have a core team of dedicated, experienced people who are steadfast in making the customer's experience the best it can be. Our people are the reason that we can accomplish the results for our customers that we do; it's not the equipment or the infrastructure. SAE has built a solid reputation for the highest levels of customer service and flexibility. Over the years, we have worked with our customers to solve their board issues, whether it was delivery, quality or technology related. Years ago I remember one of my customer's mantras – "It's not enough to satisfy your customer, you need to delight them with every interaction." That is what we are striving for each and every day.

Dan B: What kind of customers do you serve?

Dan S: Since we have been in business for so long, many of our customers have been with us for over 10 plus years and we believe that that is the best testimony to our focus on making the customer experience the best we can. Like most of our peers in the industry, our customer base is a mix of OEM and contract manufacturers and we support a broad array of industry segments from industrial controls to medical device manufacturers. We have also built a solid reputation in the RF world with a well-developed process for Teflon and other high performance substrates.

Dan: Do you sometimes get help from vendors? Such as Taiyo for example?

Dan S: We do indeed. Being a small, lean manufacturer, we do not have the large engineering teams that some of the larger players in the industry have and as such we rely on our vendors for process help, both in terms of on-going management, as well as in new process development efforts. Taiyo has been an excellent supporter of our efforts. Pete Binzel has been a huge help to us throughout the years and Don Monn is picking up where Pete left off. We greatly appreciate all of their assistance.

Dan B: Are there any new products that you would like Taiyo to develop?

Dan S: Taiyo has been our solder mask and legend ink of choice for some time. There is some real pressure on them regarding direct image masks from a couple of other manufacturers. If I had to ask, it would be to continue to improve the resolution characteristics of their DI masks, as well as the imaging speeds.

Dan B: Where do you see SAE Circuits in the future? Where are you headed?

Dan S: I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that we have had some struggles over the past couple of years as we have worked to stabilize and redirect the business. The support of all of our vendors and customers to work with us in some difficult times has not gone unnoticed. We are extremely grateful for their patience and support.

Having said that, we are aggressively retooling SAE for the future. We have made a number of major equipment upgrades over the past 6-9 months, all of it focused on enabling SAE to compete for higher value board designs. We have long-been known as a production shop with our sweet spot being 2-6 layers. We will be known in the future as the most reliable supplier for high density, high performance boards, fast. Our future depends on providing the greatest value for the customer in realizing their board designs in a timeframe that maximizes their competitive position in their marketplace.

Dan B: Thanks for spending time with me today Dan, and especially your candor. See you again soon.

For more information about SAE Circuits go to www.saecircuits.com