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Keeping the skies connected

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The single brand identity of 'Smiths Interconnect' is the realisation of a strategic re-organisation that better anticipates customer demands

Following on from a rebranding and strategic re-organisation, Mike Richardson catches up with interconnect specialist, Smiths Interconnect to discover how the company ‘whole’ has become greater than the sum of its parts.

A single thing made of many separate parts can be more important, more useful and in some ways ‘greater’ than all of the separate parts on their own. If you take all the parts of a watch and lay them out on a table, they won’t tell the time in the way an assembled watch does.

So when Smiths Interconnect unified its technology brands of EMC Technology, Hypertac, IDI, Lorch, Millitech, RF Labs, Sabritec, TECOM and TRAK under the single brand identity of ‘Smiths Interconnect’, it saw the realisation of a strategic re-organisation focused on creating a more agile structure to better anticipate and respond to customers’ evolving needs.

The company offers a range of technically differentiated connectivity solutions and prides itself in providing applications through superior connectivity. Its technically differentiated solutions are said to give customers a competitive advantage when tackling the challenges of higher power, higher data rates, wider bandwidth, and greater connectivity – all within a smaller footprint.

A one-stop shop

Under the single brand umbrella, customers can enjoy a single point of supply, not only for application-specific high-reliability connector solutions and rugged cable assemblies, but also integrated microwave and millimetre-wave components, integrated microwave assemblies and systems, high performance ferrites, RF devices as well as time and frequency systems. High performance ground and airborne antenna systems for satellite communications, radio link, radar, telemetry, and high bandwidth connectivity are also available for the civil aviation market.

“Smiths Interconnect is committed to developing advanced interconnect solutions, technologies and full system integration capabilities to address both the reliability required for flight critical systems, as well as environmental and mechanical concerns such as shock, vibration and extreme temperature ranges,” begins Smiths Interconnect’s marketing communications director, Roberta Rebora. “We want to offer a much broader product portfolio that spans from antennae in the commercial and defence aviation business, to connectors and cables, subsystems and microwave assemblies. We also want to make it easier for our customers to use Smiths Interconnect as a sole supplier and in effect, become a one-stop shop for all their product requirements.”

Responding to customer demands to develop solutions that will dramatically reduce the overall weight and complexity of an aerospace interconnect network, Smiths Interconnect is working

on flexible and modular high-speed interconnect solutions combining controlled impedance differential signal pairs, power pins, and discrete pins into a single connector housing to offer next generation data on demand, meeting both point to point and backplane connector requirements.

“As a business, we see that there is always the size, weight, and power challenges that every interconnect company faces, but we’re also seeing a new dimension in terms of speed which reflects on the higher frequency ranges that our customers are seeking to work with,” states Bruce Valentine, vice-president sales EMEA. “Our role as a business is in how we help the customer overcome these challenges. Customers are finding it very difficult to understand exactly who they are supposed to work with and what technologies are available to achieve their goals in the correct and most affordable way. This is where our whole interconnect offering provides even more value rather than simply supplying the customer with separate items.”



Roberta Rebora, marketing communications director, Smiths Interconnect

Connected as one

This confusion has often led to design engineers trying to design something that is completely un-manufacturable – or worse, a situation where the purchasing department cannot possibly procure all the materials and items within budget.

“The situation has now improved because there is now much closer integration within the customer base,” Smiths Interconnect’s director of business development – international, Paul Skolnick explains. “For the customer, the experience of working with the Smiths Interconnect ‘whole’ means looking at the application, all the inputs/outputs at the front end of the system – all the way into the printed circuit board, including interconnects, RF components, and integrated subsystems, too. Our customers are now able to really understand exactly what we can offer in terms of signal integrity for an entire system instead of just looking at one piece of the puzzle.”

“Many of the solutions we offer today are about integrating different technology brands all into one product. We are collaborating with the many different product teams within Smiths Interconnect and learning a lot more about how we can rapidly grow the company in order to

use all the technologies – allowing us to develop the best products for a wide range of customers.”

According to Valentine, Smiths Interconnect customers are now taking an evolutionary – not revolutionary approach by looking at ways to reiterate their designs.

“Increasingly high frequencies mean we are reaching a point where dimensions are influencing signal performance,” he says. “As a result, our customers are making a paradigm shift in technology which can mean increasing their risk profile. Our experience combined with our huge investments in employing skilled field service engineers that are able to support the customers in making this journey during the early design process, means that we are well-positioned to help our customers.



High reliability connectivity solutions from Smiths Interconnect

“In addition, whilst quality is a given for most customers these days it depends on how much value they are getting from their suppliers. The ones that offer less value will lose work, and the customer will instead try and do this work themselves. The ones that offer higher value will be embraced. Yes, there is the phrase one-stop shop, but for us it is more like being a multi-stop shop.”

The final word goes to Roberta Rebora who firmly believes that the brand reorganisation has made the entire customer experience of dealing with Smiths Interconnect a whole lot easier.

“It is an exciting time to be working with Smiths Interconnect,” she concludes. “Externally, it is far easier for the customer to deal with just one point of contact, plus our internal communications are now much more streamlined.”

All transformations take time and establishing a new brand is never a short journey. Smiths Interconnect has built on its legacy brand portfolios to create one ‘whole’ that is far stronger than the sum of its parts.

www.smithsinterconnect.com

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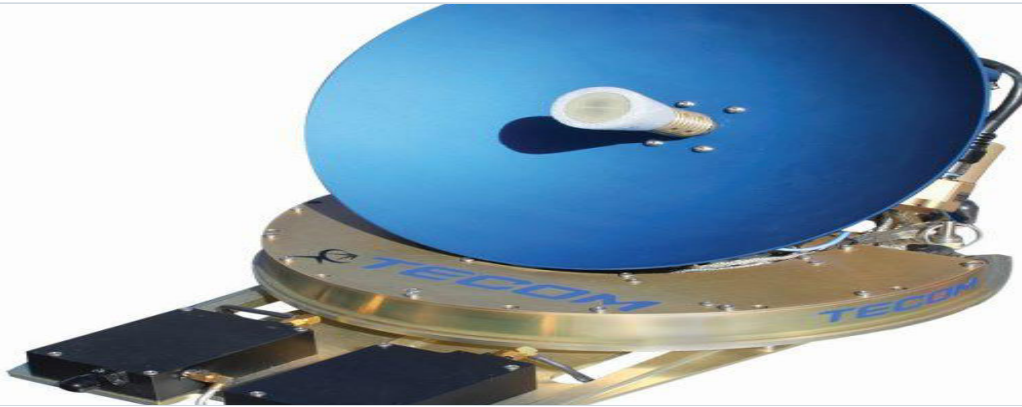
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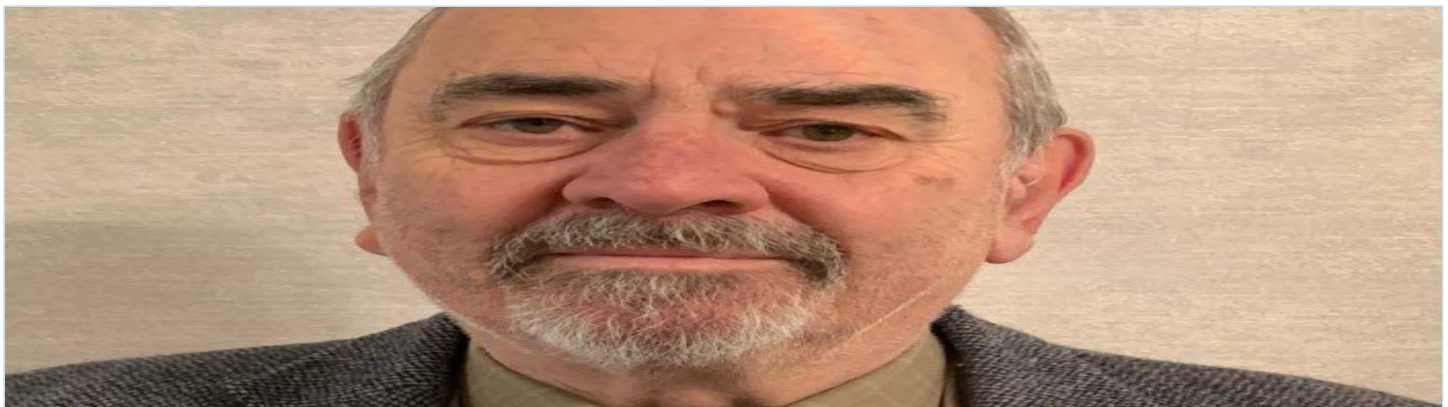
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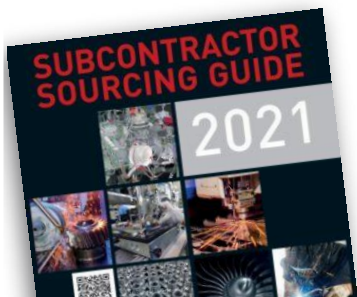
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