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Desert Burn-In

By Bob Million

It finally happened – for the first time a meeting occurred between IC and packaging manufacturers, test and burn-in socket suppliers, burn-in board manufacturers, burn-in oven system providers, and even automated test equipment and IC handler manufacturers. More than 200 attendees met at the Hilton Mesa Pavilion Hotel in Arizona recently to discuss mutual concerns at BITS 2000, a Burn-In & Test Socket Workshop. Fred Taber of IBM Microelectronics acted as the general chairman for this first of its kind desert burn-in.

Two issues kept emerging as keynote speaker Charles Lassen of Prismark Partners LLC spoke on “Package Proliferation and Its Impact on Testing and Socketing” and in other workshop talks as well. The first issue is package tolerances and “loose” specs outlined in the JEDEC JC-11 committee’s package standards. Because of wide spread package variation, socket manufacturers were requesting a need for sampling at least three pieces from various lots of ICs to check package dimensions. The second major issue is the ability of socket manufacturers to obtain “shorted” IC packages from the semiconductor houses in order to do a proper measurement/evaluation of the socket through IC leads contact resistance per IBM’s P4PM contact evaluation system. Dummy packages are a necessary evil right now.



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Other topics sparking interest included thermal management and the parameters that effect heat dissipation during burn-in presented by Wells/CTI and AMD’s explanation of its typical manufacturing burn-in process. Discussing design characteristics of test contactors and ESD concerns, Intel pointed out that among the various types of test contactors—pogo pin, elastomer, Fuzz button, cantilever, and z-axis bumps (i.e., diamond or Gold Dot) – pogo pin is still the most commonly used because of its cost effectiveness.

The desert meeting was an overwhelming success because of the ability to talk directly to the key players of the entire test and burn-in industry. Valid points were made on all sides of the issues and an excellent, yet realistic, dialogue was initiated to help eliminate current and future “bottlenecks” to this often maligned phase of IC manufacturing. All the participants were eager to continue this, so same time, same place – next year!

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