

## **Looking ahead for the electronic components industry**

Robin Gray, Electronic Component Industry Association



Rather than looking back at 2011, I will take a look at what is ahead in 2012 for the electronic components industry in general and Electronic Component Industry Association (ECIA) members specifically. There are several exciting association projects that are currently under development and should come to fruition in the new year. Likewise, there are some governmental activities that will likely move forward in 2012 that will impact the industry.

This past year saw the association launch an industry owned and managed inventory search website ([www.eciaauthorized.com](http://www.eciaauthorized.com)) that provides users with unbiased and randomized results search of authorized inventory. The site has been a very popular member benefit and has experienced steady growth. As the site has grown in popularity, the association has begun adding new features and enhancements to further benefit all of its members as well as provide a better experience for potential purchasers of electronic components. Some of these improvements are behind the scenes to improve the functionality, while others will be very apparent to visitors to the website.

Another project that is currently underway is an accurate and timely DTAM report. An ECIA task force is working on the final details of the industry's first complete DTAM for North American component sales. I anticipate that this project could be rolled out as early as Q3 if agreement can be reached with the major participants.

ECIA is partnering with FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC), the Dean Kamen event, to provide electronic components for this one of kind event. The FRC is a unique event that increases middle and high school students' awareness of science and technology by engaging them in a unique competition. The association is working with its members to donate the electronic components that are used in the kits given to the teams. For members, this is a great way to introduce your company's products to future engineers and scientists as well as getting exposure as a competition sponsor. A list of the components that FRC® needs donated may be obtained on the association's website.

On the legislative front, the industry scored a victory when the Congress passed and the President signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act for FY12

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which contains a provision that improved the detection and stopping of counterfeit electronic components from entering into the United States. The provision makes it clear that Customs and Border Protection (CBP) may provide unredacted photos or physical specimens of suspect products, labels and packaging to trademark rightsholders (i.e., the manufacturers). Without this legislation, CBP officers were redacting (whiting-out) all markings other than company logos when sending trademark owners photos of suspected counterfeit products, which made identification nearly impossible.

The 2012 US National Defense Authorization Act also added requirements for DoD regulations for detecting and avoiding counterfeit parts. As result, companies at all tiers of the defense supply chain must put counterfeit risk mitigation procedures in place. These steps must be completed by the end of September 2012.

2012 is shaping up to be an exciting year for the authorized sale of electronic components and ECIA keeps its members apprised of all pertinent developments.

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