

May N. American PCB Orders Up 10.6%

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BANNOCKBURN, IL – North American printed circuit board shipments in May decreased 2.6% year-over-year on seasonality. Orders increased 10.6% compared to May 2011, says **IPC**

Year to date, board shipments were down 5.3%, and orders were up 2.6%. Sequentially, shipments increased 1.7%, while orders were up 3.3%.

The book-to-bill ratio decreased slightly, but continued in positive territory at 1.03 for the sixth straight month. A ratio of more than 1.0 suggests that current demand is ahead of supply, a positive indicator for growth over the next two to three months.

Rigid PCB shipments were down 1.9% for the month compared to the same period last year, but orders increased 12% year-over-year. Year to date, rigid board shipments decreased 5%, while orders increased 3.1%. Sequentially, shipments were up 2%, and orders gained 1.9%. The rigid book-to-bill was 1.02.

Flexible circuit board shipments in May were down 10%, and orders were down 1.1% year-over-year. Year to date, shipments decreased 9.1%, and orders decreased 2.1%. Sequentially, shipments fell 2.6%, but orders were up 19.8%. The flex book-to-bill remained high at 1.17.

“North American PCB sales and orders in May continued slightly below last year’s levels and reflected normal seasonal patterns,” said Sharon Starr, IPC director of market research. “The May book-to-bill ratio remained positive for the sixth consecutive month and was especially strong for the flexible circuit segment of the industry. This reinforces our hope that sales will gain strength in the second half of this year.”

In May, 83% of total PCB shipments were domestically produced. Domestic production accounted for 84% of rigid and 80% of flex PCB shipments.

In May, flexible circuit board manufacturers indicated bare circuits accounted for about 41% of shipment value.