LAS VEGAS – Traffic appeared a bit light on the first day of Apex Tuesday, then ticked up on Wednesday, as suppliers focused on the attendees who did show and the array of new machines on the floor. **Juki** showed a series of FX-3 placement machines, with president Bob Black proudly noting that the lines could hit 200,000 placements an hour (based on IPC-9850) for under $1 million.
ERSA had a series of new machines, as usual, Powerflow, a full nitrogen tunnel wave machine; Selective Versaflow 3, a high volume dual-lane selective soldering machine capable of up to six simultaneously running pots. The show also marked the American debut of ERSA's Versaprint printer (one of which was just purchased by **Vadatech,** a local OEM).

A.C.E. noted sales were up 13% in 2007 and the company has expanded into a 20,000 sq. ft. building and doubled its staff. It showed the KISS104F, a selective fluxer that can be outfitted with a drop-jet or spray head, and includes software-controlled pump that ensures the solder wave maintains a constant height.

Samsung discussed strong demand for its SM series of placement machines, and noted that a Southern California demo site would likely be in its future. It also showed a turnkey SMT placement line said to place 63,000 cph in a 31-ft. footprint.

There is progress on dispensing, likely a reflection of increased conformal coat use, particularly among North American assemblers, with **Asymtek** as the head of the pack with several new machines. **Mydata** used the opportunity to show its MY500 jet printer to the States for the first time, as well as roll out a high-volume placement platform.

While some companies were scaling up – **Essemtec** announced a 20-zone reflow oven would be available later this year – others were dialing down:
BTU,
for example, showed a smaller version of its Pyramax machine (this one labeled Pyramax 75A) as the company continues to fill out its lineup of small- to mid-volume production machines.
Several solder suppliers are showing halide-free no-clean pastes, including **Indium, Cookson** and
Koki Co.,
among others. A new
Henkel
epoxy flux was slick: Hysol FF60000 is said to be reflow curable and eliminates underfill dispensing.

"Site dressing" is the word at **VJ Electronix,** whose gantry styled PMT400S rework system is just one of the machines they showed capable of site dressing and repeatable solder removal.
Sono-Tek Corp. showed a tidy EZ-Flux ultrasonic fluxer, which uses a high-impact flux transfer system to maximize topside fill. The machine is said to integrate easily into all major wave solder machines; compatible with all PCB fluxes.
This is the first year the show has been held in Las Vegas, and exhibitors were mixed on the first day of crowds, with some saying they were well ahead of last year, when the show was in Los Angeles, and others expressing somewhat more tempered sentiments. The outlook picked

up Wednesday, with several comments echoing those of VJ general manager Don Naugler, who said, “It’s been a good show; we’re quite happy with what we’ve seen so far.”