Current challenges purchasing power supplies

Sager asked its power sales engineers and sales team to list the five key topics their customers face when purchasing power supplies

Purchasing electronic components is a challenging job but purchasing power supplies has its own set of demands. Power supplies are complex devices comprising hundreds of components. They are a critical part of all electronic equipment and provide regulated voltages and important protection features. Without a good quality power supply any device risks failure.

Tariffs

Section 301 tariffs were enacted in 2018 and it doesn't appear they will be ending anytime soon. While the majority of power supplies are manufactured in China, companies like Mean Well, Advanced Energy, Vox, SL Power and others have diversified by adding manufacturing locations in countries including the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Mexico to support the North America market. There are options to purchase power supplies that are tariff-free and Sager can help with the process.

Transportation costs

Ocean and airfreight pricing is at a premium right now. Demand is surging, so transportation costs should hold for the foreseeable future. Sager Electronics has over $25 million of power supplies in inventory, with a product pipeline due to arrive in Q1 and Q2 2021. We are positioned to support buyers' requirements with US stock.

Lead times

As with transportation, the surge in demand is causing supply issues with key components like mosfets, capacitors and cooling fans. Lead times on some power supplies are stretching to over 24-weeks. Sager offers an inventory mix and supply chain expertise to help reduce lead times and keep manufacturing running.

Warranty

Power supply warranties can range from one to five-years and longer. As an example, TDK-Lambda offers a limited lifetime warranty on its HWS series. When choosing between two approved sources, warranty and reliability can play a significant role in which supply you select.

The warranty on a power supply is typically listed on the datasheet and represented in years. Most warranties start when the customer receives the power supply. Reliability is measured in terms of operating or failing; it is listed on the datasheet as Mean Time Between Failures (MTBF). MTBF is typically listed in hours.

Safety Regulations

Most product manufacturers want to sell into global markets. The ability to sell products and associated power supplies worldwide depends on meeting applicable safety standards for each country.

Power Supplies are subject to stringent safety and performance testing requirements such as electromagnetic interference (EMI) and electromagnetic compatibility (EMC). The end market also impacts power supply safety requirements. Medical equipment must meet regulatory standards such as IEC/EN/CSA/UL60601-1 3rd Edition. A new safety standard was recently introduced for audio/ video and information communication technology equipment. The new IEC 62368-1 is a transition from two previous standards, IEC60065 and 60950-1. Understanding and keeping up with the complexities and differences between various standards and product markings can be intimidating. Sager has experts who can help manage this process.

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