

**Fine Pitch Cu Pillar with Bond on Lead (BOL) Assembly Challenges  
for High Performance Flip Chip Package**

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# FINE PITCH CU PILLAR WITH BOND ON LEAD (BOL) ASSEMBLY CHALLENGES FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE FLIP CHIP PACKAGE

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## ABSTRACT

Fine pitch copper (Cu) Pillar bump has been growing adoption in high performance and low-cost flip chip packages. Higher input/output (I/O) density and very fine pitch requirements are driving very small feature sizes such as small bump on a narrow pad or bond-on-lead (BOL) interconnection, while higher performance requirements are driving increased current densities, thus assembling such packages using a standard mass reflow (MR) process and maintaining its performance is a real and serious challenge. Typical thermal compression bonding (TCB) using non-conductive paste can be used to mitigate the assembly risk up to certain extent of die size and package body size. On the other hand, the TCB process results in a significantly higher assembly cost due to very low throughput. The very cost sensitive consumer market is not quite ready to adopt TCB process for this reason. To address the need for fine pitch Cu pillar Flip Chip, a technology featuring Copper Pillar Bond-On-Lead (BOL) with Enhanced processes, known as fcCuBE™, delivers the cost effective, high performance packaging solution that is required by the industry. BOL substrate technology with standard MR is becoming popular for high performance flip chip BGA (fcBGA) assembly. There are some papers in the literature that have addressed BOL or similar types of technology on small body size flip chip CSP type packages. However, none of the literature truly addresses the assembly challenges and risk mitigation plan for bigger body size fine pitch fcBGA packages. In this study a comprehensive finding on the assembly challenges, package design, and reliability data will be published.

Key words: flip chip, fine pitch, Cu pillar, BOL, fcBGA

## INTRODUCTION

In consumer applications such as set top boxes (STB) and digital television (DTV) ICs, higher functionality, faster data rates and increased bandwidth are required for enhanced user interfaces, rich graphics and outstanding audio quality. Wire bonding technology, a popular packaging choice in the past, is often unable to successfully address the increased thermal and electrical performance requirements for next generation consumer applications and, as a result, semiconductor companies are turning to high performance flip chip interconnect to differentiate their products. The BOL interconnection and very fine pitch Cu bumps in

fcCuBE® technology deliver exceptionally high I/O density and bandwidth with excellent electromigration (EM) performance for high current carrying applications such as STB and DTV ICs at a cost competitive price in the industry.

The functional and performance requirements for other application areas such as networking and communication continue to evolve as well, driving demand for larger and thinner packages that support very high current densities and bandwidth requirements. These high performance devices also require a steady and consistent supply of power which becomes challenging as device functionality increases. In addition, there are yield and reliability concerns that arise from the larger package sizes and very fine pitch interconnection that is required to produce higher I/O densities. fcCuBE technology significantly reduces the substrate layer count and complexity, achieving a thinner, lower cost package with high power integrity, superior control over thermal performance and higher resistance to EM over standard flip chip packages.

## Package Design

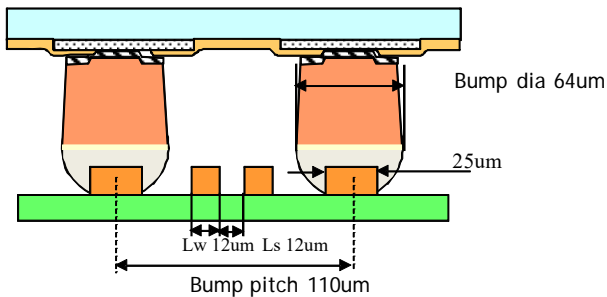
Several body size package starting from as small as 14X14mm to as large as 35X35mm packages were selected to run various legs in the DOE at various stages. A wide range of die sizes along with various Si nodes from several foundries were used for the DOE. Table 1 describes the DOE detail in the study. Substrate type and technology is another important parameter to design a lower cost and higher performance package. In this study both plated through hole (PTH) and build up substrates with multilayer counts and lower CTE core materials were used to meet package performance requirements.

**Table 1:** Fine pitch Cu Pillar fcBGA DOE

package type	body size (mm)	die size (mm)	Si node	bump pitch (um)	#traces between the bumps	bump dia (um)	bump height (um)
fcBGA-H	14X14	9X10	28	120	1	56	58
fcBGA-H	17X17	9X10	28	120	1	56	58
fcBGA	19X19	7X8	28	110	2	64	70
fcBGA-H	23X23	9X9	28	135			65
fcBGA	25X25	7X8	28	110	2	64	70
fcBGA-H	27X27	11X10	90	80	0	60	63
fcBGA-H	31X31	10X10	28	125	1	66	70
fcBGA-H	35X35	13X13	45	125	1	60	70

Lower CTE substrate core material was also chosen to control the package warpage/coplanarity in addition to extreme low-K (ELK) die protection. The gap between the bump to nearest trace is the key for the fcCuBE® design. Some of the designs have traces between the bumps. Too narrow of a gap can cause assembly related issues such as solder bridging, shorting, etc. In these designs we have as low as 15um gap between the die to the nearest trace.

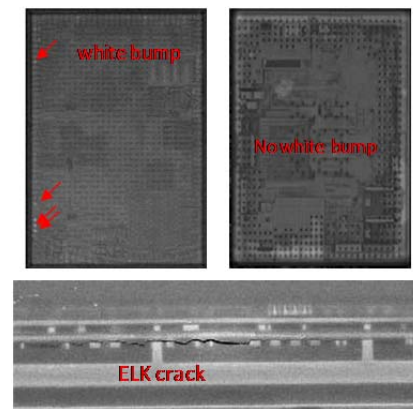
The bumping process included PI re-passivation, Ti/Cu under bump metallization (UBM), and Cu pillar plating with a SnAg solder cap on top. Most of the consumer application has multiple rows of peripheral bumps at a very fine bump pitch for the I/O while much wider bump pitches are in the die center area. Figure 1 shows the fcCuBE® Cu bump and SnAg solder cap along with BOL trace detail for a given bump pitch design. Overall Cu pillar and solder cap height were optimized in order to create the optimum stand-off height required for successful flow of capillary underfill (CUF) process in the assembly.



**Figure 1:** Bump pattern, and Cu pillar bump dimension detail w/ BOL pad

### Assembly Process

The assembly process included several design iterations for bump height in order to optimize the CUF flow underneath the die. Too short of bump standoff design can result in CUF voids for larger die size. Too tall of bump can cause ELK crack in the die. Initially a design with very tall Cu Col (55um pillar height with 30um cap) was chosen which enables a significant gap height increase. Higher pillar over solder cap ratio increased die level stress results in ELK crack (white bump) during the chip attach process. Significant ELK damage was experienced with a taller pillar design even though it gives a better CUF process in the design. Figure 2 below shows white bump with taller pillar height with the actual product.



**Figure 2:** white bump w/ taller bump (left picture), and no white bump w/ smaller bump (right picture)

Extensive simulation has been conducted to understand the safe limit of pillar/solder cap ratio. Finally, a design with smaller pillar and around 30um solder cap with full open SR was introduced which maintained a smaller bump height to address the white bump issue.

The detailed assembly process including flip chip attach, flux cleaning, under-filling, lid or heat spreader attach, solder ball mounting, marking, etc, were fully optimized for assembly. Figure 3 shows the typical assembly process flow for a standard lidded flip chip BGA package. The critical areas in the assembly process were identified as chip attach, underfilling, and ball mount processes.



**Figure 3:** Typical assembly flow for standard flip chip BGA (fcBGA) package

Additionally, an optimum amount of flux is needed in the chip attach process to make a good joint for very fine size/pitch Cu pillar. Die placement also plays a crucial role. If by any means the die are misaligned, solder bridging, non-wet, etc. might occurred in the chip attach process. Another important concern is white bump (bump delamination) for low K/ELK die. The white bump risk is much lower with the BOL pad versus bond on pad (BOP) type pad. Having a smaller BOL pad helps to resolve the die level stress during the chip attach process by shifting the stress from die side to substrate side.

The effect of die thickness on the die or extreme low K (ELK) was throughly investigated for fine pitch Cu pillar

interconnection. Typically, Cu pillar bump is much stiffer than standard Pb free bump. High stiffness Cu pillar bump creates excessive die stress due to CTE mismatch during chip attach process in the assembly. Standard 300mm wafer comes with 780um die thickness. A much higher propensity of ELK delamination or white bump occurs in thick die compared to thin die. In this study both 780um and 500um thin die were used to carry out the DOE. Hammer test or multi reflow test were conducted at 260<sup>0</sup>C peak for non-underfilled package in order to verify the ELK silicon robustness. With full thickness Si (780um) lots of white bumps were encountered right after chip attach process reflow whereas for thin die (500um thickness), configuration first ELK crack was observed after 20X reflow. The effect of bump diameter and solder resist opening (SRO) size was also investigated in the sutdy. The results in Table 2 captured various effects on the white bump from the multiple reflow test. Failure parts were cross-sectioned comprehensivley to look at the failure mode and intensity of the ELK crack as shown in Figure 4 below.

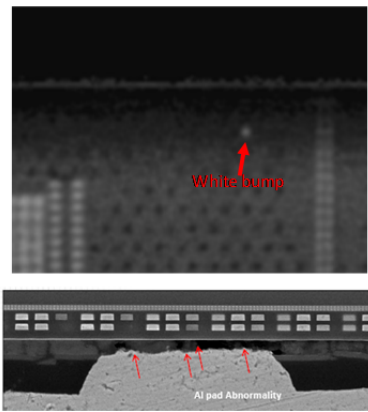
**Table 2:** White bump results for non-underfilled package after various level of multi reflow tests

Die thickness	Bump diameter	Substrate SRO	White bump results @ 260°C multi reflow				
			T=0	5x	10x	20x	30x
780um	56um	bigger	5/10	5/10	8/10	10/10	10/10
780um	56um	smaller	2/10	4/10	5/10	10/10	10/10
780um	60um	bigger	0/10	0/10	1/10	1/10	8/10
780um	60um	smaller	0/10	0/10	0/10	1/10	10/10
500um	60um	bigger	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	2/10
500um	60um	smaller	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10
500um	56um	bigger	0/10	0/10	0/10	2/10	7/10
500um	56um	smaller	0/10	0/10	0/10	4/10	5/10

Fine tuning of the DOE was completed with optimum die thickness, bump diameter, and SRO size. No anomoloies were found in the die or interconnections. Finally, a quick temperature cycle (QTC) at -40<sup>0</sup> to 60<sup>0</sup>C was conducted to verify the DOE. No ELK crack or white bump found from the verificaiton DOE as shown in Table 3 below. Optimum design parameters were selected for final package qualification.

**Materials Choices**

Package warpage is a big concern for flip chip BGA packages with medium to large die and body size and thin core substrates. A low CTE core substrate is required for large packages with ELK die. Low CTE cores help mitigate “white bump” issues and reduce warpage by minimizing thermal mismatch between the substrate and die. In this study, 4-6L of build up substrates with thin and thick core low CTE materials were used. The substrate was designed with proper metal balance on each layer to minimize warpage and other potential substrate related failures in the package. Several iterations of the design and assembly process were performed to finalize the process window.

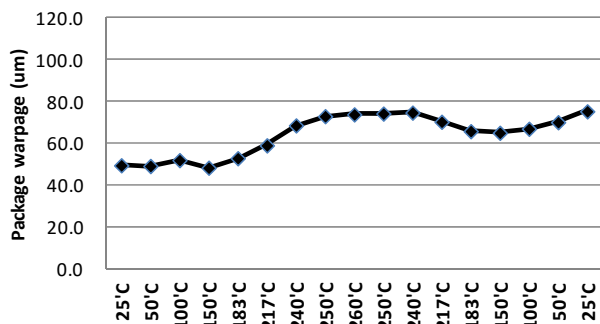


**Figure 4:** White bump scanning picture and bump cross-section after 20X reflow

**Table 3:** No white bump after QTC 50X

Die thickness	Bump diameter	Substrate SRO	White bump results @ QTC ( -40~60°C)			
			T=0	15x	30x	50x
500um	60um	small	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10
			0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10
			0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10

Our empirical data from the DOE shows package warpage or coplanarity was not much concern due to flip chip packages which are built mostly with a heatsreader or lid and die size was not very big. Thermo Moir'e data in Figure 5 shows a 35X35mm flip chip package with 4L build up substrate package warpage at various temperature was well below the requirement (150um at 25°C).

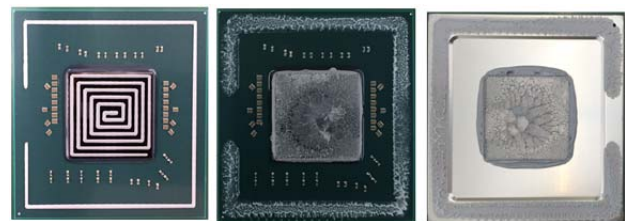


**Figure 5:** Package warpage at various temperatures for 35X35mm fcBGA-H with 4L low CTE core substrate

Selecting the right underfill material for flip chip packages is always challenging. A large die package requires high Tg (glass transition temperature) underfill to protect the bumps from CTE mismatch. On the other hand, high Tg underfill creates more die or ELK stress in the assembly process. It is a tradeoff between die or ELK stress and bump protection. Moreover, high Tg underfill will create high package warpage or coplanarity. In this study a moderate Tg underfill was selected to fulfill the package needs. A combination of “I” and “U” pass dispense was used to make sure no underfill voids, underfill bleed out or creeping.

A typical spiral dispense pattern on the die backside with supplier recommended cure profile was applied in the assembly process shown in Figure 6 below. A silicone gel based with high thermal conductivity soft thermal interface material (TIM) was selected in the DOE. The standard process was followed to detect TIM and adhesive coverage in the assembly process. Lid pull tests were performed after end of line (EOL) for all legs to make sure lids were attached properly and maintained certain adhesion strength. Both TIM and lid adhesive materials were extensively characterized to meet certain requirements such as wider process window to dispense epoxy and attach lid, higher lid-pull strength, low thermal resistance, etc.

A check list for various process steps was monitored during the assembly process to ensure it met all required conditions. The detailed check list with monitoring methodologies is shown in Table 4.



**Figure 6:** Typical TIM and adhesive dispense pattern

Electrical open short (O/S) tests will be performed after each accelerated test condition even for characterization DOE builds. Any failed units will be cross-sectioned to verify failure results and failure mode. Learning from the characterization builds are fanned out to subsequent builds including qualification build.

**Table 4:** Checklist for assembly and reliability

Process	Check Point /Methodology	Check Items
DP	Visual / optical Inspection	Sawing quality, Die chipping, Kerf width, Wafer Crack, solder void, bump shear
SPP/CCM	Visual Inspection	Paste wetting, Mis-placement, Tombstoning
FCA	Die peel	Flux Residue, coverage, Bump Joint
	X-ray	Alignment, Bridge, Cold Joint, Bump Void
UF	Visual Inspection	UF Bleed-out, Fillet Height/Coverage Creeping on die, UF crack
	C-SAM	Void, Delam, Bump/IMC/Pre-solder crack
LDA	Visual Inspection	Placement Accuracy, Bleed-out, BLT
	Lid pull	Adhesive strength
	C-SAM	TIM/Adhesive void, coverage
SBM	Ball Shear	Ball Shear Strength
	X-ray	Solder ball void
BE/EVI	AOI POD compliance	Coplanarity, Dimension, construction analysis, HT Warpage
Reliability Test	C-SAM / X-section	Delamination / white bump / bump & pre-solder crack

### Qualification Build

The leg with the best result from the characterization build was selected for both package and board level qualification. Packages were built with 3 different lots each with 77 units. No noticeable issues were encountered in the package assembly process. C-mode scanning acoustic microscope (CSAM) results was taken on every part after the underfill cure process to make sure no underfill voids or delamination occurred in the packages. A robust process, bill of materials (BOM), and carrier/fixtures were selected for the entire development and qualification build to make sure no anomaly such as solder bridging, non-wet, underfill delamination, or solder crack occurred in the package with fcCuBE® technology. Some of the packages in the development had really narrow bump pitch for mass reflow process which was very challenging for chip attach process. One of the DOE legs had 80um pitch in line bumps. A comprehensive DOE was carried out to optimize the process and BOM for 80um bump pitch package. Figure 7 shows a bump cross-section data of 80um bump pitch Cu pillar package after various reliability tests.

Package level post reliability requirements were kept the same in the qualification build (JEDEC standard package level reliability tests: preconditioning with MSL-4, uHAST, HTS, and TCB). The detailed test matrix with sample size for the package level qualification for one given body size build is shown in Table 5. Again, electrical open short tests were performed on every part after every read-point. No failure or other degradation was observed in any of the qualification build samples. Table 5 shows complete reliability data of qualification build parts.

Rel Test	Cross-section data			
TCB 1000x				
uHAST 264Hrs				
HTST 1000Hrs				

Figure 7: Reliability data for 80um bump pitch fcCuBE with fcBGA

Table 5: Qualification build reliability data for a 31X31mm fcBGA-H with fcCuBE®

Pre-con	Reliability Test							
	uHAST		TC "B"			HTST (w/o precon)		
	96hrs	168hrs	200x	500x	1000x	168hrs	500hrs	1000hrs
0/308 (No Fail)	0/77 (No Fail)	0/77 (No Fail)	0/231 (No Fail)	0/231 (No Fail)	0/231 (No Fail)	0/77 (No Fail)	0/77 (No Fail)	0/77 (No Fail)

Extensive failure analyses were conducted on post reliability parts to see bump crack or bump shape on BOL pad or other oddities in the package. Cross-section was done on a few parts after each reliability test. Figure 8 shows a sampling of bump images after uHAST, HTS, and TCB tests for 31X31mm fcBGA.

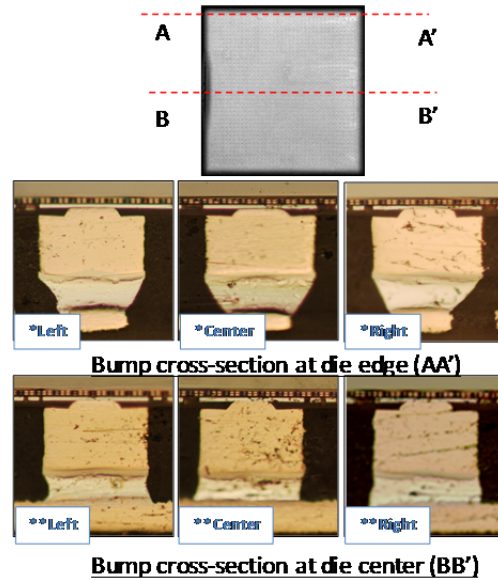


Figure 8: Bump cross-section data after reliability tests.

### Board Level Reliability (BLR) and Electromigration (EM) data

Lots of work on BOL or fcCuBE® with fcCSP package showed exceptionally good BLR and EM reliability data irrespective of bump pitch. Equivalent or even better BLR results are expected due to more optimized BOM, and processes are used in the fcBGA packages.

EM tests were performed on fine pitch Cu pillar BOL interconnections and standard bond on pad (BOP) structure for various temperature and current conditions. Over 7000 hours of EM test were conducted and no failures were observed. Very insignificant resistance shifts were observed irrespective of current stress and temperatures [2]. BOL EM data proved that technology is much more robust for fine pitch high performance packages for consumer or other flip chip applications.

### Cost Impact

With the phenomenal expansion of flip chip technology offering and manufacturing footprint, assembly suppliers are positioning themselves to support the strategic growth of very cost effective high performance flip chip for consumer and other applications. One of the major cost components of flip chip package is substrate. With the evolution of new BOL technology, significant cost benefit can be achieved from the substrate side. Due to finer pitch bump the die size can be reduced significantly for a given I/O package. Consumer such as set top box, digital TV, industrial, and automotive products are also migrating to high power with higher density, and some special requirements. The cost of the product development continues to grow; assembly

supplier investment for product line investment grows at the same rate. Time-to-market pressures remain high, with design cycles getting shorter and market-driven product requirements skyrocketing with much cheaper price. This is one of the key challenges across the assembly suppliers. By using such BOL technology in the flip chip package and other value engineering (VE) driven technologies, the need for low cost high performance fine pitch flip chip package will likely grow significantly for next generation advanced packages.

## CONCLUSIONS

Continuous trends in bump pitch reduction, performance improvement and Si node reduction, and the resultant move to ELK dielectrics, have created the need for a robust Flip Chip bump process that is serviced by the copper pillar technology. The fine pitch fcCuBE® technology evaluation for low cost consumer package has proved that the technology is very robust for assembly and performs exceptionally well through all critical JEDEC level reliability, and high current EM testing. The technology currently in high volume production for fcBGA and has excellent assembly yield and dppm level losses for opens/shorts.

Furthermore, the fcCuBE® technology now is extending beyond consumer markets as the SoCs undergo various application environments including rigorous automotive qualification program.

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