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Currier Plastics Makes investment in 3D Printing Technology

Auburn, NY Currier Plastics has added a 3D printer to use in their design department for part engineering development. In a statement released by Gary Kieffer, VP of New Product Development, "We look forward to enhancing our V² philosophy by bringing our 3D electronic Designs to a 3D tangible sample for both internal and external Customers within hours rather than days and weeks as experienced before."

The Objet 30 3D printer, uses a technology that is an additive process of making three dimensional objects from a digital file. An object or part is created by laying down successive layers of material. Faster and less expensive because it can give concept development teams the ability to produce parts and concept models in hours allowing forward movement in the design/concept stage.

Computer aided design (CAD) is used to create virtual designs and transforms them into an almost identical physical model. The standard interface is the STL file format which uses triangular facets to approximate the shape of a part. With additive manufacturing, successive layers of liquid, powder, or sheet material is laid down on a tray inside the machine. This tray is mounted on x-y-z axis rails which allows the printer head to build up the model from a series of cross sections. These layers, which correspond to the virtual cross section from the CAD model are fused automatically by UV light to create the final shape. The primary advantage to 3D printing or additive fabrication is its ability to create almost any shape or geometric feature in a short amount of time.

Using contemporary methods to build a model can take from several hours to several days, depending on the size, complexity and method used. 3D printing can typically produce models in a few hours, dependant on machine, number and size of parts being made.

Currier Plastics is located in the heart of the finger lakes region and has been a custom molder for thirty years. They specialize in Custom Product Design, Injection Molding (IM), Extrusion Blow Molding (EBM), and Injection Stretch Blow Molding (ISBM). Currier Plastics is an Association for Manufacturing Excellence (AME) award winner and is a recipient of the Economic Champion by the Center State Corporation for Economic Opportunity. Currier Plastics was recently featured on the January 2012 cover of Plastics Technology with their new proprietary product, *The Perfect Sit®*.

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