



What is Rapid Prototyping?

Rapid Prototyping is an innovative technology that evolved within the design and manufacturing industries. This technology makes it possible to fabricate physical parts without the need for tooling from the direct conversion of 3D data.

There are several rapid prototyping platforms that produce parts in a range of materials. However, each rapid prototyping platform uses the same principals of slicing, layering, and bonding to build parts.

The 3D data is first sliced into cross-sectional planes by a computer. These "planes " are sent from the computer to the rapid prototyping machine, similar to a larger copy machine, which builds the part layer-by-layer. The first layer of the part is bonded to a platform or starting base. Its geometry is defined by the shape of the first cross-sectional plane. The second layer is bonded to the first and shaped according to the second cross-sectional plane. This process is repeated until the part is complete. Common rapid prototyping systems included Selective Laser Sintering, 3D Printing and Stereolithography.

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