



Timberland masters quick step with 3D models

Anthony Clark

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Timberland is using 3D printing technology from Z Corporation to create physical shoe prototypes. According to the manufacturer, it has cut development times by more than 30% by using a ZPrinter 650 to produce multicolour 3D models.

Toby Ringdahl, CAD manager in the company's global footwear product development division, said: "We used to hire an artisan or service provider to make our models, and it typically took two weeks to receive the finished goods.

"Now we simply press 'print,' remove our models from the ZPrinter, and continue to move our product concepts to market. Every time we print, we shorten the development cycle and help get new styles to consumers while they're hot. That's typically six months earlier than if we still outsourced our models, and at a fraction of the cost."

In addition to shortening the development cycle, ZPrinting quickly paid for itself by reducing the cost of each model – \$100 in material versus \$1,000 spent on a contractor.

"Timberland is a great example of how 3D printing can streamline and improve the entire development process from concept through manufacturing," said Z Corporation vice-president of global sales and services, Ed DeArias. "With ready access to affordable prototypes, companies can improve quality, shorten cycles, contain costs and improve communication throughout the company."

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