

PO54-PR - PRESS INFORMATION

Proto Labs Receives The Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade, 2010.

Telford, UK. April 21st, 2010: In recognition of its engineering innovation, investment in technology and its outstanding success in European markets, Shropshire based Proto Labs Ltd. has been awarded the prestigious **Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade**.

Proto Labs® is one of the UK's most exciting and fastest growing manufacturing companies with local branch offices in Germany and France. Since it was founded just five years ago, the company has radically improved the economics and delivery times associated with the production of prototype and low-volume parts for manufacturers. Customers are world-leaders in many different industry sectors, including medical, aerospace, automotive and domestic appliances.

"We are absolutely delighted to receive the Queen's Award for Enterprise," says Proto Labs managing director, Mr. John Tumelty. "This is richly-deserved recognition for the hard work and the dedication of our teams based in the UK, and in our local branch offices in Europe."

Proto Labs has achieved outstanding commercial success with sustainable year-on-year growth. The company's innovative services are used by product designers and product development teams who need prototype or low-volume plastic parts delivered quickly and cost effectively.

"For a company working on a new or updated product, time-to-market is critical," says Mr. Tumelty. "To test and develop a product to the point where it



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is ready for manufacturing means making working prototypes. The longer this process takes, the higher the development cost and the more likely a competitor will launch *their* product first. Our services allow design and development engineers, even those with very little or no experience of metal-cutting or plastic injection moulding, to order and receive precise, high-quality parts more simply and faster than ever before.”

Proto Labs offers two services: First Cut® delivers Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machined parts in small quantities of 1-10 units, and Protomold® delivers injection-moulded plastic parts in quantities of 10-10,000+.

“Many of our customers use our services sequentially. For example, they may develop a prototype requiring a few parts made by First Cut for initial testing, and iterative design improvements, then move to injection-moulded parts from a Protomold tool for marketing trials, final testing or production.”

What makes the Proto Labs process particularly innovative is the company’s super-computer cluster and powerful software, both of which are continuously developed in-house. A customer can upload a 3D CAD model of their part to the First Cut or Protomold websites and receive within hours a unique web-based quote, including a detailed manufacturability analysis and an accurate all-in production price. The customer can then place an order in much the same way as purchasing a book from an online retailer. Whichever service the customer uses, the company can ship orders in as little as one day from the state-of-the-art manufacturing facility based in Shropshire.

“In just a few years Proto Labs in Europe has helped thousands of companies,” says Mr. Tumelty. “Receiving this coveted Queen’s Award makes us all very proud of what we have achieved in such a short period of time.”



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About Proto Labs, Limited

Based in Shropshire in the UK, Proto Labs has radically changed the economics and lead times associated with the production of prototype and low-volume parts for European manufacturers. Proto Labs' customers include companies from all sectors such as medical, aerospace, automotive and domestic appliances. With two service offerings: First Cut® delivers machined parts (ideal for quantities of 1-10 parts) in over 25 production-intent materials including aluminium while Protomold® delivers injection-moulded plastic parts (ideal for quantities of 10-10,000) in hundreds of production-intent materials. Using a super-compute cluster Proto Labs offers a web-based quoting system which includes a detailed manufacturability analysis and an accurate all-in production price in just hours **and** can ship orders in one business day. For more information please visit www.protolabs.co.uk

About Protomold®

Protomold® is the injection-moulding service offered by Proto Labs, Limited. Designers and engineers can submit a 3D CAD model of a part to the Protomold web-based quoting system, ProtoQuote™, and receive a detailed 3D model manufacturability analysis and an accurate all-in production price in hours rather than weeks. With ProtoQuote®, customers can easily react to last-minute design changes, uploading as many iterations as they need to get the right model, material and cost. This in turn greatly reduces the time-to-market for a new product. In addition to all this, Protomold can deliver injection-moulded prototype and low-volume plastic parts manufactured from a choice of hundreds of production-intent materials in as little as one business day. For more information please visit www.protomold.co.uk



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About First Cut®

First Cut® is the machining service offered by Proto Labs, Limited. Designers and engineers can submit a 3D CAD model of a part to the First Cut web-based quoting system, FirstQuote™, and receive a detailed 3D model manufacturability analysis and an accurate all-in production price in just hours rather than weeks. With FirstQuote®, customers can easily react to last-minute design changes, uploading as many iterations as they need to get the right model, material and cost. This in turn greatly reduces the time-to-market for a new product. First Cut allows customers to make a fully functional prototype much earlier in the development cycle from a range of over 25 production-intent materials such as ABS, Nylon, PEEK, and aluminium produced in as little as one business day.