



## CUSTOMER PROFILE

## How Dimension printers fit into the design process

Eaton Corporation | Lincoln, Ill.

The addition of the Dimension 3D Printer to Eaton Corporation's design process has helped the company save on prototyping costs, reduced time to market and created a valuable marketing tool through actual physical prototypes that customers can touch and feel.

Eaton Corporation is a diversified industrial manufacturer and global leader in electrical, fluid power, truck and automotive systems and services. The company's Lincoln, Ill. plant recently purchased the Dimension 768 3D printer from Hagerman & Company, Inc. It is being used to create prototypes of components in residential electrical distribution products including loadcenter, meter breaker and multiple metering units.

The addition of the Dimension 3D printer has enabled the Lincoln plant to generate prototypes for company divisions worldwide, rendering parts for their use.

Eaton designer Mike Ranta said that using the Dimension printer has reduced costs significantly, estimating that a prototype which once cost \$1,000 to outsource now costs just \$50 to create in-house. There was also the issue of minimum order amounts with many SLA suppliers, which necessitated ordering extra parts the company didn't need.

"Before purchasing the printer, we'd have to think about whether we wanted to generate a purchase order for a prototype, then wait for the part," Ranta said. "Now, we can generate as many prototypes as we need, in house. We can start a project in the morning, and have it ready by the afternoon."

In addition to savings on the prototypes themselves, the company is also using the Dimension printer for product cost savings projects. Eaton design engineers use Autodesk 3D design software to create the designs, then render them to scale in ABS plastic using the printer.

"Being able to touch and test the prototype part gives a better perspective of how it will work than using the 3D software alone," Ranta said. "The design concept is easier to understand by showing the team an actual part, versus a drawing."

The company has even been able to use the prototypes as a marketing tool, displaying them at trade shows.



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