

**IN MEMORY OF  
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## **FROM THE EDITOR**

THOMAS WILK, EDITOR IN CHIEF



# **CHANNEL CHANGES**

## **Common routes to market for 3DP products and services**

**By now you** may be familiar with a story from December on how NASA “emailed” a wrench from Earth to the International Space Station. Specifically, NASA built a CAD file of the requested ratcheting socket wrench, converted it into a file readable by the 3D printer onboard the ISS, and uploaded it to the printer for manufacturing.

So, as part of this month’s cover story, I asked our contributors: What are the common routes to market for 3D printing products and services?

“In the U.S. and Canadian market, we sell 100% through the reseller community,” says Bruce Bradshaw, VP of marketing for North America at Stratasys. “We have a strategic account management team that works directly with manufacturers to help guide and consult with them. Also, we have about 60 different resellers, such as NeoMetrix, who sell complementary products like scanners. A lot are also top SolidWorks resellers, so they’ll sell software into manufacturing environments.”

“There are two aspects to our business,” says Dan Perreault, president & CEO at NeoMetrix Technologies, Inc. “We provide the services, and we also sell the equipment. If you look at our total population of customers, there are definitely more that are originally interested in the services, as opposed to investing equipment. However, there are those that start out with services as a means to prove the technology, and then subsequently purchase a system like a printer from Stratasys or scanner from Creaform.”

“I once heard the comparison that 3D scanning and 3D printing are like a washer and dryer, and I really like that idea,” adds François Leclerc, product manager at Creaform, who offer 3D

scanning hardware and services. “One thing we’ve come to realize recently is that we were both targeting the same customers and applications. With a 3D scanner and 3D printer, you have a way in and a way out of an iterative CAD-based design process, where the two tools really complement each other.”

“We get a lot of referrals from customers for future customers to use 3D scanning to gather data on parts,” says

### **3D SCANNING AND 3D PRINTING ARE LIKE A WASHER AND DRYER.**

Matthew Bosley, sales engineer at Capture 3D. “Some don’t purchase one of our systems, but they do use us as a service to help them scan something they need, and use one of the available software packages to build the CAD model.”

“In the long term, a lot of distributors are going to have to start getting into this field so that they can add that as a service for their end customers,” says Mark Norfolk, president at Fabrisonic. “I don’t see factory maintenance departments having this equipment yet. It’s still fairly expensive. A million-dollar machine is not unusual in the metal 3D printing world. But there are lots of service bureaus like ourselves around the country who have that capability and have multiple machines that are running 24-7, so they’re spreading that capital cost over the number of customers.”

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