



Rapid.Tech + FabCon 3.D
25-27 June 2019
Messe Erfurt

Make or buy?

Contract Additive Manufacturing forum at Rapid.Tech + FabCon 3.D to help businesses make decisions on the use of 3D printing technologies

(Erfurt, 14 May 2019). The benefits of additive manufacturing (AM) are now well known in industry. Virtually unlimited design freedom and the ability to realise exceptionally complex shapes and functions that cannot be achieved with conventional processes – or only at great expense – speak for themselves. Nevertheless, in the absence of knowledge and experience, there are many stumbling blocks to getting started with AM. “It’s not as simple as buying a 3D printer. It requires an extensive understanding of all the processes and process steps – from ideation to AM-oriented design and data preparation for the particular process, as well as knowledge of the different materials and production technologies, through to mechanical and thermal post-processing. Increasingly, contract additive manufacturing companies are developing these skills; they have a head start in terms of knowledge and are on hand as a service provider to offer their expertise to both newcomers and experienced customers,” says Dr Eric Klemp, COO of voestalpine Additive Manufacturing Center GmbH in Düsseldorf.

Whether newcomers become well versed in AM but continue to call upon external 3D printing providers or whether they decide to build up in-house expertise and their own machinery depends on the direction of the particular company, its product portfolio, and on the motivation, knowledge and skills of its management and employees. “Customers who continue to make use of service providers only pay for parts produced without flaws and have no investment and start-up costs, thereby keeping their risks at a manageable level. Conversely and especially if volumes are increasing, it can make absolute sense to establish your own production chain,” says the AM expert. Answers as to which path to choose and at which stage will be provided by the Contract Additive Manufacturing forum at Rapid.Tech + FabCon 3.D on 26 June 2019. “The talks will present possible approaches using specific examples, and we will offer assistance in deciding whether to make or buy,” says Dr Klemp, explaining the aim of the forum, for which he has selected the content.

The speakers are drawn from experienced contract additive manufacturers in Germany and Austria, such as FIT, Fuchshofer Advanced Manufacturing, Jell, MBFZ toolcraft, DyeMansion, PARARE and 3YOURMIND. They will demonstrate that, compared to conventional processes, additive manufacturing requires a profound change in thinking at every step of the production chain if it is to be implemented successfully. Other talks will focus on process and cost optimisation using additive manufacturing; process qualification and certification to Nadcap, the aerospace accreditation programme; efficient data management throughout the entire AM production chain; and high-end manufacture of components including finish and paint. DB Schenker is a new entrant to contract additive manufacturing. The logistics company has developed a digital business model for 3D printing and will be presenting it at the forum.

The Contract Additive Manufacturing forum is one of 14 sector- and subject-specific forums on the conference programme for Rapid.Tech + FabCon 3.D. Three forums – Software & Processes, Plastics, and Standardisation & EHS – are appearing on the agenda for the first time. Alongside these new additions, the programme will once again feature the established forums on the Automotive Industry; Aviation; Medical, Dental & Orthopaedic Technology; 3D Printed Electronics & Functions; Tool, Mould & Jig Construction;



Metal; Design; and Law, as well as a session by the Fraunhofer Additive Manufacturing Alliance and the two-day AM Science forum. Overall, over the three days of the conference, there will be more than 100 lectures presenting the latest developments, trends and findings relating to additive technologies and applications in theory and practice.

The 3D Printing Conference and the redesigned presentation spaces and networking opportunities at the exhibition will also help attendees to share their knowledge and experiences and to build and maintain their networks.

For their 16th edition, to be held from 25 to 27 June 2019, Rapid.Tech + FabCon 3.D are yet again expecting over 200 exhibitors from Germany and abroad, as well as more than 5,000 international trade visitors and conference delegates.

Further information: www.rapidtech-fabcon.com

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