

Industrial Manufacturing to Benefit from Growth in 3D Printing

As customer service levels rise, storage solutions need to keep up

According to the latest report by A.T. Kearney, titled “3D Printing Market to Grow to \$17.2 billion by 2020,” the 3D printing industry is expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 25% in five years, and in its wake is the market for hardware, supplies, and services also set to substantially expand.

This research underscores the impact 3D printing will have on the industrial sector in particular. “Although traditional manufacturing will have cost advantages in large scale production settings for the foreseeable future, 3D printing’s role will grow in settings where these five dimensions are crucial for success, such as prototyping (lead time and speed), personalized medical implants (mass customization), and jet components that require complex assembly and have high fly-to-buy ratios (new capabilities and waste reduction),” explained report researchers.

The mass production and mass customization that 3D printing affords are attractive to many industrial manufacturing facilities seeking to provide an increased level of customer service. While this is a useful sales tool, it can wreak havoc on manufacturing facilities’ storage.



Mass Production

Mass production means more inventory, and organization is critical to remaining profitable with increased inventory levels. Manufacturing facilities must maximize storage space and reduce their storage footprint to allow for expansion and access to inventory with optimal efficiency.

So what’s the best way to increase storage space? Spatial issues in warehouses have necessitated building up rather than building out. Modular storage cabinets take advantage of vertical space and are tailored to your needs. As those needs expand, so

do these adaptable storage systems. Building-block-like flexibility allows for the addition of one or more cabinets to accommodate a growing inventory, and you can reconfigure them as much and as often as needed.

In addition to their organizational capacities, modular storage cabinets actively protect your parts, tools, and other equipment by eliminating the wear and tear of open shelving. Fully extendable drawers that keep contents at eye level make finding parts simple and protect them from dust and unnecessary handling when closed, doubling shelf life.

Mass Customization

A prolific inventory can be a blessing or a curse depending on its storage: Think along the lines of “too much of a good thing,” and it’s easy to understand why. Combining 3D printing materials and fabrication procedures can produce parts quickly and accurately, but not always in the same manner. And building the additive manufacturing interface, including the software and hardware, can be very expensive. Keeping it simple with designers doing the job manually can be the solution, but with this comes an overflow of customized parts. To prevent an excessive inventory and ensure efficient retrieval of parts, modular cabinets assist in implementing the ultimate in organized storage.

Modular storage cabinets systematically protect and control inventory by providing distinct and easily identifiable locations for specific products. By maximizing organization, restocking happens quicker and overstocking declines drastically. Likewise, retrieval time is also greatly reduced. With conventional shelving, over half of retrieval time is spent simply getting to—and finding—stored items. However, customizing the height, width, color, number, and layout of drawers trumps standard shelving as a more organized method of storing and retrieving parts. The unity of speed and efficiency in the storage and retrieval processes eliminates wasted time, excessive inventories, and the hassles of searching for parts.



Organization is further improved with the use of accessories in modular storage cabinets. Foam inserts are cut precisely to cushion your tools and parts, while adjustable partitions and dividers in each drawer can be removed for expedient handling, issuing, and counting. The setup of partitions and dividers—or loading diagrams—can be configured in virtually infinite ways from drawer to drawer within one cabinet. These organizational accessories are conducive to fast and easy retrieval of parts and tools, cutting the time it takes to search for items in half.

Increased Versatility

With the implementation of 3D printing comes the increased demand for customized material handling parts and equipment, specifically specialized hardware. More site-specific, ergonomic, and safe products are especially important. Seeking a storage manufacturer with versatility is the key to incorporating equipment that will grow with a facility as needs and inventory change. Special requests at Vidmar are standard. Improved floor layouts are created from facility blueprints to drastically reduce downtime in any facility consolidation or reorganization. Cabinets, workstations, and STAK Systems are all custom-configured to meet the demands of each facility serviced.

Vidmar is dedicated to creating the best storage products for manufacturers around the globe. Customers can arrange for a free analysis of their storage needs by calling **800-523-9462**. Detailed information on Vidmar products is available at **STANLEYVidmar.com**.

