APPLICATION STORY

Baldor Electric Company Drives Design With Dimension 3D Printer

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— Dewayne May
CAD Engineer,
Baldor Electric Company

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Baldor Electric Company designs and manufactures industrial electric motors, mechanical power transmission products, drives and generators. With more than 8,000 employees at 26 plants in the United States, Canada, England, Mexico and China, Baldor supplies products to thousands of customers in more than 70 countries worldwide.

With such a large and varied customer base, Baldor commits substantial resources to product design. The company employs 150 designers across a number of design teams that work with a range of electric motors including commercial, linear, and alternating and direct current.

Prior to 2001, Baldor used a number of different service bureaus to create 3D models of its motor component designs. After the CAD file for the component was complete, it generally took one to two weeks for each iteration of the 3D model to arrive from the service bureau.

"Two or three design iterations on any given project meant up to four to six weeks in delays waiting for the 3D model," said Dewayne May, Baldor CAD engineer. "We felt that if we brought 3D printing in house we could streamline this phase of the design process."

The Dimension Solution

Baldor purchased a Dimension 3D Printer and has been thrilled with the results ever since. "Our turnaround time for 3D models has improved drastically – we can have an ABS part ready for testing in hours, not weeks," said May. "3D models that once cost $500 through a service bureau can now be produced for less than $15 in house. The dramatic time and cost savings allow us more flexibility to make fast adjustments throughout the design cycle."

Baldor is now using the Dimension 3D Printer to test form, fit and function for a variety of design applications including mounting brackets for motors, stationary switches for motors, conduit boxes, fans and breaks. "The high quality ABS models produced by the Dimension 3D Printer improve our ability to accurately test components. The end result is that our customers see innovation and quality enhancements delivered at a much faster pace – truly a competitive edge."

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