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Speeding reverse engineering

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WOODLAWN - Employees of 3D Engineering Solutions have gotten plenty of stares over the last week driving their latest project around the neighborhood.

The high-tech company, a less-than-year-old engineering and metrology (measurement inspection) provider on Chester Road, is helping Akron-based Myers Motors figure out how to mass-produce its three-wheel NmG (or No more Gas) personal electric vehicle.

"People who've seen it wonder how they can get one," said James T. Irwin, president of 3D Engineering, which he launched late last year with vice presidents James Hassett and Jerry Clark.

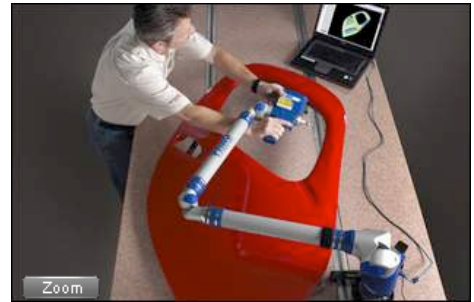
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3D uses a high-speed portable laser system to collect information dramatically faster than traditional methods to inspect parts, make three-dimensional models and "reverse engineer" - or figure out how to economically produce almost anything from the finished item without engineering drawings.

Irwin, whose family owns CTL Aerospace, a composite manufacturer in West Chester Township, said the technology can reduce the time it takes to figure out the tooling and production for a part from weeks to a matter of hours.

The time savings can help U.S. manufacturers be more competitive with overseas rivals, said Irwin, but it can also be used to do just about anything from forensics to architecture.

3D has done work for aerospace companies including GE Aviation, Boeing and Rolls-Royce, but the Myers Automotive project is its first in the motor vehicle market, an area where it hopes to expand. 3D believes it is the first firm within a 300-mile radius of Cincinnati to have the laser data collection technology. 3-D's laser system



PROVIDED

A worker at 3D Engineering Solutions works on the door of the all-electric car that 3D is reverse engineering for Meyers Motors.

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collects 20,000 data points a second. It was able to develop computer models for all 42 parts in the vehicle in a matter of three days.

Myers acquired the rights for the NmG from a West Coast company that ran into financial problems. Myers is producing on a limited basis the lumpy ovoid, single-set NmG, which is classified as a motorcycle, is recharged with household current and produces speeds up to 75 mph.

Founder Dana Myers hopes to use the data collected by 3D Engineering to develop an easier-to-produce vehicle selling for less than \$15,000, Irwin said.

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