

TUESDAY 21ST APRIL 2020

Photocentric receive their third Queen's Award, in recognition of their Innovation in LCD based 3D printing.

Peterborough based innovator and specialist 3d printer manufacturer, Photocentric, are delighted to announce the news of their third prestigious Queen's Award accolade.

Since 2002 Photocentric have been at the cutting edge of innovation in photopolymer, manufacturing a wide variety of materials that harden in light. Patent holders in visible light curing technologies, over the last 20 years Photocentric have supported and innovated a broad range of applications; establishing themselves as leaders across varying industries. Today, Photocentric are renowned as the world's largest and most trusted manufacturer of crystal-clear stamps, and in more recent times have become a leading player in the global additive manufacturing space.

Photocentric received their first Queen's Award in 2016, receiving the Innovation award in acknowledgement of their innovative Imagepac product; a patented package of photopolymer enabling a simpler and cheaper manufacture of stamps.

Their second Queen's Award came in 2018, receiving the accolade for International Trade for their outstanding 3-year growth in overseas sales. Today, Photocentric celebrate their third prestigious Queen's Award – the Innovation award for the second time, this time for their work in the use of LCD screens to make fast, affordable 3D printers.

Founder Paul Holt says: "This is the most prestigious award for UK business, it has been given to us in recognition of the Innovation Photocentric has achieved in creating LCD based 3D printing.

This method of 3D printing, developed by us nearly 6 years ago, has started to change the way manufacturing takes place. There is no better example than the way we have recently used LC Magna printers to manufacture thousands of protective face shields every day on a scale unequalled by other methods of 3D printing."

Becoming 3D Industry Leaders and the Vision of Mass Manufacture

With an established background in chemistry, Photocentric in recent years moved into the manufacture of 3D printers. They applied their understanding of photopolymerization to the visible light part of the spectrum, to unlock the powers of using widely available, high resolution LCD screens in 3D printers. Working with their patented daylight curing process, they invented the use of LCD screens as the selective light source for a 3D printer; a technology today that is disruptive to additive manufacturing.

Driving their LCD developments is their vision - to enable custom mass manufacture. They enable their vision through providing disruptive, fast and large format machines and compatible functional materials. These have been developed for a range of applications, one strong one is dentistry, particularly that of aligner manufacture. Their LC Magna printer enables orthodontists and other dental professionals to batch produce patient specific arches for thermoforming aligners in volume; at a cost, speed and scale previously unknown. Other sectors Photocentric provide solutions for include the entertainment, industrial and figurine industries.

Mass Manufacturing Thousands of Shields for NHS Workers – COVID19

After seeing the story of a ventilator valve 3D printed for an Italian hospital, Photocentric began to think about how they could help support hospitals using their large-format printer farm which can produce vast numbers of parts per day.

Receiving a large and immediate demand from hospitals both local and further afield for protective face shields, Photocentric reacted quickly; designing, printing and testing a 3D printed shield part in a day. A day later, the design had been approved by doctors both locally and in Spain.

Usually used for test parts for customers and to trial new resins, Photocentric's fleet of LC Magna large-format printers were turned over for immediate use. Each printer produces 135 shield parts every 90 minutes with Photocentric's optimised technology. OPRO, the very successful, innovative, double Queen's Award manufacturer of mouthguards loaned Photocentric their 5 LC Magna printers to help increase the daily print capacity and deliver to those in need. With the help of their suppliers and customers, Photocentric are now delivering tens of thousands of shield parts a day for the NHS and healthcare heroes working on the front line during COVID 19.

Since the outbreak Photocentric have changed their business. They have enabled the manufacture of goods locally and at a speed and scale impossible with traditional manufacture or other conventional 3D printing technologies.

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