Design services company shines in the medical market

Petko Design’s new advanced FDM 3D printer sets it apart

By Peter Caulfield

Petko Design Inc. of Richmond, BC, has just acquired an industrial-version fused deposition modeling (FDM) three-dimensional printer. Petko operations manager Shaun Granleese says the Fortus 400mc printer (www.fortus.com), which is made by Stratasys Inc. of Minneapolis, is one of the first industrial versions of an FDM printer in BC’s Lower Mainland.

Its $100,000-plus price and 600 kg size notwithstanding, Granleese says the printer is more cost-effective and enables quicker turnaround than outsourcing prototype manufacturing to contractors.

“Now we can make prototypes and small production run parts in-house and have them ready by the end of the day,” Granleese said.

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Product design house invests in 3D printer

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Founded in 2005 by Mirjan Petek, who is the company’s president, Petko (www.petkodesign.com) is a service company with engineering, design and development capabilities. Granleese says Petko takes the concepts that have been developed by their customers and turns them into commercial products by developing and integrating the electrical, mechanical and optical components.

“We provide services for companies that are looking for an experienced team, but do not want to go the expense of hiring managers and employees and buying a lot of software and equipment,” Granleese said. “We fill in the pieces missing in other companies, by providing them with specialized design skills.”

Granleese says Petko offers electrical, mechanical and optics products engineering design and development capabilities. Services include schematics and PCB design; high-speed mixed signal (analog and digital) electronics circuit design; simulation of performance and signal integrity; and fast prototyping of multi-layer circuit boards. Petko can also prepare the documentation that is required for the certification or regulatory approval of a product.

“Our customers’ ideas are transformed from a concept to a fully-functional prototype that is ready for manufacturing,” he said.

Granleese says Petko has an extensive set of tools for electrical and mechanical design, simulation, and testing, including FPGA (field programmable gate array) design.

The company specializes in medical devices, and understands the many regulations and standards connected with them. Before he started Petko, Petek used to work for PMI Labs (formerly Perceptronix Medical Inc.), where he was involved in the development of products for the early detection of lung cancer.

Petko has undertaken “dozens” of projects since the company was founded. Most of the company’s customers are located in BC, but it has also done business all over the world, including China. The company has 2000 square feet of labs and offices, including an optics clean room. It has eight full-time staff, plus a large extended family of contractors and contributors.

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Petko Design has developed a digital medical camera for a customer that is designed to sit on the top of scientific microscopes.