

## CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

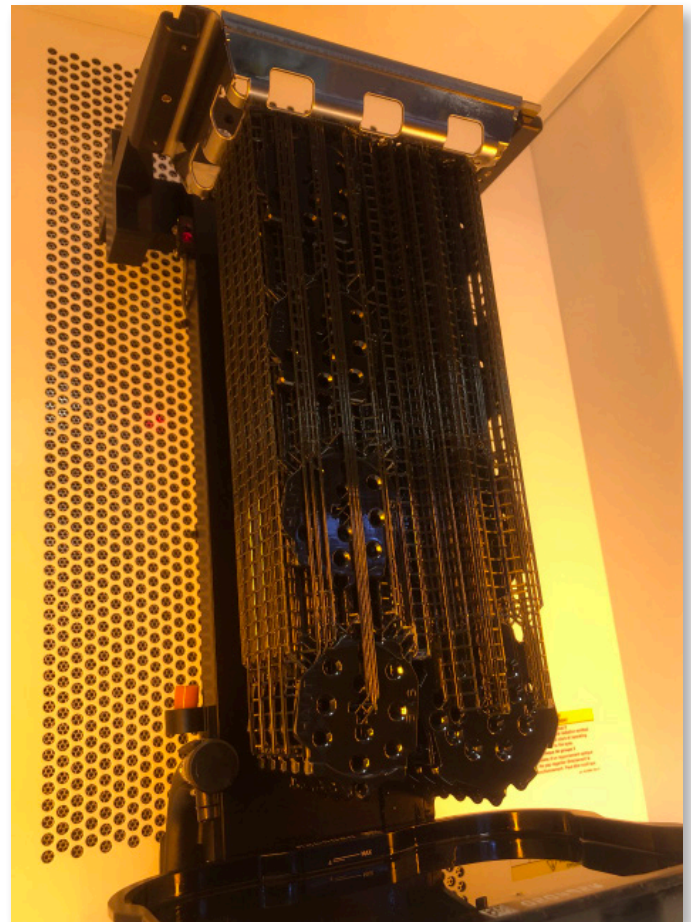
**somfy®**

## SOMFY: Thinking Ahead With Automated Post-Printing For Prototyping

With innovation rooted at its core for more than 50 years, staying ahead of the curve has always come naturally to Somfy - the world's leading manufacturer of automatic controls for homes and buildings. The company delivers automated shutters and solar protection, blinds/curtains, access control products, security products, and connected home products to 58 countries worldwide. Their innate drive to innovate is what led Somfy to recently adopt additive manufacturing into their prototyping processes. Noticing the abounding value in additive, the company's internal prototyping department (the Add Lab) in Cluses, France, was recently outfitted with 3D Systems' Figure 4® Modular vat photopolymer printers. These particular printers are renowned for their ability to scale operations for same-day prototyping and to deliver a diverse range of part shapes and sizes at a low operational cost. Thus far, Somfy has already achieved better prototyping flexibility with the Figure 4, as it's much faster for them to achieve multiple design iterations during product development.

Of course, additive manufacturing entails more than just design and print software. When the Add Lab began working with top-of-the-line 3D printers, they were aware that most resin removal solutions wouldn't be able to keep up with their desired throughput, and the rest of their high-efficiency workflow. For Somfy, a company that places a significant focus on sustainability, health, and safety, isopropyl alcohol (IPA) was not even considered as a viable resin removal option. IPA is notorious for its environmentally harmful features like high vapor pressure, high flammability risk, and a short product lifespan (among other issues). These factors all contribute to a highly unpleasant working environment.

To keep their workflow running as smoothly as possible, and to avoid all of the risks and concerns associated with IPA, Somfy turned to the pioneers of automated solutions for resin removal - PostProcess Technologies. After evaluating their unique needs, PostProcess matched Somfy with the software-driven DEMI 430, a solution leveraging the brand's proprietary resin removal detergents and patented Submersed Vortex Cavitation (SVC) technology for consistent resin and support removal.



Example of DLP part from Figure 4 printer

Thanks to the effectiveness of the solution's vortex pumping scheme and precision-controlled ultrasonics, Somfy has been able to significantly ramp up their prototyping volume. The lab puts several batches through the DEMI 430 day-in and day-out, enabling them to use their current printers at maximum capacity for optimal productivity.

## CASE STUDY

With the efficiency enabled by the complete PostProcess solution, Somfy plans to be able to add printers to their operation and continue to scale without being inhibited by the post-printing process. By deciding to go with the PostProcess solution, Somfy instilled high throughput, impeccable consistency, and top-tier safety standards in the Add Lab. Additionally, Somfy proactively enacted substantial savings and a sustainable post-printing process thanks to the longevity of PostProcess's detergent,

which lasts up to 6 times longer than IPA. This longevity minimizes the need for frequent detergent change-outs - a costly process that causes machine downtime and a heightened risk of workplace accidents.



Example DLP parts from Figure 4 printer

Speaking to the benefits of implementing the PostProcess DEMI 430, Somfy's Prototyping Lab Manager Philippe Bendel said, "The DEMI 430 has quite literally been a breath of fresh air here in the Add Lab. It's assuring knowing that this solution allows us the opportunity to grow and scale while maintaining the safest and most sustainable environment possible for our employees. We've already been impressed with the level of personalized support we've received from the PostProcess

team, and look forward to continuing to experiment with new resins without having to worry that the post-printing process may slow us down."

### About PostProcess

PostProcess Technologies is the only provider of automated and intelligent post-printing solutions for 3D printed parts. Founded in 2014 and headquartered in Buffalo, NY, USA, with international operations in Sophia-Antipolis, France, PostProcess removes the bottleneck in the third step of 3D printing – post-printing – through patent-pending software, hardware, and chemistry technologies. The company's solutions automate industrial 3D printing's most common post-printing processes with a software-based approach, including support, resin, and powder removal, as well as surface finishing, resulting in "customer-ready" 3D printed parts.

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**PHILIPPE BENDEL**  
Prototyping Lab Manager

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PostProcess solutions will enable the **full digitization of additive manufacturing** through the post-print step for the Industry 4.0 factory floor.

Additionally, as an innovator of software-based 3D post-printing, PostProcess solutions will enable the full digitization of AM through the post-print step for the Industry 4.0 factory floor. The PostProcess portfolio has been proven across all major industrial 3D printing technologies and is in use daily in every imaginable manufacturing sector.

### **About Somfy**

Somfy is an international group with operations in 58 countries. Somfy is the world leader in the automatic control of openings and closures in homes and buildings. For over 50 years, Somfy has allowed people to transform their living environments with automatic controls, by designing and developing solutions offering comfort, security, and energy savings.



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