

Neckarsulm Communications

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Audi expands polymer 3D printing in Production

- **Audi assumes pioneering role within Volkswagen Group**
- **Printed auxiliary tools now also improve workflows in volume production**
- **Global 3D printing network under construction**

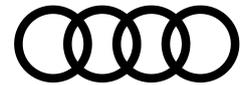
Neckarsulm, April 8, 2019 – Audi is expanding the use of 3D printers in Production. Custom designed and locally printed, auxiliary tools from the 3D printer help employees on the production lines. A separate department will be responsible for implementation at the Neckarsulm site in the future.

The expert team at the startup/analysis center has already firmly established polymer 3D printing in the craft-scale R8 factory at the Böllinger Höfe. They develop ideas for new or optimized tools in close collaboration with their colleagues on the production line. The team under project manager Waldemar Hirsch design the tools on site and print them on the 3D printer. During a one-week workshop last December, the expert team trialed the use of this fast, convenient service for volume production in the factory. They identified several hundred applications where printed auxiliary tools offer substantial savings potential.

“By establishing a separate specialist department for 3D printing, we are professionalizing this already successful project. Even more employees will be able to benefit from the experienced expert team and the custom auxiliary tools in the future,” said Helmut Stettner, the Neckarsulm plant manager. But Audi is also using the project to actively drive cultural change. The employees on the production line are directly involved in the development process for the 3D-printed tools.

Hirsch gives top priority to focusing on the employees and their needs. “When designing a prototype, it is very important to us that we fulfill our colleagues’ wishes exactly,” he said. “Our goal is to provide our Audi colleagues the 3D-printed tool as quickly as possible, thus supporting them in their daily work.”

The process is another building block in the company’s digital transformation. For Audi it marks an important step in the evolution of production into a modern smart factory. The use of the futuristic technology enhances flexibility and efficiency in addition to enabling the products to be customized as suggested by the employees. “The decision to establish the new department supports the creation of a cross-site network. Ultimately the entire Volkswagen Group will benefit from the expertise in Neckarsulm,” said Stettner.



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The **Audi Group**, with its brands Audi, Ducati and Lamborghini, is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the premium segment. It is present in more than 100 markets worldwide and produces at 18 locations in 13 countries. 100 percent subsidiaries of AUDI AG include Audi Sport GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy) and Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy).

In 2018, the Audi Group delivered to customers about 1.812 million automobiles of the Audi brand, 5,750 sports cars of the Lamborghini brand and 53,004 motorcycles of the Ducati brand. In the 2018 fiscal year, AUDI AG achieved total revenue of €59.2 billion and an operating profit before special items of €4.7 billion. At present, approximately 90,000 people work for the company all over the world, more than 60,000 of them in Germany. Audi focuses on sustainable products and technologies for the future of mobility.
