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Three Awards in Three Months! Fresh Accolades for Proto Labs

Telford, UK. June 29, 2010: No World Cup blues for the staff and management of Proto Labs Limited, as the company notches-up a hat-trick of prestigious and high profile awards. Just days after receiving the MWP Award at MACH 2010, the UK's largest manufacturing exhibition, and only weeks after winning the Queens Award for Enterprise, the Shropshire company received The Institute of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) Manufacturing Excellence (MX) Award for Integrated e-Business.

Nominees for the MX Award - what many have called 'the toughest award of all', undergo a rigorous process involving self-assessment audits, company visits from a team of MX assessors and presentations to a panel of industry experts. The 2010 MX roll call of winners boasted some of the world's best known engineering companies, including Siemens, BAE Systems, Autodesk, Leyland and Michelin.

The award ceremony was held at the Dorchester Hotel, London, on June 23rd and representing Proto Labs was Commercial Manager, Mr. Damian Hennessey: "Reaching the finals of MX, and winning, is great recognition for the many people behind the scenes at Proto Labs," he said. "For a professional body as prestigious as the IMechE to honour our business makes us all very proud, particularly as all too often the UK is dismissed as a viable location for ground-breaking engineering innovation."

Proto Labs is one of the most exciting and fastest growing manufacturing companies in Europe. Since it was founded just five years ago, the company has radically shifted the economics and delivery times associated with the



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production of prototype and low-volume parts. Operating from its manufacturing location in the UK and sales offices in France and Germany means Proto Labs can provide first class service to customers across Europe who include both cutting-edge companies and world-leaders in many different industry sectors, such as medical, aerospace, automotive and domestic appliances.

The company offers two services: First Cut® delivers CNC machined parts in small quantities of 1-10 units in many plastics and aluminium, while Protomold® delivers injection-moulded plastic parts in quantities of 10-10,000+ in just about any thermoplastic the customer can think of. Either service can deliver parts in as little as one day.

But, what makes the Proto Labs process particularly innovative is the company's 'super-compute cluster' and powerful software, both of which have been continuously developed in-house since the company was founded. A customer can upload a 3D CAD model of their part to the First Cut or Protomold websites and receive within hours a unique, web-based quote, including a detailed manufacturability analysis and accurate, all-in production price.

Mark Prisk MP, Minister for Business and Enterprise attended the 2010 MX ceremony and presented the various awards. But, this was not the first time Proto Labs has been here! The company also won the award for Integrated e-Business in 2006, presented on that occasion by William Hague MP. "In just a few years Proto Labs has helped many thousands of companies in Europe," said Mr. Hennessey, "and receiving the MX Award for the second time is professional acknowledgment of how we are constantly improving our process; striving to make it answer the needs of the most important critics – our customers, both old and new."

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About Proto Labs, Limited

Based in Shropshire in the UK, Proto Labs has radically changed the economics and lead times associated with the production of prototype and low-volume parts for European manufacturers. Proto Labs' customers include companies from all sectors such as medical, aerospace, automotive and domestic appliances. With two service offerings: First Cut® delivers machined parts (ideal for quantities of 1-10 parts) in over 25 production-intent materials including aluminium while Protomold® delivers injection-moulded plastic parts (ideal for quantities of 10-10,000) in hundreds of production-intent materials. Using a super-compute cluster Proto Labs offers a web-based quoting system which includes a detailed manufacturability analysis and an accurate all-in production price in just hours **and** can ship orders in one business day. For more information please visit www.protolabs.co.uk

About Protomold®

Protomold® is the injection-moulding service offered by Proto Labs, Limited. Designers and engineers can submit a 3D CAD model of a part to the Protomold web-based quoting system, ProtoQuote™, and receive a detailed 3D model manufacturability analysis and an accurate all-in production price in hours rather than weeks. With ProtoQuote®, customers can easily react to last-minute design changes, uploading as many iterations as they need to get the right model, material and cost. This in turn greatly reduces the time-to-market for a new product. In addition to all this, Protomold can deliver injection-moulded prototype and low-volume plastic parts manufactured from a choice of hundreds of production-intent materials in as little as one business day. For more information please visit www.protomold.co.uk



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About First Cut®

First Cut® is the machining service offered by Proto Labs, Limited. Designers and engineers can submit a 3D CAD model of a part to the First Cut web-based quoting system, FirstQuote™, and receive a detailed 3D model manufacturability analysis and an accurate all-in production price in just hours rather than weeks. With FirstQuote®, customers can easily react to last-minute design changes, uploading as many iterations as they need to get the right model, material and cost. This in turn greatly reduces the time-to-market for a new product. First Cut allows customers to make a fully functional prototype much earlier in the development cycle from a range of over 25 production-intent materials such as ABS, Nylon, PEEK, and aluminium produced in as little as one business day. For more information please visit www.firstcut.eu/gb

For initial enquiries about Proto Labs Limited/First Cut/Protomold, please contact Richard Vaughan, European Marketing Manager at richard.vaughan@protolabs.co.uk (+44 (0) 1952 607488) or visit www.protolabs.co.uk

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