



NEWS RELEASE

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THE PROTOMOLD COMPANY NAMED AS TEKNE AWARD FINALIST

Premier awards program recognizes Minnesota's companies and individuals who have shown technology innovation and leadership

MINNEAPOLIS — Sept. 29, 2004 — The Protomold Company, Inc., pioneer of rapid injection molding, is a finalist in the Advanced Manufacturing Emerging Company category for a 2004 Tekne Award, Minnesota's annual awards program that recognizes companies and individuals who have shown superior technology innovation and leadership. The Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA) and Minnesota Technology, Inc. (MTI) are the primary sponsors of the Tekne awards program.

Applicable across a diverse range of industries, Protomold's rapid injection molding process enables design engineers to validate the form, fit and functionality of their design with real prototype parts at one-third the cost or lead time normally associated with conventional injection molding. Rapid injection molding utilizes proprietary software developed by Protomold that combines 3-D computer-aided design with high-speed CNC machining to produce prototype and low-volume injection molded parts in as little as three days.

The MHTA and MTI, in partnership with Medical Alley, MNBIO and Minnesota Project Innovation, join together to recognize technology innovators and leaders who have made lasting contributions to enhancing the quality of life and competitiveness of Minnesota. The awards are separated into categories that recognize the best and brightest in innovation, development, education, commercialization and leadership of technology companies in Minnesota.

"Our status as a 2004 Tekne Award finalist is a recognition of our commitment to Minnesota's economy, our customers and our employees," said Bradley Cleveland, president and CEO, The Protomold Company. "Our achievements can be attributed to the breakthrough technology originally envisioned and created by founder Larry Lukis, exceptional teamwork by all of our employees and the increasing importance our customers place on reducing their time to market. We truly appreciate this recognition from our peers in Minnesota."

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“In the five years that we’ve been naming Tekne Award finalists, the program has become the premier awards program for technology innovators and leaders in Minnesota,” said Kate Rubin, president of the Minnesota High Tech Association. “The 2004 Tekne Award finalists show that Minnesota continues to produce cutting-edge technology and is a great place to do business.”

Dr. Wayne Pletcher, president of Minnesota Technology, Inc. added: “We are proud to honor The Protomold Company as a 2004 Tekne Award finalist and are pleased to recognize its leadership in high-technology innovation.”

The 2004 Tekne Awards will be presented on Tuesday, Nov. 9, at the Minneapolis Convention Center, beginning with a reception at 4:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6 p.m. and the awards ceremony at 7:00 p.m. Fifty-one finalists have been named in 17 categories. A list of all finalists and categories can be found at www.tekneawards.org.

About The Protomold Company

The Protomold Company has radically changed the economics and lead times associated with prototype and low-volume production of injection molded parts. Its defined market segment, rapid injection molding, is positioned between rapid prototyping and conventional high-volume injection molding. Protomold® is privately held and headquartered in Maple Plain, Minn. Further information can be found online at www.protomold.com.

About MTI

Minnesota Technology, Inc. (MTI) is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to help its business customers gain competitive advantages, support their growth, and contribute to Minnesota’s economic vitality. It fulfills this work through a statewide staff of expert professionals who have tested expertise across a wide variety of business, technology, manufacturing, engineering, publishing and research disciplines. In the last three years, MTI has helped nearly 2,000 Minnesota companies and made a significant economic impact. It helped create and retain over 2,500 jobs, saved its clients more than \$70 million, and helped generate \$80 million in new technology investments. For more information, visit www.minnesotatechnology.org.

About MHTA

The Minnesota High Tech Association accelerates the growth, success and sustainability of Minnesota's technology-based economy through public policy advocacy, member collaboration and education, and community outreach. MHTA is the only membership organization that represents Minnesota's entire technology-based economy. MHTA members include organizations of every size – involved in virtually every aspect of technology creation, production, application and education in Minnesota. MHTA works in partnership with AeA, which represents Minnesota's technology organizations nationally. More information on the MHTA can be found at www.mhta.org.

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