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The fast and economic route to success on the market

Arnold Umformtechnik offers Rapid Prototyping to the fastening technology – specialist RP team reduces delivery lead time for customised short runs to three weeks – costs are reduced by simultaneous procedures

(Forchtenberg). With its innovative methods and services, Arnold Umformtechnik GmbH & Co. KG, the fastening specialist, has forged a solid position on the market. In view of the constantly growing demand for small runs with delivery lead times close to those of standard products, Arnold has strengthened its Rapid Prototyping team and acquired more up-to-date machines which can be deployed more flexibly. This has resulted in a reduction of delivery lead times for individually tailored, highly complex fasteners and pressed cold formed parts to as little as three weeks from receipt of order.

In the light of global competition, time has become the most crucial factor that drives success. Product and production-oriented enterprises are developing new capacities or are recasting their business methods to enable them to get to market with innovative solutions faster than the competition. The basic requirement is to reduce development costs and cut development times.



The Arnold Fastener Express team in action

This is where Rapid Prototyping makes a considerable contribution. It can be used to manufacture working parts straight from CAD data. In the past delivery lead times of up to 30 weeks needed to be scheduled, particularly for the development and production of functional samples or special short-run solutions. Now the specialists at Arnold have the possibility to produce and supply complex customized fasteners within as little as three weeks.

Whereas in the past a large proportion of these components principally served as view models or prototypes, the engineers at Arnold now go one step further. By producing function types with properties very close to series production, they are making use of the growing need for Functional Prototyping. Engineers at Arnold are currently receiving around 150 enquiries a year for this type of prototyping. And Arnold's own modern tool stock means that it is able to

use Rapid Prototyping to manufacture short runs quickly, effectively and above all economically.

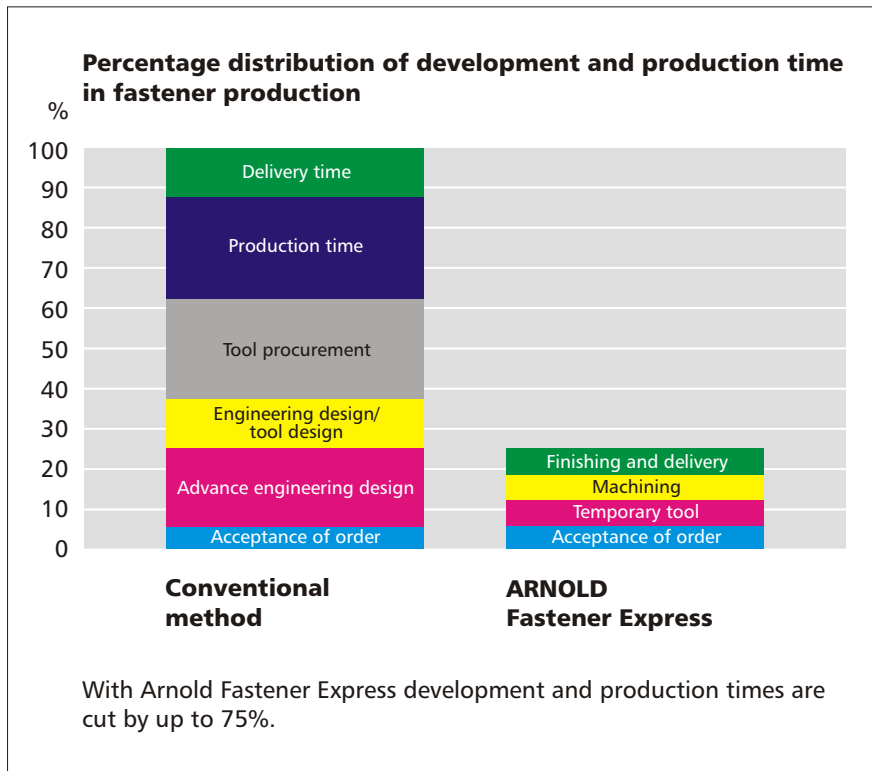
Arnold has also cut down on administrative time primarily by setting up a specialist RP team. The team has installed a direct acceptance process which eliminates the waiting time for



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The Arnold Group is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Würth Group, which, with over 50.000 employees and with 314 companies world-wide operates on a global basis with earnings of over 6 billion euros.

Innovative Rapid Prototyping methods save time and money, and promote market success.

the full design process common throughout the industry. Receipt of an order automatically starts off the technical evaluation process, such as the typical materials to be joined, or checking the mechanical properties of the fastener. The Arnold method also gains time by simultaneously translating the 3-dimensional CAD data into the product. And the time-consuming "tool design" and "tool procurement" processes are completely eliminated. The raw part goes directly into the machining process, where it is turned ready for use in the final process. The part is then ready for the function test.

"Using this almost simultaneous process we achieve quality in our products faster and more directly," said Reinhard Barth, Product Development & Management Manager at Arnold Umformtechnik GmbH & Co. KG, commenting on the advantages of Rapid Prototyping. "We produce runs of up to 1,000 extremely complex fasteners all possessing the same properties as the bulk manufactured cold formed parts— for a quarter of the time and cost."

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