

Faster Prototypes and Tooling Accelerate Time to Market for Schneider Electric



Example part.

COMPANY PROFILE

Schneider Electric is a multinational corporation specializing in energy management and automation solutions. With more than 160,000 employees in more than 100 countries, Schneider Electric offers a variety of products and solutions for end-users ranging from households to large-scale industries with a focus on sustainability and efficiency. The company is one of the leading automation vendors worldwide.

Daniel Erickson, the Plastics and Tooling Manager for Global Supply Chain North America at Schneider Electric, shares insights into their long-standing partnership with Quickparts, a supplier specializing in rapid prototyping and low-volume production.

CHALLENGE

Daniel Erickson worked for New Product Development when he started with Schneider Electric. Time is of the essence when introducing new products, but the company faced challenges that left them looking for a new partner. Daniel Erickson and the company knew they needed rapid prototyping to facilitate new product development, and they needed to reduce the time to market for product launches.

While they had existing suppliers, they couldn't meet the company's needs. These constraints could potentially restrict the company's ability to innovate rapidly, slowing down new product introductions and affecting the company's competitive edge.

SOLUTION

Quickparts was sought out to mitigate these challenges. "We brought Quickparts on board because we needed a supplier to help us with rapid prototyping for product development," said Daniel Erickson.

Quickparts bridged the gap by providing rapid prototyping services that facilitated the speed necessary for launching new products. This was achieved through several strategic approaches.

Communication is a critical component when speed to market is the goal. To minimize potential challenges in the later stages of development and ensure the project remained on track, Quickparts prioritized upfront communication through Design for Manufacturability (DFM) assessments and meetings.



ABOUT QUICKPARTS

Quickparts is your global manufacturing partner, offering unparalleled efficiency and scale-up opportunities. Our extensive in-house network and local expertise provide faster lead times, better communication, and tailored solutions. We handle everything, from rapid prototyping to low volume production, with no limitations on size, complexity or quantity.



Learn more at
[quickparts.com](https://www.quickparts.com).

To facilitate speed to market, Quickparts provided robust, rapid-turnaround steel tooling, which reduced lead times for prototype samples to an average of 3-4 weeks. Even though it was rapid prototype tooling, it was constructed similarly to a Class 104 mold, which can run up to 100,000 cycles.

The two companies collaborated closely following Schneider Electric's internal Flow Analysis to replicate conditions (gating, parting lines, and venting) in the soft tooling that resembled those required in the hard tooling. Multiple engineering change modifications to molds were required during the process, but this allowed Quickparts to refine and validate the best proof of concept without fabricating entirely new molds.

Inspections and Quality Control Support Schneider Electric's Goals

Quickparts supported rigorous qualification criteria by providing First Article Inspection Reports (FAIR), Product Performance Evaluation Plan (PPEP), and Critical Quality Control Standards (CQCS), among others. These integrated strategies collectively contributed to a streamlined and accelerated prototyping process.

Establishing a Long-Term Value-Driven Partnership

Through the past decade, Quickparts has remained a steadfast and trusted partner, bringing value beyond prototyping. Today, the primary focus for Daniel's work with Quickparts is prototype injection mold tools and parts, but Quickparts is also used for some low-volume production, which is crucial for product launches while high-volume production tooling is being prepared. Quickparts' responsive approach allowed Schneider Electric to launch products at a lower volume and gain a competitive advantage by reaching the market faster.

"The whole key is time to market. I can get to market faster with Quickparts than with the long-term production manufacturers that take months to reach capacity," said Daniel. "With Quickparts, we can launch at a lower volume and get to market faster with some of our key customers and then expand from there. The greatest value I receive is time - whether it be time to market, getting prototypes in hand so we can do pilot builds, engineering prototype builds, or product evaluations and testing - these are all primarily focused around time."

Quickparts has exceeded the company's expectations on a couple of projects by building additional tooling, automation equipment, and assembly equipment to support product launches, helping to make the launch successful.

"It is a good company to work with and has good people. They are responsive, attentive, and do an excellent job. I've done several projects with them over the years, and the results speak for themselves. They always deliver. I would highly recommend them," said Daniel Erickson.

Quickparts' ability to deliver critical solutions quickly has been a fundamental component in Schneider Electric's successful product development and launch processes.

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*Daniel Erickson
Plastics and Tooling Manager*

