



# Prodways Group opens up new horizons for 3D-printed footwear

Paris, 6 June 2017

**Prodways Group, a subsidiary of Groupe Gorgé, announces the successful commercial development of its portfolio of solutions for the footwear industry.**

As sport shoe manufacturers are looking for ways to accelerate new product launches, create more versatile footwear and provide enhanced performance to their customers, Prodways Group unique 3D printing solutions open up new horizons for the industrial production of 3D-printed footwear.

Over the past few years, Prodways Group has developed proven 3D technologies and materials for faster manufacturing of final outsoles, midsoles and insoles providing higher performance, complex textures and customized design and properties across the sole that offer a competitive alternative to traditional manufacturing processes.

## **Enhancing sportswear mid-sole performance with TPU material**

Fostering a culture of innovation, Prodways Group has developed a revolutionary elastomeric material for additive manufacturing that has already convinced many sportswear industry leaders.

Designed for use with laser sintering 3D printers, Prodways Group's proprietary thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) material stands out for its superior elongation at break capacity of over 300%. This exclusive material enables the printing of ultra-flexible mid-soles with higher fatigue resistance, while eliminating the time and cost of tooling. This process also enables a high level of precision in 3D printing of lattice structures, a level that could not be reached with traditional manufacturing processes, thus saving weight and bringing higher performance to sportswear midsoles.

While traditional moulding techniques limit the capacity to adjust the properties across the midsole, Prodways Group TPU's shore hardness can be varied depending on energy input, allowing variable density for each area of the midsole, providing improved performance and better addressing the needs of each sport or athlete.



In addition, Prodways Group offers a wide range of premium laser sintering printers with the largest capacities in their segment, taking the additive manufacturing of sportswear midsoles beyond small series manufacturing and up to the industrial level.

Thanks to its unique 3D printing and materials offering, Prodways Group provides the sportswear industry with key differentiating 3D technologies to accelerate the path of new product launches without being limited by the time and cost of traditional tooling.

### **Challenging the manufacturing of outer soles to deliver productivity gains and cost savings to footwear industry players**

Major footwear players bring hundreds of new sports shoes to market every year, with each new model requiring several dozen outsole patterns and moulds to fit each foot size. Prodways Group's exclusive MOVINGLight® additive manufacturing technology combined with a proprietary material is the only 3D printing technology to print resistant composite moulds to inject or compress a series of final outsoles with tailored designs and complex textures.

While traditional metal mould tooling processes are expensive and slow MOVINGLight®'s unique combination of high resolution and productivity allows to print moulds that are ready for production within a few hours. With this unique technology, Prodways Group accelerates new product market launch cycles, while delivering cost savings to its customers and allowing new designs for improved outsole performance.

### **Mass production of bespoke insoles**

Prodways Group has been developing an applications dedicated to bespoke insoles using 3D printing. Commercially launched in January 2017, ScientiFeet is offering podiatrists a fully integrated solution from foot scanner impression to 3D printing of the end product. Once the production has been finalised, the insoles are delivered to the practitioner's office, which delivers them to the patients.

*"Being able to 3D print customized soles for specific pain relief is a game-changer for orthopaedic applications. 3D printed insoles are lighter and deliver higher precision to offer a tailor-made treatment to each patient",* commented Cyrille Pailleret, General Manager at ScientiFeet.

Whether orthopaedic, in response to a medical condition, for comfort or to improve sports performance, insoles today represent a growing global market. More than 5,000 pairs of ScientiFeet insoles have already been printed.



## About Prodways Group

PRODWAYS GROUP is a specialist in industrial and professional 3D printing with a unique positioning as an integrated European player. The group has developed right across the 3D printing value chain (machines, materials, parts & services) with a high value added technological industrial solution. PRODWAYS GROUP offers a wide range of 3D printing systems and premium composite, hybrid and powder materials (SYSTEMS division). The company also manufactures and markets parts on demand, prototypes and small production run 3D printed items in plastic and metal (PRODUCTS division). The Group targets a significant number of sectors, from aeronautics to healthcare.

In 2016, the company generated revenue of €25.2 million, including 58% outside of France. Building on revolutionary and proprietary technology, MOVINGLight<sup>®</sup>, PRODWAYS GROUP today has global visibility in the industrial 3D printing sector and with leading customers.

PRODWAYS GROUP is a Groupe Gorgé company.

For further information: [www.prodways-bourse.com](http://www.prodways-bourse.com)

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