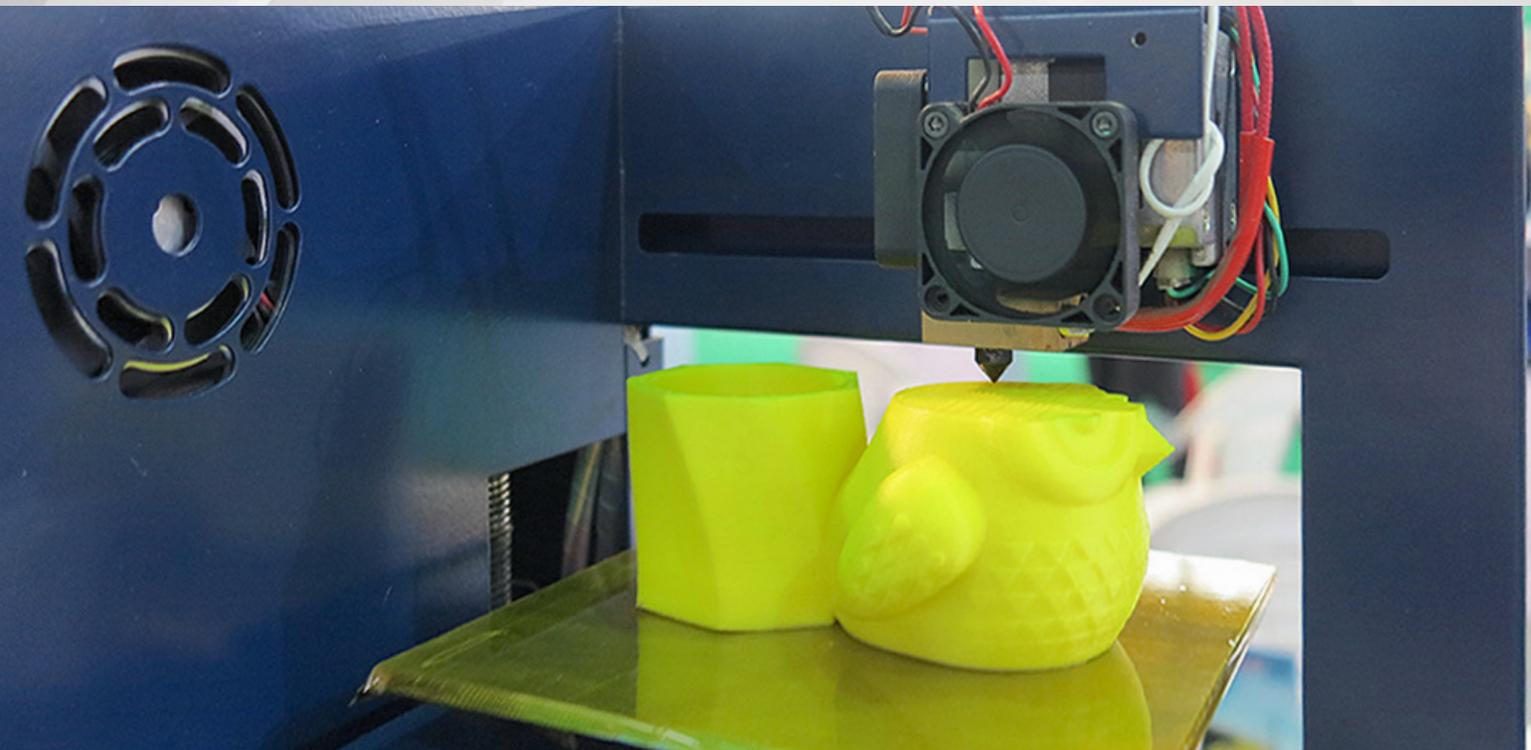


3D Rapid Prototyping

P R I N T E R S



APPEXPO 2014

Introduction

Most people call these “3D printers” but in reality they are applicators or raised relief squirting systems (melting from a plastic-like coil). So a more realistic word is 3D prototyping (I am not sure any of these are very rapid....).

Another acceptable word is “additive manufacturing.” This term is used but is a tad long and not as wishful as 3D printers.

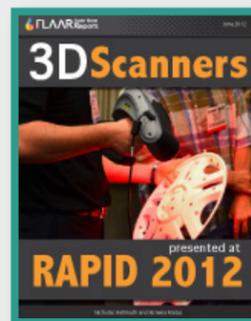
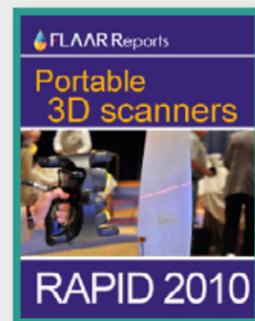
There were several booths for 3D additive personalized reproduction machines at APPPEXPO 2014.

What is bizarre is that Drupa organizers announced that they would “highlight 3d printing for Drupa 2016.” Drupa woke up finally to realize that drupa 2012 was going downhill. So they all got together to “restructure” and decided on packaging and 3D printing. So in effect, the focus is splattered, rather surprising for a Germanic company (with my German heritage, and having lived in Germany nine years with a German girlfriend, I more or less thought I understood Germanic efficiency: as in Leica cameras and Zeiss lenses).

And then splatter. Drupa splatters into so many segments there is nothing left (probably because FESPA took over wide-format printers for EU and APPPEXPO took over wide-format printers for the rest of the world (though I am not sure Drupa has realized how large and important APPPEXPO has become).

Anyway, we really had hoped Drupa could recuperate, but instead they splattered (including splattering in 3-dimensions!).

Learn more about 3D Technology at www.wide-format-printers.org



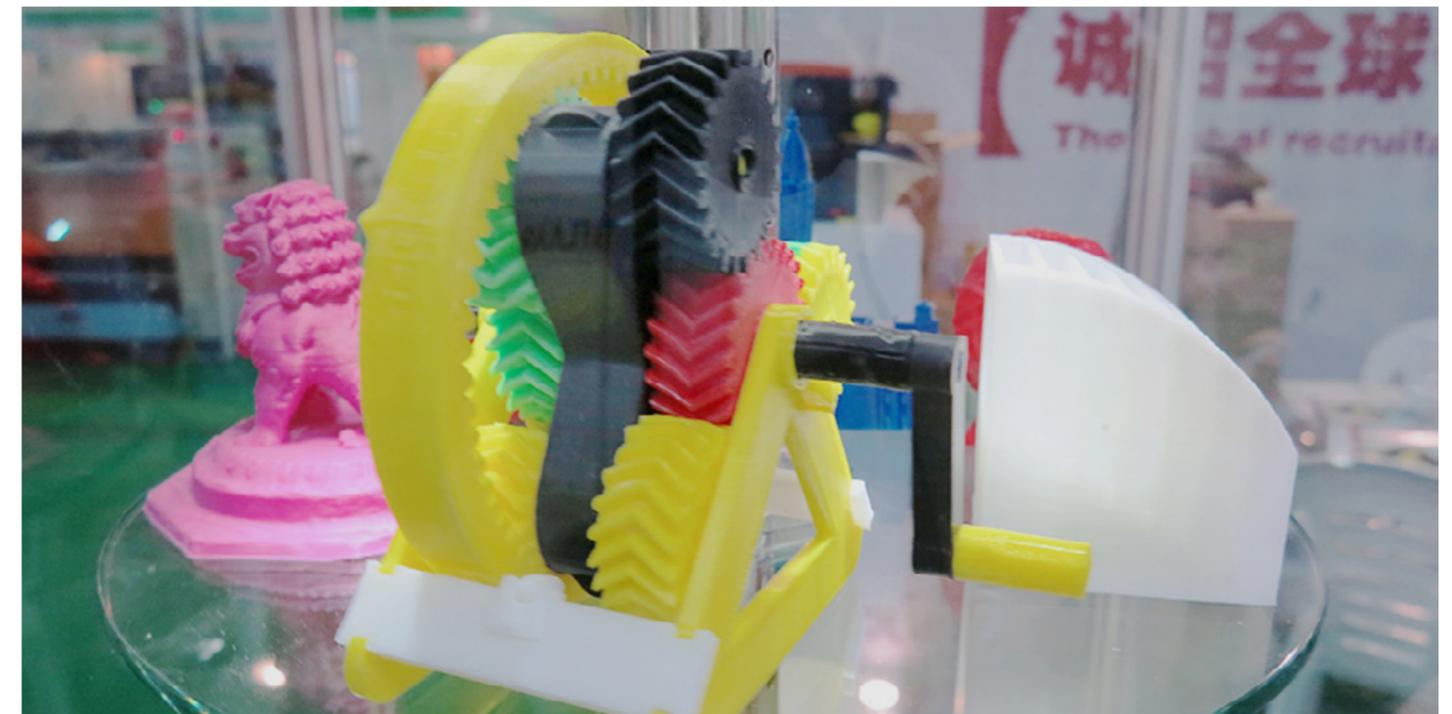
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3D Additive Production is growing at most expos

Most signage and printer expos now have one or two booths with 3D equipment. So APPPEXPO is part of a worldwide trend. In the USA I tend to focus on a specialized expo for 3D technologies, named RAPID: this is a tiny expo in terms of size, but it is comprehensive in terms of technology available to see, touch, and learn about.

It will take all signage expos a while to learn about the range and diversity of technologies of 3D lay-down and build up, and chemistries of the different materials. It is also important to combine 3D scanning and digital imaging hardware and software together with 3D “printers.” Merely having 3D production machines is only a third of the workflow: the first 66% is the conception and the creation of the 3D model. I hope the Drupa team, board of advisors, and the Messe Duesseldorf team read this paragraph.

We witnessed all the VISCOM venues, all four of them, effectively wind down in size. VISCOM Milano made about every-mistake-in-the-book (which we detail in our evaluation reports). They lost 50% of their exhibitor space as a result, in just three years. During these same several years APPPEXPO grew in China and FESPA remained strong in Europe.



Some of the 3D samples observed at APPPEXPO 2014

I estimate there will be more 3D Additive Production machines at APPPEXPO 2015

For most signage shops you can already produce 3D advertising

- With honeycomb sandwich material and flatbed cutters
- With CO2 laser engravers and CNC routers
- With vacuum thermo-formed workflow on UV-cured or solvent inks which are specially formulated to be heat-formable into 3D objects

Plus you can create raised-relief effects by layering multiple print passes with UV-cured flatbeds. In other words, a sign shop is not the market for a 3D “printer” nor any additive lay-down machine system. If you want to do graphics and signage, our suggestions in the paragraph above are far more realistic.

3D systems are for totally different and completely unrelated industries, at least for the next several years. Perhaps Drupa will eventually wake up and realize that if they are a printing expo, that “3D printers” are not printers whatsoever and have almost nothing to do with anything Drupa stands for.

But for APPPEXPO, since they are intelligently maintaining their focus on wide-format inkjet, inks, media, substrates, laminating, and signage, it is nonetheless helpful to have several booths with 3D machines so that we can learn the jargon and learn the 3D production technology and chemistry.



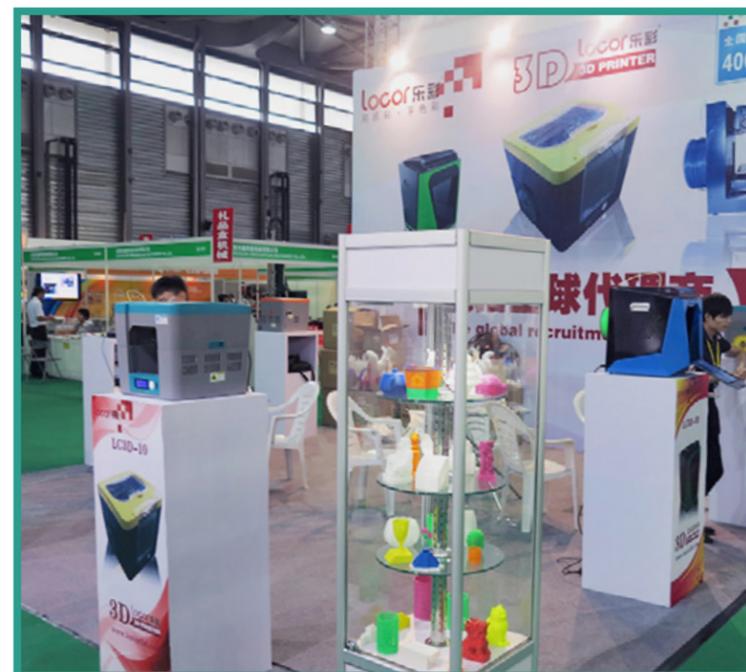
Contact info for APPPEXPO 2015

Their web site is: www.appexpo.com/2/EN/article/2393

Telephone: +86-21-63288899

Fax: +86-21-63749188

Locor



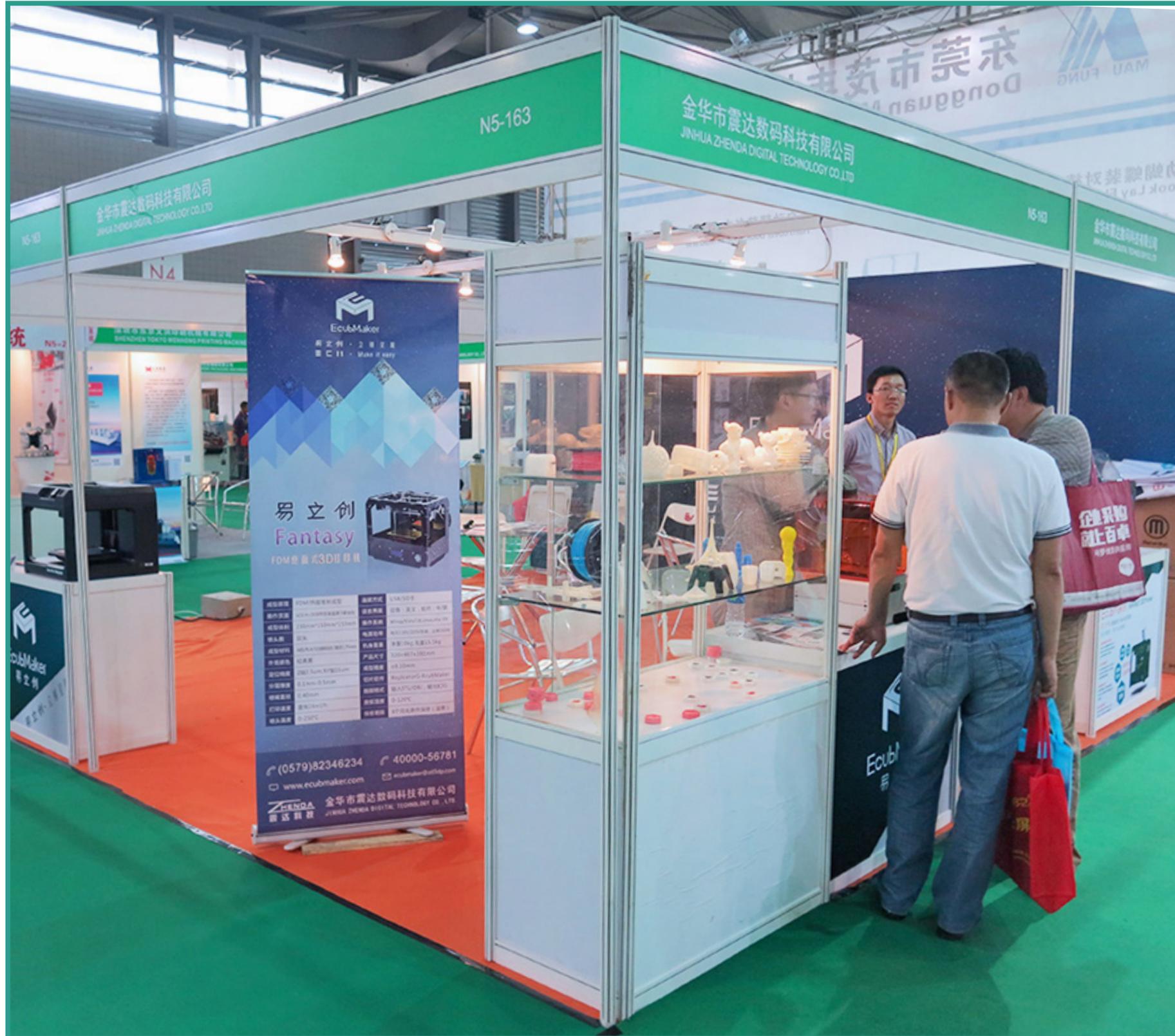
MooRobot





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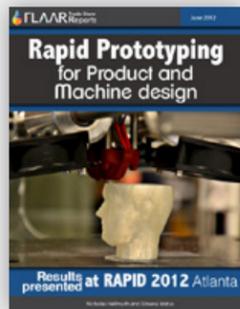
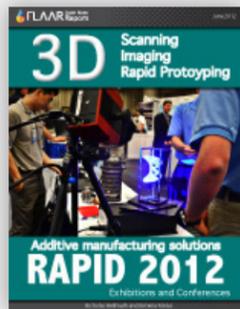




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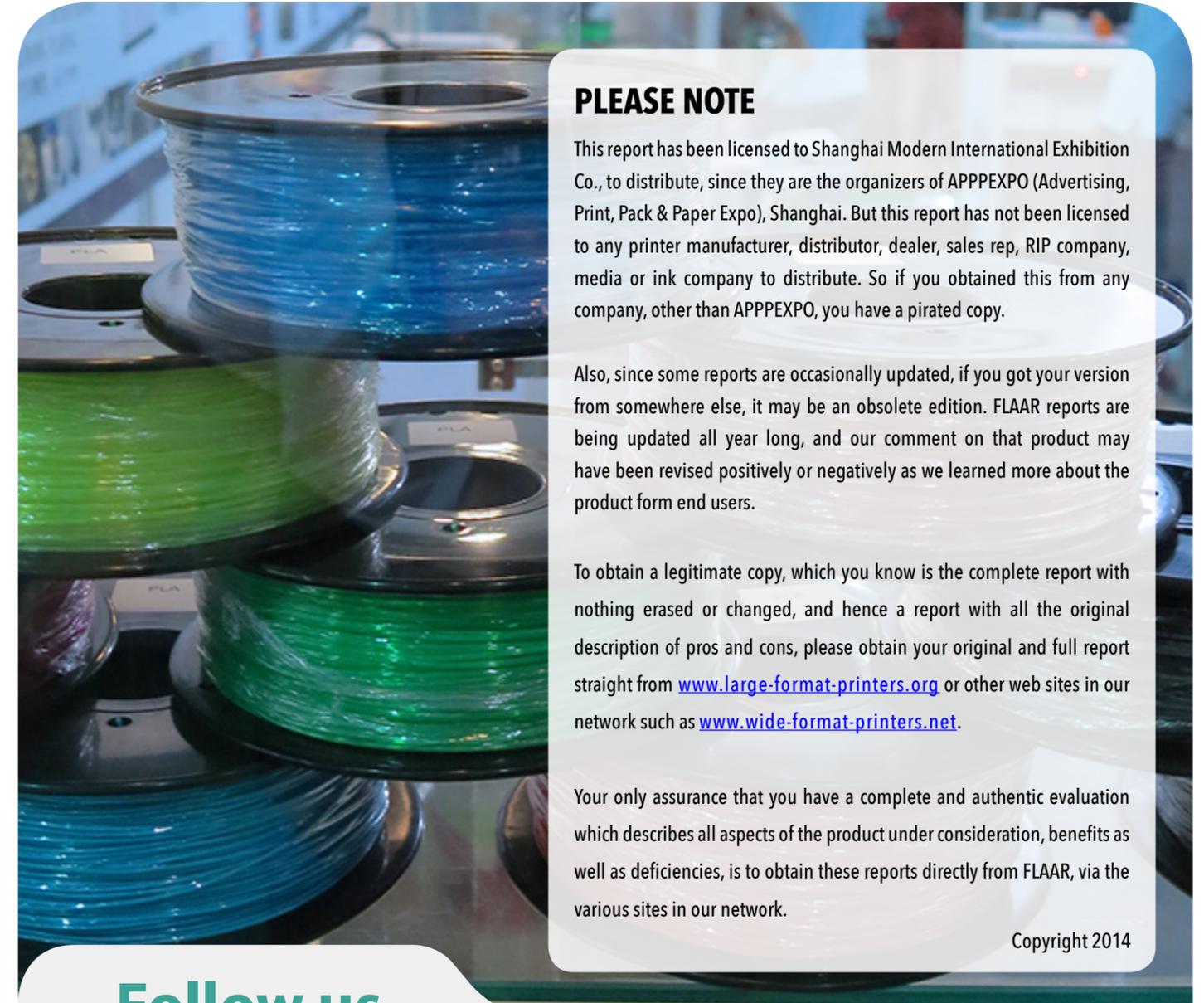
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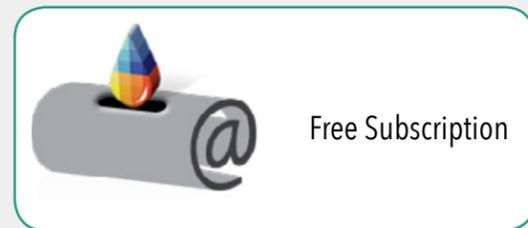
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