

How to

FIND YOUR

NICHE

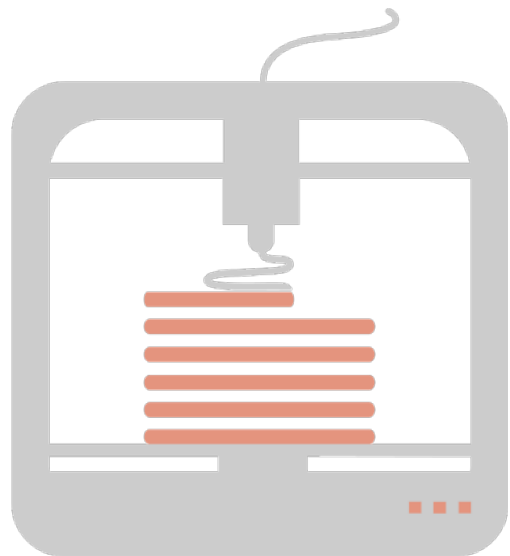
A guide to differentiating your 3D printing
business from the competition.





Introduction

The 3D Printing industry is providing countless possibilities for various sectors. The growth of 3D printing technologies is fueling innovation, and 3D printing applications continue to expand outside of prototyping. Despite the growing market, many 3D printer manufacturers struggle to find their place.



Each 3D printer manufacturer has a vision. But those who understand the importance of differentiation gain an advantage. Many struggling companies tend to offer solutions that cater to every type of end-user to meet different needs. Yet by doing so, they may lose the opportunity to specialize in an aspect that gives them that competitive edge.

Thus, understanding the capabilities of your products and what it can solve allows you to identify who needs it the most.

Many successful businesses focus on solving a specific need. This helps them build specialized competencies that stand out from the crowd and turn them into experts. They know their target market and are focused on providing a solution that is valuable to their customers. Their value proposition targets a specific need that makes their customers say, "this is the right solution for me".



How to find your niche?

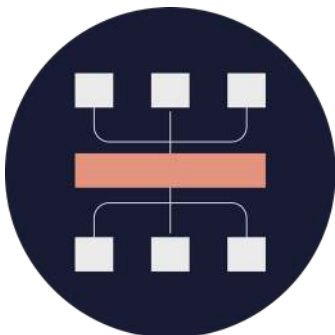
1. Embrace your vision



A vision is an ultimate goal that your company wants to accomplish long-term. It is why your company exists in the first place. Fully embracing your vision allows you to stay focused on becoming the best in your field. This involves having a clear view of what you want to achieve and where your company aspires to be in five to ten years.

No vision is wrong. But ensure that it is concise, future-oriented, and challenging but sustainable.

2. Identify your core competencies



Your vision tells you where you want to go, but it is also vital to understand where you are now. Identifying your strengths gives you an idea of what your core competencies are. Therefore, it is important to remain critical and objective when distinguishing them. You may already have an idea of what your strengths are, but gather reliable data to back up this list.

Talk to your employees and suppliers. Ask your customers what they love about your product. Are your printers living up to a certain standard? Are your clients happy with your products? Which features do they value the most?

Bear in mind that core competencies are unique attributes that give you an advantage. It is something that you have specialized knowledge of. So, compare your strengths with your competitors and identify the ones that make your company stand out. You can be good at developing cost optimized 3D printers versus being the best at providing high-quality industrial level printers. Furthermore, gather your team and round up the specialized skills your team members possess. These can also contribute largely to your company's overall core competencies.



3. Recognize your weaknesses

Recognizing your weaknesses helps you understand the areas of your business that needs improvement or strategic alliances. Do not avoid your weaknesses. You can leverage your strengths or network to overcome these. It is important to remain focused on what you are good at to continue building that block of unique competencies. You may end up losing returns when you apply resources that are not within your expertise.



When this happens, you can consider building alliances with other companies. Building strong partnerships with companies that complement your competencies can support your strategic venture. There is a great opportunity here to grow your team and collaborate with a group of people who share the same vision as you.

Remember that 3D printing is an industry in the making and that the right alliances can generate bigger revenue to all parties.

4. Research your market

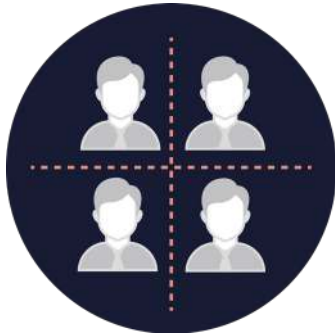


Conduct market research to understand how the market is performing and what it needs. This includes looking into different industries that are using 3D printers.

Talk to your customers, both current and potential. Ask them what benefits they expect from a product. What negative experiences do they go through when getting the job done? This will help you identify industries with a strong market-fit for your products.



5. Conduct a needs-based segmentation



Now you know your core competencies and understand the needs of your market. Next, segment your target market based on these needs. Then select the segment that can benefit the most from your products or solutions.

When conducting a needs-based segmentation, narrow down the group as much as possible. The end-users for 3D printers expand to a variety of industries.

Say you are targeting the medical industry that requires mass customization. That would entail better printing quality & precision, as well as the ability to integrate all existing and new applications. **Certainly, the needs of the medical industry are different from a manufacturing company that is mass-producing items.** Hence, segmenting the market based on needs will aid in finding the market that you can add value to the most.

6. Identify your niche market

Part of having a 'niche' is catering to a specific market. Your niche market will be a segment of a much larger group of potential buyers that is characterized by a specific need that you can solve. Targeting a niche market helps you differentiate your company in an industry filled with already established players.



Based on your core competencies and needs-based segmentation, which segment would benefit the most from your product offerings?

This will be your niche market, as there is a strong product-market fit where you can offer an effective solution for an unmet need. Create a strategy concentrated on targeting this group of customers, as they are the ones who are most likely to value what you offer. Having a concentrated approach allows you to focus your product development and marketing efforts. This is helpful in situations where resources are limited. Use tools to help you outline your tactics. The value proposition model is perfect for mapping out different customer profiles and determining the value you deliver based on their needs.



7. Form the right partnership



At times when you have found your niche, you may also find that you need specific expertise to bring your value creation to the next level.

When you understand your core competencies and weaknesses, you can identify the areas you need cooperation with. Many companies collaborate to bring in additional skills and expertise to the company.

In this guide, we feature two examples of companies that Create it REAL have partnered with - Fusion3 Design and WEISTEK Co. Ltd.

These companies recognized that focusing on their core competencies allowed them to become experts in their fields. Yet, they also understood the potential and value of creating strong partnerships to go beyond customer satisfaction.



Fusion3

Affordable, High-Performance 3D Printers

Fusion3 is an American company based in North Carolina that designs and manufactures affordable and high-performance 3D printers for professional users.

Fusion3 has a vision

They understand what their customers need, and they want to offer only the best 3D printing experience to their clients. The company focuses on providing high-performance printers with unique features and first-class technology.

Understanding their strengths allows them to identify and target the right market that benefits the most from the solutions they provide. In doing so, they become one of the best 3D printer companies that provide valuable solutions to their customers.

Fusion3 holds a vision of providing additional features that improve its customers' printing experience.

For Fusion3, slicer software is an integral part of a comprehensive 3D printing solution. However, they recognize that their expertise lies within the development of hardware and not software engines. Hence, their vision can only be accomplished through cooperation between slicer software and hardware.



"Fusion3 presented their vision, and we know we want to be part of accomplishing that vision. Collectively, we all aspire to bring the 3D printing industry to its full potential. With the right partnership and collaboration, we can continue to do that and provide the best solutions."

- Jeremie Pierre Gay, CEO of Create it REAL



Fusion3

Affordable, High-Performance 3D Printers

In partnership with Create it REAL, the REACTOR slicer software was developed, powered by Create it REAL's REALvision slicing engine.

Create it REAL's core technology expertise and proprietary slicing platform complemented Fusion3's high-performance 3D printers. With REACTOR, Fusion3 ventures into a branded and comprehensive slicing software solution, which allows them to accomplish their vision of providing a streamlined 3D printing experience.

REACTOR 3D slicer software includes features that you can find in a traditional 3D slicer. However, there are unique features such as automated built-in material list, modifiers, offline printing and many more.



"With the recent launch of our new REACTOR 3D slicing software, we are excited about our long-term partnership with Create it REAL. Create it REAL brings in technology expertise, experience, and an innovative white label business model into our partnership. I am confident that both sides will continue to contribute to expanding the capabilities of the REACTOR and REALvision platforms over time."

- Chip Royce, CEO of Fusion3 Design





WEISTEK®

WEISTEK is a company based in China that envisions to educate the next generation of Chinese students.

WEISTEK's Vision

WEISTEK is devoted in promoting individuality and uniqueness to foster an innovative world. They specialize in innovating and manufacturing desktop 3D printers for Educational use, and also offer educational content for 3D printing. WEISTEK saw the potential in applying 3D printing in education in China to revolutionize the way they learn.



"We want to improve education in China and promote a learning space for children to create, collaborate and build self-confidence. Using 3D printers, students are encouraged to create, share and improve their inventions. This elevates their problem-solving skills and their determination to keep innovating with new ideas." - **Vicky Chen, CEO of WEISTEK**

WEISTEK anticipated an aspect of the students' learning behavior; **kids get motivated by fast results**. Hence, they recognized that to support the learning experience, they need to provide high-speed 3D printers. This way, students can continue creating an idea that they can print instantly and iterate further.



"Create it REAL embraced WEISTEK's vision. We are focused on pushing the limits of 3D printing speeds to support the continuous improvement in education. The ability to create and develop new things almost instantly is extremely powerful. It fosters creativity in changing our world. And we get to provide the technology that enables that."

- **Jeremie Pierre Gay, CEO of Create it REAL**





WEISTEK®

With the partnership, Create it REAL helped in improving WEISTEK's IdeaWerk Speed 3D printer into a high-speed printer capable of printing up to 10 times faster.

WEISTEK's partnership with Create it REAL has helped improve their IdeaWerk Speed 3D Printers. With Create it REAL's full electronics solution, the printers are now capable of printing up to 10 times faster. We also provide the slicing software that the students can use, with more user-friendly features.

Create it REAL's expertise in 3D printing core and software technology combined with WEISTEK's expertise in hardware has resulted in a great success. Thousands of units were sold across China.

The partnerships formed have allowed these 3D printer manufacturers to penetrate deeper into their market and achieve their vision and goal.

Finding your niche is the first step. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that we guide the 3D printing industry into its full potential by working together.



About Create it REAL

Create it REAL is a Danish company that specializes in 3D print core technologies. With slicing software and control technology, Create it REAL works with 3D printer manufacturers who want to push their technology to the next level, as well as companies who want to introduce 3D printing as part of their business. We have developed an advanced real-time processor, which allows for high-speed 3D printing that is five times faster than standard FDM printers. It also provides end-to-end encryption for guaranteed secure printing.

Want to get the most out of your 3D printer?

Contact us now

In Cooperation with:

Fusion3 Design
www.fusion3design.com

WEISTEK Co. Ltd
www.weistek.net

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