



At-risk Youth in San Francisco Benefit from Protolabs' Cool Idea Award

August 17, 2021

The youth-built BOOM boombox teaches entrepreneurial and engineering skills to kids in economically challenged communities

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.—Aug. 17, 2021—Digital manufacturing leader Protolabs (NYSE: PRLB) today announced that The BOOM has been selected as winner of the Cool Idea Award, a manufacturing grant used to help accelerate development of innovative products.

The BOOM is an organization that empowers kids to develop skills and hands-on experience to build a brighter future. Piloting in the close-knit Bayview neighborhood of San Francisco, youths learn how to build a product—a unique, handmade boombox—and bring it to market. Apprentices are introduced to engineering-and-entrepreneurship thinking, so they can later develop their own product ideas.

Protolabs teamed up with The BOOM to manufacture a part that securely holds battery-cells together to create a pack that powers the device. The mounting system holds multiple batteries securely to act as a single battery pack. BOOM's Founder and Design Lead, John Weiss, designed the component after being frustrated by the lack of an off-the-shelf solution.

"It is exciting to have an opportunity to use our expertise to help a not-for-profit that's doing such important work in its community," said Robert Bodor, President and Chief Executive Officer of Protolabs. "The BOOM's efforts provide the kinds of experiences kids need to learn about business, technology, and manufacturing in order to grow both creatively and practically."

Protolabs provided a manufacturing grant that allowed The BOOM to develop, design, and test. What makes the part unique is that it makes battery packs expandable. The design uses an intelligent dovetail joint which couples with low-cost off-the-shelf battery spacers. The spacer-nut is made of a durable nylon material using HP's Multi Jet Fusion 3D printing process.

"Protolabs' Cool Idea Award has been a major factor in enabling our entire educational program to move forward," said BOOM Director, John Weiss. "Protolabs is truly making a difference in the lives of the kids we work with."

The battery packs are used in The BOOM's flagship device, a cool, retro boombox. Each is uniquely decorated with artwork donated by artists who specialize in street art, tattooing, videogame art, or comic books.

"The BOOM is a true example of the power of technology democratization," said Carlos Montesinos, research scientist and technical lead, Intel Labs. "John Weiss...is using technology, not only to solve problems, but also to bring people together, enable invention, and inspire."

Weiss anticipates a 2021 public release of the boombox, with a simultaneous announcement of the device's official name. Based on the success of the Bayview experience, he plans to expand the concept to more cities across the country.

Each year, the Protolabs Foundation offers grants to 501(c)(3) organizations that help give back and strengthen our communities. The particular focus is on STEM-based programs through the Good Ideas grant, which has helped thousands of kids in the communities we serve.

About Protolabs

Protolabs is the world's leading source for digital manufacturing services. The technology-enabled company produces custom components in as fast as 1 day with automated 3D printing, CNC machining, sheet metal fabrication, and injection molding processes. Its digital approach to manufacturing enables accelerated time to market, reduces manufacturing costs, and enables supply chain agility throughout the product life cycle. Visit [protolabs.com](https://www.protolabs.com) for more information.

About The BOOM

The BOOM's mission is to reduce violence and promote emotional growth, physical activity, economic opportunity, and roots culture. The BOOM is a ground-breaking school-of-the-streets, on a mission to transform teens in-crisis into homegrown engineers, entrepreneurs, and tradespeople. The nonprofit organization teaches its apprentices how to build a bumpin' boombox, using recycled and repurposed materials. To learn more, go to theboom.org.

Investor Relations Contact:

Protolabs
Dan Schumacher, 763-479-7240
Vice President, Investor Relations and Financial Planning
daniel.schumacher@protolabs.com

Media Contact:

Protolabs
Brent Renneke, 763-479-7704
PR & Media Strategist
brent.renneke@protolabs.com