

Thinking in 3D: Expiring Patents

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Among the next generation of 3D printing patents that will soon expire are key patents for metal-based printing processes. The patents' expiration will almost certainly result in significant price reductions for 3D printers in the metal-based field. For example, a key patent for selective laser melting held by the Fraunhofer Institute for Laser Technology will expire in December 2016. As a result, 3D printer manufacturers in 2017 and beyond will produce SLM printers at substantially reduced prices (SLM is a great technology for metal 3D printing). The bottom line is that we expect dramatic growth for printing processes that can produce functional parts in metal.

3D Printing will impact the way we make almost everything. Because the technology will change our clients' businesses, Benesch has formed a 3D Printing Industry Group, a multidisciplinary team led by core members of the firm's Innovations, Information Technology & Intellectual (3iP) Property Group.

For more general information and to learn more (including by viewing more than 25 Benesch-produced videos on 3D printing), [click here](#).

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