FORMNEXT 2026 / EXHIBITION BRIEF

Why these parts were 3D printed

17-20 November 2026 | Frankfurt, Germany



Nikon SLM / LEAP 71 heat exchangers

Design for performance led the captured applications. It was the primary reason for 25 of 76 families. Exhibits showed how printing can shape internal flow paths, reduce structural mass, or combine components that previously needed assembly.

38,477
visitors at Formnext

765
exhibitors at Formnext

76
captured families analyzed

Primary reasons for printing

One reason per captured family

Performance	**25**
Lightweighting	12
Consolidation	9
Customization	9
Design and appearance	7
Production economics	7
Material properties	4
Tooling and patterns	3

Two exhibits that explain why

Performance / LEAP 71

The aluminum liquid-to-liquid heat exchanger integrated helical passages and connections in a compact body. The geometry was designed to improve heat transfer.

Consolidation / INDEX

One Click Metal and INDEX redesigned a bar feeder. The clamping piece went from **11 components to one**, and the slider trolley went from **two to one**.

Leading reasons by industry

13 of 15
Thermal, optics and marine
Primary driver: performance

7 of 13
Mobility and robotics
Primary driver: lightweighting

5 of 8
Dental and medical
Primary driver: customization

Coverage and sources

The catalog draws on 163 photos, two local clips, and 39 public Formnext uploads from 22-24 November. It groups repeated views and records 42 stated and 34 inferred reasons. The counts describe the exhibits captured on one visitor's route.

Mesago show figures | Formnext videos | INDEX case study | EOS heat exchanger footage