

Proto Labs Names First Cool Idea!

MAPLE PLAIN, Minn. – August 23, 2011 – [Proto Labs](#) [1], a leading online and technology-enabled quick-turn manufacturer of prototype and short-run production CNC machined and injection molded custom parts, has announced the first recipient of its Cool Idea! award program. Don Ladanyi, of Westlake, Ohio, has been awarded prototyping and production services to help launch his product, TruFlavorWare®, designed specifically for chemotherapy patients.

TruFlavorWare is non-metallic, organic, taste-inert flatware, designed to make food taste better by eliminating the aversive "taste-reactive" electro-chemical reactions caused by metal knives, forks and spoons. Ladanyis product brings particular relief to cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy by removing the bitter metallic aftertaste that often occurs when trying to eat with standard metal flatware.

"Dons taste-inert flatware is a cool idea because it solves a very basic problem -- that is, how to neutralize the unpleasant taste caused by standard flatware when your sensitivity to metal or plastic is acute," said Proto Labs founder and CTO Larry Lukis. "With Cool Idea!, we want to stimulate innovation by helping deserving products move past the idea stage to market viability. Toxin-free flatware that restores the dignity of mealtime to cancer patients certainly fits the bill."

Don Ladanyi got the idea for TruFlavorWare while dining with chopsticks. He realized that the neutrality of bamboo enhanced the flavor of his food. In addition to its taste-inert properties, TruFlavorWare is BPA-free, and made of a highly durable, FDA approved, proprietary composite material that has been ergonomically designed and weighted to approximate the substantial feel of stainless steel flatware. Unlike common light-weight plastic flatware, TruFlavorWare is totally dishwasher-safe and lasts a lifetime.

In an early beta-test at a major Ivy League university, a random panel of 100 tasters preferred TruFlavorWare over regular metal flatware by a remarkable majority of 2:1.

"It was a revelation to me when I realized that everyday eating utensils actually interfere with what we taste," said Cool Idea! recipient Don Ladanyi. "I knew how unpleasant it was trying to eat when all you can taste is metal or plastic, so I wanted to find a better solution. I wanted to create something that would allow a strawberry fruit salad to taste like a pure strawberry fruit salad, not some harsh metallic version of a fruit salad. I couldnt have done this without Cool Idea! – Im absolutely dedicated to the success of this product, and am grateful for the prototype and initial production support from Proto Labs."

Prior to creating TruFlavorWare, Ladanyi worked as a biomedical engineer. He plans to continue introducing TruFlavorWare to healthcare facilities first in Cleveland, and then throughout the U.S. For more product information, visit www.truflavorware.com [2].

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The Cool Idea! Award is a new program designed to give product designers the opportunity to bring innovative products to life. TruFlavorWare is the first recipient, with additional recipients to be named. Throughout the course of this year, Proto Labs will provide an aggregate of up to \$100,000 worth of prototyping and short-run production services to award recipients. For more information, visit www.protolabs.com/coolidea [3].

About Proto Labs

Proto Labs is a leading online and technology-enabled quick-turn manufacturer of low-volume CNC machined and injection molded custom parts for prototyping and short-run production. Proto Labs provides "Real Parts, Really Fast" to product developers worldwide. Proto Labs offers two quick-turn services in North America, Europe and Japan: Firstcut (www.firstcut.com [4]) CNC machining and Protomold (www.protomold.com [5]) injection molding, both capable of providing parts in as fast as one business day. Product developers who use Proto Labs for prototypes and short-run production can upload a 3D CAD file at any one of Proto Labs online sites, get an interactive quotation and place an order for Proto Labs services directly online. For more information, visit: www.protolabs.com [1].

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