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# Boeing and Oerlikon sign 3D-printing research agreement

By **Rachel Debling** on February, 20 2018 | Partnerships, Collaborations & Acquisitions



Standardizing additive manufacturing, better known as 3D printing, for the aerospace industry is at the core of the latest deal between [Boeing](#) and [Oerlikon](#).

A February 20 press release announced the partnership between the aerospace company and the technology and engineering group. As part of the five-year agreement, the companies will collaborate to develop standard materials and processes for metal-based 3D printing, using the data from their research to "support the qualification of additive manufacturing suppliers to produce metallic components using a variety of machines and materials," according to the release. The initial focus of their research will be industrializing titanium powder bed fusion additive manufacturing and ensuring parts made with this emerging technology will be approved by the FAA and Department of Defense.

Leo Christodoulou, Boeing Chief Technologist, commented in a statement: "This agreement is an important step toward fully unlocking the value of powder bed titanium additive manufacturing for the aerospace industry. Boeing and Oerlikon will work together to standardize additive manufacturing operations from powder management to finished product and thus enable the development of a wide range of safe, reliable and cost-effective structural titanium aerospace components."

"This program will drive the faster adoption of additive manufacturing in the rapidly growing aerospace, space and defense markets," Dr. Roland Fischer, CEO Oerlikon Group, said about the agreement. "Working together with Boeing will define the path in producing airworthy additive manufacturing components for serial manufacturing. We see collaboration as a key enabler to unlocking the value that additive manufacturing can bring to aircraft platforms and look forward to partnering with the largest and most respected aerospace company in the world."

Boeing has already been paving the way for the use of 3D-printed parts in aerospace for more than 20 years. They currently have around 50,000 parts made using this manufacturing process installed on their commercial, space and defense products. Last year Boeing made further headway in the popularization of 3D-printed parts in the aerospace industry by using [an FAA-qualified 3D-printed structural titanium part on the 787 Dreamliner](#), a first for commercial aircraft, and also founded the [Boeing Additive Manufacturing organization](#) under the belief that additive manufacturing will "generate value for customers by enabling greater affordability, quality, customization and speed-to-market innovation," said the press release.