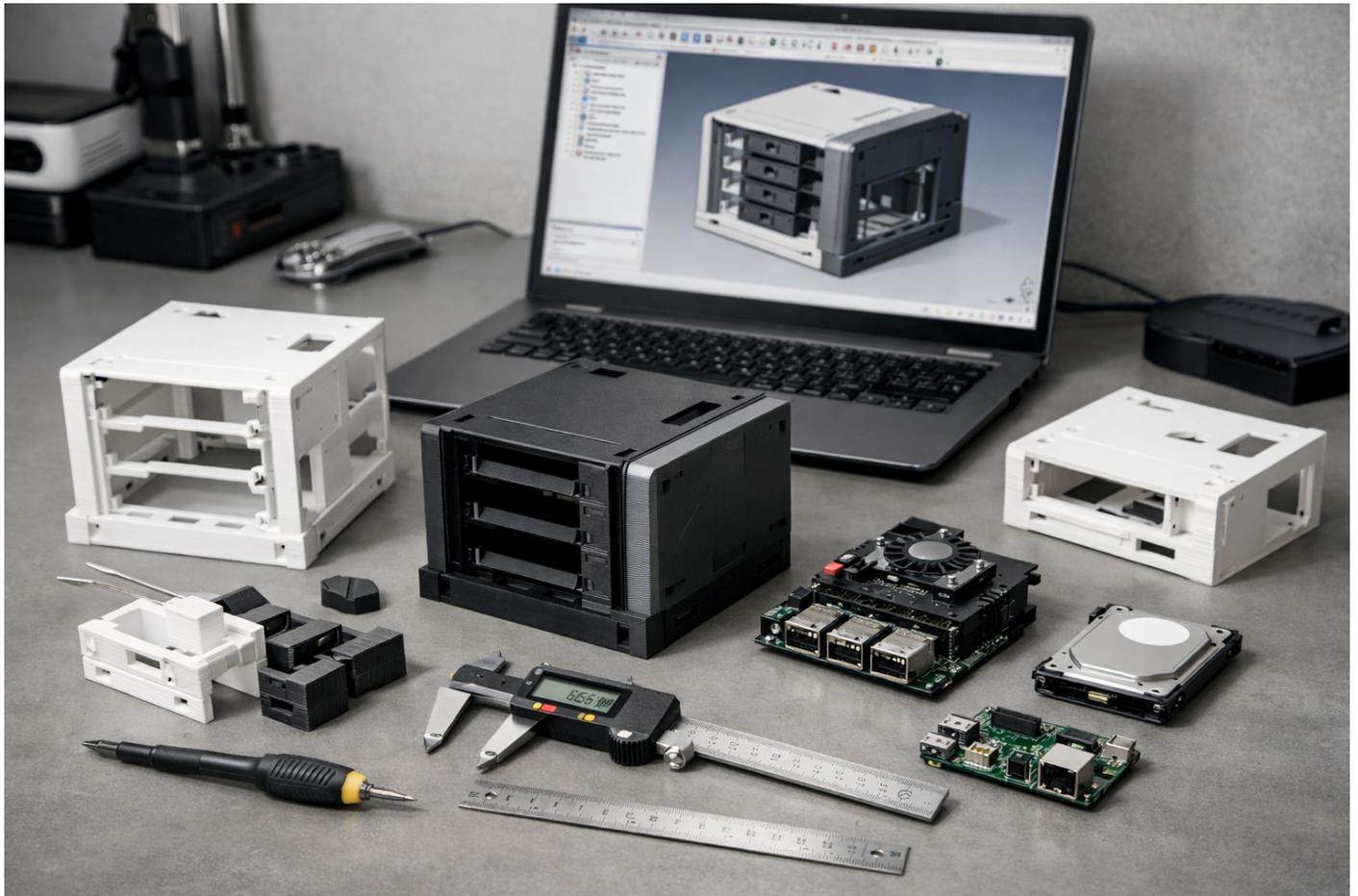


Table of Contents

Rediscovering Engineering Through 3D Printing 3

3D Printing



Rediscovering Engineering Through 3D Printing

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I didn't buy a 3D printer to print toys. I bought it to prototype systems.

In early October, I added a BambuLab P1S to my lab. Most people start with a Benchy — a calibration cube, a cable clip, something small and forgiving. I opened FreeCAD and started designing a NAS enclosure from scratch.

Probably not the most subtle first print.

But I wasn't interested in printing trinkets. I wanted constraints. I wanted tolerances. I wanted

airflow questions, structural rigidity concerns, screw alignment problems, and the kind of iterative refinement that forces you to think before you click “print.” I wanted to push engineering muscles I hadn’t used since high school — the ones that make you consider load distribution, clearances, material thickness, and assembly order.

For years, most of what I build has been invisible: servers, scripts, infrastructure diagrams, automation pipelines. Systems that live in racks or in the cloud. With 3D printing, for the first time in a long time, I could design something in the morning and physically hold the result in the evening.

Something functional. Something structural. Something real.

That decision — to start with a NAS enclosure instead of a novelty print — set the tone for everything that followed.

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