

PROTOTYPING

Services at Smithsonian Exhibits



Smithsonian Exhibits (SIE) builds prototypes that test and refine exhibit elements to ensure that they are as effective as possible. Recently, SIE worked with the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum to prototype a design element composed of curved metal walls woven together with colored yarn. The design posed several challenges from a production standpoint. Solid metal rods were deemed too heavy, but the alternative—hollow metal tubing—was difficult to produce and assemble precisely. SIE came up with an innovative solution: laser cutting the individual parts and using a slot and tab system to fit them together. The prototype SIE produced helped save costs while allowing Cooper Hewitt to get a final product that met its design specifications.

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