Subject: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 06:14:25 GMT
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I've just been told that Shapeways has decided not to refund sub quality prints - ie those where due to the failure of the Shapeways staff to align the model correctly in the print tray the model is marred by visible stepping and knitting. Please note this is the result of the actions of Shapeways staff and is not a problem with the materials or printing process. This is a big blow as I always had the confidence to order knowing that if there was a production issue Shapeways would correct it. Until this issue is addressed I'm sorry but I will not be reordering, and I would urge others to do likewise.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 06:44:11 GMT
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A print this bad can only be classed as "defective".

Suggestions about "light sanding" don't work. WSF, like all nylon, resists sanding very effectively. It's both strong and flexible.

Covering the entire model with fine-grain putty, then sanding, can work, but takes many person-hours for a result not as good as it would be if printed in the correct orientation.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 06:49:53 GMT
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Before everyone jumps ship, please could you share the model and material.

By definition, 3D priting is an additive process whereby a model is built up layer-by-layer, some of that layering may be visable in a finished model, however there are steps that can be taken to reduce the visability of the layering that are independant to the print orientation. This may not be of much help to you with this issue at this time but it might help you and others reduce the risk of 'unhappy prints'

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 06:58:56 GMT
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Material - WSF.
Model - http://www.shapeways.com/model/275935/1-144-fokker-d-vii.htm l

Compare with what is stated at http://www.shapeways.com/materials/white_strong_flexible

Quote:Please note, because we print layer by layer, sometimes you might see "print lines." Usually, we organize models so these print lines are minimized, but sometimes the print lines are unavoidable. Here is a picture of what print lines look like at their worst.

Such a "worst-case" is one thing. This print is quite another.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 07:11:35 GMT
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For comparison, here is a model printed acceptably., and of the usual quality for WSF we've consistently had in the past.

And the finished product:

See the problem?

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 07:16:25 GMT
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Hi Zoe, are you pilgrim1908?

The only image of yours I see is the one with the coin, the layering is as a result of the additive process, and I haven't a clue what size the coin is so cannot say if the layering is normal or not.

[edit]doh that's the shapeways image

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by pfeiffer stylez on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 07:32:16 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Zoe Brain wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 07:11
(...)
See the problem?
Nope...

Usually, linking' on forums attachments doesn't work.

And, since I don't have an account over there, even in the WingsOf War forums I can only see a thumbnail.

Attach the pics here, or use an image hoster.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 07:46:05 GMT
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stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 07:16Hi Zoe, are you pilgrim1908?

No - just a regular customer. I've re-ordered in the past, confident that in the case of the odd defective prints like this one, I'd get a replacement after a delay.

Even when 22/25 models in one recent batch came through as bad as this one. It's no longer an unusual occurrence.

Shapeways has had in the past perhaps $10,000 of business from these aircraft. That rapidly-growing business will evaporate if this is the new standard.

If the models were printed with tail or nose up (aligned with z-axis) this problem shouldn't happen - and I suspect shouldn't be as bad as it is looking at the resolution of the z-axis printing anyway. The terracing effect is in 0.2mm layers at least, comparable to minimum detail resolution. It obliterates the finer details.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 07:54:26 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

pfeiffer stylez wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 07:32Zoe Brain wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 07:11
(...)
See the problem?
Nope...

Usually, linking' on forums attachments doesn't work.

And, since I don't have an account over there, even in the WingsOf War forums I can only see a thumbnail.

Attach the pics here, or use an image hoster.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 08:14:42 GMT
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Zoe, a basic concept of designing models for 3D printing is to make the faces of the model as small as possible, smaller than the minimum detail, half the size of the the minimum detail is good, 1/3rd the size is better. Yes, this becomes a juggling act between the quality you want and Shapeways triangle limit on upload, but the efforts are well worth the end result.

You may ask. 'But, why must I make the faces so small? The model looks good on screen.' - even in the Shapeways image of your model, I can see faceting. The printer translates faceting to layering when the model is sliced up - the bigger the gap between vertices, the bigger the slices and the bigger the layering (or stepping).

Here's an example, the top image shows the stepping, the middle image shows the faces, and the bottom image shows the scale against a 1mm grid - Bracelet ID = 65mm, total triangles = 615,456 - ideally this model should have had double the number of faces to reduce the stepping further, but like I already mentioned, its a juggling game and the print is more than acceptable.

File Attachments

1) WSF-stepping-combo.JPG, downloaded 933 times

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 09:12:06 GMT
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If that were the problem, the results would be consistent, would they not?

Same model, same material, but (assumed) different orientation of printing.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 09:30:40 GMT
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Yes, exactly - the results are consistent and in the case of a model such as yours, the faceting-converted-to-stepping is prevalent when the model is printed wing surface up because of

the size of the faces that make up the wing surface although admittedly, the previous image of the stepped wings does look duff to say the least compared to the latest image. What did SW CS say about the print?

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 11:06:47 GMT
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Hi - no Zoe isn't me

We both use Shapeways regularly to print model aircraft, and are part of a much larger community. I have over a year of ordering experience and own something in the region of 50 models, although the total number ordered by the rest of the community must be several orders of magnitude greater.

This is not a complaint relating to the material used. We understand the limits of the materials and processes. The general consensus is that Shapeways WSF is adequate for our needs, and indeed this has proven to be the case, with problem prints being reasonably few and far between. When there has been this kind of problem Shapeways have identified the cause as being orientation in the printing tray

However, in the past when there has been an occasional problem such as identified in Zoe’s pictures, Shapeways customer services have been excellent in offering to reprint. This has provided us with the reassurance to continue to order with confidence, and I have used precisely this argument to recommend them to other members. One of our members has now been informed that Shapeways are no longer prepared to reprint these “miss prints”. This has shaken our faith in Shapeways to say the least.

The problem is one of quality control, not an intrinsic problem with the printing process or materials used. Shapeways appear to be saying they are happy to provide sub standard goods.

Apart from the questionable legality under EU consumer protection legislation, this is in my mind a very poor example of customer service and business practice. Shapeways can rectify this by either getting it right when they print, or as they have done in the past, reprinting the “duff” ones. If they do, then I’m more than happy to keep placing orders.

Ken

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 11:06:49 GMT
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stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 09:30What did SW CS say about the print?

I'll quote:

Quote:I know we have been refunding these kind of prints in the past, but since we have put this on the website we are warning people that this can happen and we unfortunately can't compensate this any more. I know that this is a disappointment, but this is the way 3D printing does work. You can see print lines on models, which we call stepping, and this does happen a lot with these small airplane models.

We have tried a lot of things, by putting them differently in the printer, but unfortunately it does happen to these models.

Maybe you can try to use some fine sanding paper to get rid of this stepping on your model.

I am very sorry that I can't help you further with this issue.

If they replaced the WSF "worst case" example with the two photos above, to show how bad it can be and still be considered an "acceptable print", that would be one thing. I think it would scare away customers though, seeing the huge variation in quality. This is more than just "print lines" that may be filed or carved off.

Customers have tolerated such bad prints in the past, knowing that at least they'll get replacements, when they submit photos of the items. This new policy is ill-advised.

It also may contravene EU customer protection laws regarding "fit for purpose" unless only the worst examples are used in advertising.

When they're good, they're very good. The rough surface can be dealt with, it's inherent in using WSF. Go to FUD if you need to. What can't be dealt with is the Russian Roulette of "do I get a good print or not" when there's no refunds.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 11:29:48 GMT
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Hi Ken & Zoe,

I understand the situation now and have sent an email to, hopefully, the right person who'll be able to help you out.

Anyhow, have either of you tried a high-poly model to see if that does make the difference? The method I use for near-smooth (i.e. reduced stepping) WSF models is what I've learned through the experience of modelling, buying, and refining the model and the method works. Perhaps, I should create an aircraft and put my money where my mouth is

Another little 'gotcha' - Shapeways is US based these days, so EU legislation isn't gonna work, haven't a clue how US advertising standards work though.

Paul

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 11:35:22 GMT
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stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 09:30in the case of a model such as yours, the faceting-converted-to-stepping is prevalent when the model is printed wing surface up

In other words, if Shapeways would just print the models with the fuselages aligned to the z-axis, there'd be few or no problems, right?. A simple fix.

With their increased scale of operations, and subcontracting to 3rd parties of mixed competence, this appears impracticable though. The differences are clearly visible to the naked eye too, a simple QA check would stop such things from leaving the production facilities. This too appears too hard.

I really feel it for the Customer Service people. So far, they've been permitted to do an excellent job. This new policy ties their hands.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by virtox on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 11:38:02 GMT
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@stop4stuff Sorry, but I have to disagree on the faceting as the major stepping issue here.

Stepping occurs on shallow angled surface that nearly align with the horizontal plane.
And is most prevalent on the bottom of the prints, as far as I have seen. But this is usually regardless of the number of faces.

In the case of curved surfaces, when it nears the horizontal plane, it has some influence, but mostly on the distribution of print-lines.

For example:

Whether the model is "perfectly" round or more faceted, the shallow angle parts will show lines, the shallower the angle the clearer the lines, because the horizontal distance will be larger than the vertical distance.

If the model is faceted, the chance of a larger near horizontal area increases and the stepping might be more regular/pronounced.
But in that case we are talking major face size, meaning much larger than 0.2 mm then. Looking at the airplanes that is not the case.
The preview render has a tendency to exagerate this on small models.
On the rounder version, the stepping will be non-linearly distributed, which might obfuscate it more.

@stop4stuff, looking at your example the facets are smaller than the print lines, so I doubt making the faces smaller would improve anything.

Back to the airplanes, yes I think it is the orientation that is the MAJOR factor here, but I am surprised the WSF material was ever suitable for these models.
I would think the detail or ultra detail would be far better suited?

Some more speculation:
Another factor which may explain differences between orders may be which printer was used to print it, I believe there are quite a few different printer models used for WSF.
And it would depend on the settings made by the operator.

I can not tell how large the complete model including all sprues was, but if this was very large, the chances of it being printed flat will increase, and might even end up in the printer for large models (which according to some page I read) has a coarser vertical resolution/more stepping.

File Attachments

1) Combie View.jpg, downloaded 911 times

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:15:38 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 11:29The method I use for near-smooth (i.e. reduced stepping) WSF models is what I've learned through the experience of modelling, buying, and refining the model and the method works. Perhaps, I should create an aircraft and put my money where my mouth is ;)l

As for your offer - good idea. Contact me privately and I'll send you some 3-view plans of a relatively simple aircraft to model in 1/144 scale, plus photos for details. Profit margins are small on these items though, they're very price elastic. No designer is going to get back in profits the time it spends to build the model, it's very much a labour of love. Too much competition from metal and resin models.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:20:09 GMT
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Yes Virtox, see my image of the red bracelet earlier - the image clearly shows a flat zone with stepping around it - however from experience sub 0.2mm faces reduces the stepping to the printer accuracy (0.1mm layer thickness with 0.05mm laser positioning accuracy for the EOS P100) and yes I have received models with major (0.3mm+) stepping - these were 'low' poly models with 1mm+ sized faces.

I understand what you are saying about shallow inclines pronouncing the stepping, however Zoe's last image should have stepping on the fuselage of the plane as pronounced as on the wings in the image previous to that.

The model Baritone Horn that I made & had printed in wsf has curves in all three axis, the faces work out to be about 72 triangles per square mm and the model has virtually no visable stepping.

As for the printer settings used by different printers, surely that should be dictated by Shapeways, and if the settings are different to Shapeways specification (as in noticable stepping different to 'as advertised') then the model re-printed?

Anyone got a choice of aircraft they'd like to see?
(I have the full set of The Illustrated Encylopedia of Aircraft to work from) - PM on its way Zoe.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:44:32 GMT
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stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 11:29
Another little 'gotcha' - Shapeways is US based these days, so EU legislation isn't gonna work, haven't a clue how US advertising standards work though.

Paul

They're EU registered and trading here so they're covered by EU regulations.

Shapeways B.V.
Commercial Register
Eindhoven no. 17239507
VAT no. NL/820321394B01.

Look, we dont want a witch hunt, we want a return to a reasonable standard of service.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:55:17 GMT
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virtox wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 11:38
Another factor which may explain differences between orders may be which printer was used to print it, I believe there are quite a few different printer models used for WSF.
And it would depend on the settings made by the operator.

I can not tell how large the complete model including all sprues was,

cm: 8.66 w x 6.4 d x 1.46 h
in: 3.4 w x 2.5 d x 0.6 h

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by virtox on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:55:44 GMT
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stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 12:20Yes Virtox, see my image of the red bracelet earlier - the image clearly shows a flat zone with stepping around it

Yes but I think that has to do with the fact that the surface is relatively flat, and the polygons in your preview look smaller than the layer surfaces.

Just saying, from my experience with printing both high an low polygon models. Stepping (sometimes) happens on both, just not as much in different print runs.

Does the bracelet have the same stepping on the other side?
Same question for the planes, is the bottom as bad as the top?

Quote:
however Zoe's last image should have stepping on the fuselage of the plane as pronounced as on the wings in the image previous to that.

I don't follow? All major surface on that were probably oriented vertically? So only the front and back of the plane might show stepping but on small surfaces this is less clear.
Looking at the image is see slight horizontal striation on the fuselage which are the print lines?

Anyway, Shapeways can only dictate so much, same goes for quality control. But I agree something must be done here, either in communication or in quality control.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Youknowwho4eva on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:57:11 GMT
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Good morning everyone. Hold up a minute, we're just waking up and getting started over here. I'll see if I can find some answers for everyone!

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by virtox on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 13:04:35 GMT
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Sorry I missed that, I was going from your 5th post, 1st image.
And thought it might be part of a larger lattice with more planes.

And I misjudged the scale (not into model planes, so no idea about scale)

In this case, smaller triangles might help. But only so much.

Anyway, if you have not done so please raise the issue in Uservoice or vote on it, if you have not yet.

http://feedback.shapeways.com/forums/111989-shapeways-feedba ck

Anyway, I'm off my game, I'm being slowly cooked by the first real summers day, so I'll sign off now

Cheers and good luck!

Stijn

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 13:10:11 GMT
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Ken,

Agreed about standards of service, and we shall see, I'm waiting on a coupon for a 'duff' purple S&F model myself .

Anyhow, let's see what we can do to get your aircraft flying true again - like I said, I'm up for putting my money where my mouth is and using my methods to find out.

@Virtox, yes, the stepping is on the other side and is slightly more pronounced, which I assume is due to the surface being downside in the print tray and aquiring the customary 'sag'.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 13:10:43 GMT
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Youknowwho4eva wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 12:57Good morning everyone. Hold up a minute, we're just waking up and getting started over here. I'll see if I can find some answers for everyone!

Let's put it this way... Shapeways customer service has never let me down before. I don't expect

they will here either.

But yes, please reconsider this decision.

These two prints, of identical models in identical materials, are not the same quality. Neither is the difference inherent in the printing process, nor accurately described in the WSF data page under "worst case" print lines.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by pfeiffer stylez on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 13:27:37 GMT
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Wow... from a painter's point of view, the surface is a nightmare.

(But I'm wondering why Kampfflieger doesn't enable WSFp as material option...)

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by BillBedford on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 13:52:18 GMT
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Let's see a side view of both these models.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by watkins.sonny@gmail.com on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 13:52:54 GMT
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It seems that the quality depends on the print orientation which the customer has no control over. When orientated correctly these models are fantastic. When orientated incorrectly the models are of such a low standard that they can not be used. If refunds are not given for incorrectly orientated models, buying from shapeways becomes a lottery.

I'm not willing to risk wasting money on a sub standatd product. I will not be ordering any more shapeways models unless refunds are issued for sub standard printing.

Ian

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 14:22:49 GMT
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A recent comment:

Quote:I'm one of those "3D-printing-sceptics" and have stated this fact repeatedly on this forum.

And I was actually about to place my first order this week end!

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by BillBedford on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 15:27:42 GMT
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stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 11:29 Perhaps, I should create an aircraft and put my money where my mouth is

Just printing an aircraft wouldn't work because it might just be orientated in the 'preferred' orientation. What you need is a shape that will show the banding which ever orientation it is printed in. I suggest a cube with a shallow pyramids on each face.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 17:28:44 GMT
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BillBedford wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 15:27stop4stuff wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 11:29 Perhaps, I should create an aircraft and put my money where my mouth is

Just printing an aircraft wouldn't work because it might just be orientated in the 'preferred' orientation. What you need is a shape that will show the banding which ever orientation it is printed in. I suggest a cube with a shallow pyramids on each face.

The project is in hand. What I shall do is create a cube of 6 aircraft - Zoe has been good enough to send me details of two aircraft which will suffice for the test.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by natalia on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 18:13:42 GMT
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Hi Guys,

My apologies for the delay in responding, I've been chatting with Customer Service about this issue all morning and I want to stress that customer happiness is first priority in everything we do. We know print orientation varies the finish on a model and while we do not guarantee a specific print orientation, we do try to orient a model in a way that minimizes inevitable stepping. I agree the picture on the materials page (link) is currently inadequate and I will change it shortly to accurately reflect the "worst case but still acceptable scenario".

The reason we can not guarantee print orientation is one of cost effectiveness for you and for us. We strive to provide the lowest prices by packing the printer as efficiently as possible - with as many models per print run as we can. So if there is a space that a model plane will fit in that is vertical, we'll pack it in there. Next time, it might be in horizontally. As you notice, this changes the finish due to the direction of the stepping. We also use production partners who operate the same way, in a manner of efficiency. We DO try to take into account which print orientation works best, but we just can not guarantee it every time, so we do not say that we can.

Your happiness is our top concern, and if you are very unhappy with print quality, right now our policy is to reprint or refund. We are happy to do this as it is not a major issue for us on the first print, or even the second, however, as you can imagine, this becomes very problematic if models with intrinsic concerns re: print orientation are being ordered regularly, particularly through a shop as is the case here. We want to guarantee both your happiness and that of the customers ordering from your shop, but continuously reprinting due to orientation issues can become very costly for us over time and will ultimately hurt us and the community. By making it more clear on the materials page about the variation in finish possible due to stepping, I hope we can present realistic expectations so that refunds or reprints can be issued when there is a clear discrepancy.

With that context in mind, we want to come up with a a sustainable solution that puts your needs first. Josh, our VP of Engineering, wrote a great post earlier today about what is happening under the covers at Shapeways as we work on solving all the issues that we know will make it a better experience for you. The full post is here:
http://www.shapeways.com/blog/archives/1460-Inside-Shapeways-Building-an-Infrastructure-for-Growth.html

To pull from it, we know what you want, we hear it through threads like this and from the CS team directly. Moving a 200 ton stone (our current software) to get to the foundations underneath is what we are doing creating In Shape 2. It is taking a while and we're 33% there. I want to be clear that the ability to specify print orientation is a tool that we want and will be available with InShape 2. This is not something that is going to happen tomorrow but it is something we both want and are working towards.

To get back to the specific issue here, there has been no change to the refund policy, and we are going to take another look at this order. From what I can see this should be a refund, and we will follow ASAP with you.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 18:51:39 GMT
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Natalia,

As you can see from my images, the print orientation is not necessarily the issue (and so it shouldn't be), however the images that Zoe Brain has provided definiately show signs of either the wrong printer or print settings being used for the size of the model. Now, the printer settings or the machine used is nothing that a Shapeways customer can ask for or expect, however the expectation is that models come out as is shown on the material page - changing the material page because of 'efficiency' is not going to placate Shapeways customers, in fact if the goal posts move it will more than likely drive Shapeways customers to another company that can provide what they advertise.

Just saying it like I see it,
Paul

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 21:03:39 GMT
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OK now I'm confused. This is what Christel Hagens has posted re the subject

"Christel Hagens
JUN 28, 2012 | 09:53AM CEST
Hi Keith,

Thank you for this link, I am afraid this is indeed the way we do work. These things can happen to White Strong & Flexible models, here you can see the stepping on some models. And this does happen a lot to these small airplanes. We do mention this on our material page but I must agree that the picture isn't that clear.

We are working on adding some better pictures so the customers and designers can see the stepping better on models. The issue is that if we would reprint these models the same thing might happen again, because we do mention this on our material page to warn customers and designers about this we unfortunately also can't refund this.

Sorry about this.
Kind Regards,

Mrs. Christel Hagens
Customer Service Agent
www.Shapeways.com
bkupton
JUN 28, 2012 | 03:39AM CEST "

So basically which is it? I should add that the mixed response is far from reassuring and is playing directly on our concerns.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by GWMT on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 21:37:52 GMT
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Hi Natalia;

Natalia wrote: "The reason we can not guarantee print orientation is one of cost effectiveness for you and for us. We strive to provide the lowest prices by packing the printer as efficiently as possible - with as many models per print run as we can."

Rather than print (for example) the model plane horizontally to completely fill the print run why not select the next item in queue to be printed that will fill the available space and leave the model plane as the first item to be included in the next print batch?

You wouldn't have to deal with an upset customer and additional reprint and shipping costs this way. Shapeways could add a few days to the delivery time to account for this if necessary; I'd trade a few extra days to print if the item gets printed correctly the first time.

There are lots of people who are interested in purchasing via Shapeways but won't because they aren't sure they'll get useable product. You're going to be deluged in orders when you put that fear to rest.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by GWMT on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 21:50:29 GMT
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Here are two side-by-side pics of a WSF part printed in different orientations:

http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&goto=26795&&srch=print+orientation#msg_26795

Note that this has only happened to one out of six prints of this part.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stannum on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 22:39:25 GMT
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The bad airplane looks a lot like problematic prints years ago. Those were blamed on poor printing settings (the avaliable modes go 60 to 180 micron layers, so things can vary a lot) or too much recycling of the nylon dust.

If the airplane is the new acceptable quality, that is a step backwards. The current image used in material info page shows stepping but not as bad.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by natalia on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 22:56:21 GMT

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Hi guys, thanks for the feedback, I totally hear your confusion.

We are actually working across European and US timezones, which may explain the apparent communication gap.

We're getting in touch with Keith directly to come up with a solution that he is happy with, whether it be a reprint or a refund.

We want to make sure everyone in the community has transparency into the refund policy, which this case has proved is not clear enough. I'm working on making it clear and fair and you can expect that in the next week at the latest.

Best,
Natalia

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 23:20:39 GMT
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To be clear - we dont want refunds! Refund policy is not really the issue, we want a product we can use, or the reassurance that if the product is substandard this will be reprinted. I'm interested to find out just how many models this effects as a % of the numbers produced. Anecdotal evidence is that it is a small %, at least as far as customer comments is concerned, yet Christel says " this does happen a lot to these small airplanes". Sorry but it seems like something doesnt tally.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by pfeiffer stylez on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 23:21:19 GMT
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Can this horrible surface be caused by the print direction ONLY?

Because, if the print direction is THIS critical,
I should never have seen a good print of this model.
Triangular ground view, one side rounded - there is no way for the operator to orientate it in a "good" direction.
But I'm pretty satisfied with the surface of my printed models.

I think,
either the printer settings for the airplane were somehow wrong,
or there is a problem with the uploaded files.
Maybe both, and perhaps exacerbated by the print direction.
But it can't be JUST the print direction.

PS
Since Shapeways offers a polishing service, I don't understand why you guys still order these models in standard WSF. ^^

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 00:16:00 GMT
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pfeiffer stylez wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 23:21
PS
Since Shapeways offers a polishing service, I don't understand why you guys still order these models in standard WSF. ^^

Because there were too many defects - missing props, broken struts etc - from the polishing process. It also removed much of the detail sometimes. Gross defect rates (missing parts etc) approached 20%. That's why polishing was removed as an option.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Bathsheba on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 02:38:42 GMT
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Polishing is a tumbling process, fragile parts don't survive it.

My 2c: I think Shapeways should print all parts always in the orientation given. If that's not practical, I want them to throw an error and reject the part. I don't care whether orientation is thought of as Y-up or Z-up, but I want it to be specified by me with 100% consistency.

This is always one of the first things I settle with a 3DP supplier: orientation matters to me, and if you can't print my part as supplied then don't rotate, reject. If it doesn't fit in today's build bed, I'll wait. If my preferred orientation is uneconomical, I'll pay more.

I know these processes have layers. I know how big they are. I know where I want the stepping to be visible. I know the size of my polygons. I understand how all these things work. They're

part of my design process. But if you change the orientation unpredictably, all my efforts are useless!

This is what I want about orientation. I will never deviate from wanting exactly this. I hope you'll consider it.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 07:07:08 GMT
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It appears from the "official" response that Shapeways know that print orientation is a factor with these models, however they continue to print in the "wrong" orientation because they want to fill the print tray to keep costs down. Is this a reasonable assessment of the situation?

The problem here is that they are making a conscious decision here to print what they know could be a sub standard model, then using the cost implication as a justification.

If you stood back and thought about this for a few minutes you would see that the problem could be avoided simply by printing something else in that spare tray area that was not dependent on orientation. What would the cost of this minor alteration to practice be? Possibly a minor delay to the customer, but that would be accepted if the customer understood it was to ensure a reasonable quality of their print. For every sub standard model that the customer complains about the cost to Shapeways, is either the cost of the reprint including staff time, which is nil profit, with additional postage and packing, not to mention the time staff take to deal with the complaint. This is probably greater than the original profit margin anyway. If Shapeways refund, then they lose the whole deal.

I can therefore understand why Shapeways are keen to stop refunds \ reprints, and certain (bad) business models would adopt or continue with the “up yours” approach to customer service, gambling that the lost future business from an individual customer would be less in value than the time and effort to change their process and eliminate the problem. After all, very few of the customer base would be prepared to push this matter to a legal solution.

Problem is, this is the 21st Century, and we all can now share our experience online – facebook, twitter, forums and blogs. Shapeways is a web based business, so they need to realise that if they don't address this issue, their Google search results will pretty soon start to return results mentioning bad customer services and experiences. In short, the customer base is now much more connected, so bad customer service (as I think this is) becomes an issue with a far larger audience of present and possibly future customers.

So, is this matter really that important to them to resolve? Change the process to try and avoid the

problem, because we all know they can, and give a guarantee that if the print is sub standard they will reprint. IF they do, then I, and I'm guessing the vast majority here will breath easy, place orders, and continue to spread the word that Shapeways is a company you can trust and put your money with. If not, every day this continues the number of Google hits on blogs, websites and forums is going to rise exponentially. A couple of days ago this was a single complaint by email, imagine where we will be next week?

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 07:57:44 GMT
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Here's another example: the detail of the radiator on the top wing shows a 0.2mm rectangle on a larger 0.4mm rectangle.

You can see that the stepping here is comparable to the 0.2mm detail resolution.

This was one I actually managed to remediate by covering with fine-grain putty, sanding smooth, then using a round file to insert the curves where they should be. But it took 15 hours to save a $10 model from the scrapheap, and doesn't look quite as good as one printed correctly.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by danttonov on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 08:08:24 GMT
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Thanks for sharing your problem!I totally agree with you!This along with some other time wasting issues will definitely make me think twice before placing an order here again!In my opinion the fact is that the plane looks like trash and it is their obligation to replace it!!In the end it is the customer who has the right-or not?

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 08:08:51 GMT
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Pilgrim1908 wrote on Fri, 29 June 2012 07:07Change the process to try and avoid the problem, because we all know they can, and give a guarantee that if the print is sub standard they will reprint. IF they do, then I, and I'm guessing the vast majority here will breath easy, place orders,

and continue to spread the word that Shapeways is a company you can trust and put your money with.

Exactly. And the converse is true too. Don't give a guarantee, and the word will get out that Shapeways products can sometimes be good, but sometimes useless. That it's a gamble, and you will sometimes be throwing your money away if you chance it.

I've told literally a hundred potential customers that "sometimes you will get a dud print - but they'll reprint it free and include it in your next order". Now what do i tell them? That it's a gamble, where a $200 order might be all OK, or might be a complete loss? "Do you feel lucky"?

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Youknowwho4eva on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 13:01:30 GMT
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Good Morning again everyone. There are many different issues being discussed here. And believe me I've read every post . Every thing you have stated is being discussed. To prevent further disconnect between what everyone is being told we're meeting to unify our response. This thread has brought some issues to the surface, that are obviously important to a lot of people in the community. And understandably these issues aren't "flip a switch" to fix. So if you wish to express your feelings on these issues, feel free. Definitely share any expertise, or experience. Just take a breath first, our team will worry about the expenses, and how to keep you guys and your customers happy.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 13:27:22 GMT
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ok Mike, here's one from today -

Quote:...
The following models have been rejected by our production team:

- Extruded Pipe Die D6 - within! in Frosted Ultra Detail: Can not be cleaned : hole is to small and can't guarantee that the model will be clean inside.
/model/edit/259898/
...

And follow-up

Quote:...
Hi Paul,

Thanks for your email.

I have asked my colleague yesterday about this model because it has been printed before with no problems and I wanted to know why it has been rejected this time. This is the answer I received:

The hole is just to small to depowder.

If you want us to print it in the future then you need to make a bigger hole or make the model solid otherwise the model will get rejected. It simply does not meet the design rules so our production facility can reject it.

...

The model in question is Extruded Pipe Die D6 - within! only available in FUD (so no powder) and the model complies with the FD & FUD design rules -
Quote:Escape holes for hollow parts - two holes, each min 2mm in diameter (smaller escape holes will print, but the model will likely have residue)

The whole point of the model is to have the trapped wax, without it the design is useless - other examples at http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&&th=5289&goto=33678#msg_33678

Anyhow, waiting on a reply from Joost about how to move this forward.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 13:58:40 GMT
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No hurry. There may be multiple issues here.

Technical ones - orientation, settings (60 or 180 micron), or a catastrophic combination of both.

Managerial ones - ensuring quality when subcontracting.

Financial - if unacceptable prints can only be reduced, not eliminated, how to deal with the additional expense. Maybe a small surcharge on troublesome models? You can't print models at a loss.

Lots of suggestions here on possible solutions, both interim and long-term. Take your time. Get it right, but plan on reviewing the solution periodically to see if there's change. Is the rate of unacceptable models increasing? Decreasing? What's the cost of printing fewer models but not wasting raw material and preventing costly re-prints? Can models be marked as "orientation sensitive" so delayed and others substituted in that run if no suitable slot is available? Maybe only use certain sub-contractors with good records for those, or requiring certain printing equipment be used.

You are under a lot of pressure here, but getting it right is more important than a quick-fix. Customers understand that. Marking some models as "orientation sensitive" on the sales side, and warning of possible additional delay in printing them would be acceptable.

Bottom line: we know that the 3D printing process is capable of producing models like this one. It is technically possible.

Models like the one below are apparently not an inevitable part of the 3D printing process, not to this extent. The numbers and printer resolution specifications just don't add up, this is no mere "inevitable printing line" issue if the numbers are correct.

It doesn't matter how efficiently you can print such low-quality products. You need to identify what is the difference in the processes that produced these two, and it's less expensive to print fewer per tray and have them all like the first picture, than to print more per tray like the second, requiring reprints or damaging the brand and dramatically reducing sales, possibly to zero from an ever-growing market.

Your call. It may be that you decide to get out of the market here, especially since market is growing and you may be taking a loss on each print due to re-prints.

In the first 10 orders, I never had a dud. In the last 4, dud rate has been ~50%. It could be a coincidence, or something's changed. It's morale-sapping when of 25 prints, 23 look like the

bottom picture. Without refunds, this becomes untenable to customers. With refunds, it looks like it's untenable to you.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Youknowwho4eva on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 15:12:50 GMT
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Paul,

That's a different issue, feel free to start another thread and I can explain what I've been told about this.

Zoe,

We should be hearing shortly about the results of some discussion, with more in-depth discussion to come!

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 15:17:58 GMT
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I've no need to start another thread, the issue is in hand and moving forward, however my issue is totally related to the gist of this topic - i.e. design rules and print expectations.

Paul

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by aeron203 on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 15:57:45 GMT
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Zoe and Pilgrim,
I can't speak for Shapeways, and I am curious how they will present the issue, but I can give you an unvarnished and direct explanation that will put it in a nutshell without any marketing spin. The apparent lack of action is not intentional. They do care about your experience and want to deliver a good product at a great value. The change you are requesting is not as simple as it appears because the system is automated. There is no person making the decision about what model goes in what build and how it is positioned. What Josh (VP of Engineering) alluded to in the recent post was that they have to invest a lot of time and effort into basically re-building the whole

platform because they outsourced the development the first time. Anyone who has ever hired outside developers knows they don't like to release their source code, and when they are obligated to under contract, it will be in their own personal style, i.e. obfuscated to an extent that other developers will have an awful time trying to interpret and modify it because the original coders were paid to make something that functions, not to obey standards, which takes far more effort.

Shapeways had their platform built on the cheap the first time around, and it will take 10x more effort just to get things standardized in a way that they can make even the most basic changes without the whole thing collapsing. Tying knots is whole lot easier than unraveling them.

In this age of technology where the value of every function from stock-trading to supermarket checkout is called into question, the practical reality is always somewhere in the middle. Much the same as outsourcing manufacturing, you get what you pay for.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by natalia on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 16:18:17 GMT
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Hi Guys,

note: **There's a summary version of my post below**

Thank you for the feedback. Like you Pilgrim, I'm a great believer in Facebook, blogs and twitter as channels to communicate with companies. That's one of the reasons we set up UserVoice, the forums and an open channel of discussion - because we WANT to hear your concerns and praise - we are, as you say, an online company. By all means let out your frustrations, and please also let us know your issues so we can fix them. With that in mind, we have emailed you directly in response and have offered a reprint of this particular plane.

Quote:
It appears from the "official" response that Shapeways know that print orientation is a factor with these models, however they continue to print in the "wrong" orientation because they want to fill the print tray to keep costs down. Is this a reasonable assessment of the situation?

That is not quite correct. While we do try to maximize the print tray for efficiency there are models which have known issues (like these planes) that we strive to orient in the "right" way, every time. Since we have been receiving a number of complaints from planes over a long period of time, we KNOW that planes should be oriented nose down for the best quality. Since late May, we have

been in communication with all our production partners to encourage them to always orient these models in this way. Only because we get feedback like this do we learn about the optimal orientation like this. So please, continue to give us feedback, here, on Facebook, and via email to service@shapeways.com. We do read it, and we do take it seriously.

With regards to this particular order, to be fair, this was an honest mistake and an oversight on two fronts, the second being that we "don't refund stepping anymore". Ideally, we would have offered a reprint or refund as we have in the past. We are working on clarifying the policy about acceptable levels of stepping, but in this case, the fact that it's a known issue that planes only print well nose-down, and one we try to control for, we should accept the liability for our mistake in orientation.

Our customer service agents work tirelessly to address many complex issues: orientation, stepping, wall thickness, design rules and material properties to name just a few. We're only human, and occasionally some issues slip through. We do pride ourselves on fixing our mistakes. We give you 4 weeks to file a complaint, and the sooner you let us know, the faster we can fix it and prevent it from happening again. Obviously, seeing how passionate our community is about this issue, we realize we need a clearer policy in place, both for us and for you to make it easier to be consistent.

For transparency, this plane is from an order from April, and we are still honoring a reprint/refund this far out. I hope this shows how much we care about keeping our customers happy. Because there have been so many planes ordered, and feedback about optimal orientation, we KNOW that they should be oriented nose down for the best print. Since we were not getting it perfect every time we put measures in place to ensure they are flagged to be printed nose down. We have seen a fall in complaints of mis-printed planes since then. Right now for most models, we do our best to chose an optimal orientation, and if we mess it up, we will offer a reprint or refund and when there is a known issue with group (like planes) we do DO our best to accommodate it - as we have by flagging them to be printed nose down. In the long term, we DO WANT to introduce specifying print orientation as a service, so customers can chose the optimal orientation for their models, every time.

As Michael mentioned, we are meeting to finalize a clear policy on refunds and reprints, and yes Zoe, we will take our time to get it right, and seek feedback along the way from you, our customers, to come up with something that is fair for everyone. Thank you Aaron for your post, it's a very accurate reflection of our process here!

Here's the short version:
1. Pilgrim, we have contacted you individually regarding this order. We are reprinting it in-house to ensure the correct orientation.

2. Thank you for raising this issue, its leading to a clearer, fairer reprint/refund policy for all.
3. Keep giving us feedback, we need it to learn and grow and keep doing a great job for you.
4. Please, let service know as soon as possible if you have a model you are not happy with. We want you to be happy, but we rely on you telling us in a timely manner.
5. We are meeting to finalize this policy so it is clear and fair for everyone.
5. In the short term, all planes are being printed nose down - this has been happening as of May.
6. In the long term, we will be offering a service to specify print orientation. We want this as much as you do.

Thank you for your continued feedback, I appreciate the discussion. I will update you on the policy we come up with on Tuesday and I would love your input into making it something we all agree on.

Best,
Natalia

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 20:47:04 GMT
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Thank you for your generous offer, however I should point out I don't have a model that needs reprinting. All my models have been (so far) acceptable quality of has minor flaws that were not worth chasing. My experience with Customer Services has also been excellent.

My email was to raise concern over the reported change in policy regarding miss-prints. All you need do is reassure the community that where an item which can be printed correctly, you will make an effort to do so, and if you fail or the quality is sub standard, you will reprint or refund.

That's all that is needed.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by watkins.sonny@gmail.com on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 20:59:43 GMT
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HI, The order that this complaint originated from is 120932 (ordered on 1st June)

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 21:06:35 GMT
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Pilgrim1908 wrote on Fri, 29 June 2012 20:47Thank you for your generous offer, however I should point out I don't have a model that needs reprinting. All my models have been (so far) acceptable quality of has minor flaws that were not worth chasing. My experience with Customer Services has also been excellent.

My email was to raise concern over the reported change in policy regarding miss-prints. All you need do is reassure the community that where an item which can be printed correctly, you will make an effort to do so, and if you fail or the quality is sub standard, you will reprint or refund.

That's all that is needed.

Dude, why the hell did you start this off then if you're a semi-happy bunny?

May I please ask you to respectfully - GROW UP!

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 22:02:54 GMT
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I'll assume against the evidence that you are an adult so will answer that one politely

I was informed by a fellow member that there was a change in Shapeways reprint \ refund policy that would in principle impact on everyone who orders or designs through them. The result was a volume rise in customers who would not place orders in future due to the risk they would be paying for a sub standard product without recourse to refund or reprinting. This would be damaging to me as a customer as it would restrict my purchasing, and to the company if it became generally known they were prepared to accept producing sub standard goods.

This strikes me as poor customer service, and as a customer I have the right to raise it as an issue. As I also am involved in teaching customer service to businesses I felt that Shapeways were being both unreasonable and were using what is recognised as bad practice. The reasonable thing to do here is to raise this with them and allow them to respond, which I have done.

It appears that by raising these concerns here and in other places Shapeways have received the

feedback and reviewed their decision in the light of that feedback, They are also investigating ways of improving their product by changing their processes to reduce the chance of these sub standard prints occurring. The net result is that the service to the customer has been improved, customer confidence is improved, and with the added bonus that by printing fewer sub standard products their overall costs have been reduced. Shapeways have shown they understand the value of customer feedback and have used it to improve their service. They should therefore be applauded for doing so.

Is that a reasonable answer?

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 22:40:55 GMT
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Pilgrim1908 wrote on Fri, 29 June 2012 22:02Shapeways have shown they understand the value of customer feedback and have used it to improve their service. They should therefore be applauded for doing so.

:applause:

I've been dealing with Shapeways for a while. At times, I've accepted a marginal model, not asking for a re-print, just sending photos showing them how to improve.

More often, it's they who contact me, with photos again, asking if something they think may be substandard is acceptable to me before sending it. I've ordered over a hundred different designs,and we know that the physical geometry of these models stretches the boundaries of what's possible. Most often, their standards have been higher than my own, the model's flaws (bent wings etc) easily fixable (by dipping in hot water, and letting it straighten out naturally). The result has been fully up to the most demanding standards.

Simply put, Shapeways has, in the past, provided the best customer service of any firm I know of. In terms of business practices and ethical behaviour, they don't just talk the talk, they walk the walk.

Whether this particular issue can now be said to be fixed and completely finished with, I'm not sure at the moment, and will wait for the official word. I am 100% confident though that when it is fixed and closed off, I'll be happy. They've never let me down.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by stop4stuff on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 22:45:18 GMT
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Pilgrim1908 wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 06:14I've just been told that Shapeways has decided not to refund sub quality prints - ie those where due to the failure of the Shapeways staff to align the model correctly in the print tray the model is marred by visible stepping and knitting. Please note this is the result of the actions of Shapeways staff and is not a problem with the materials or printing process. This is a big blow as I always had the confidence to order knowing that if there was a production issue Shapeways would correct it. Until this issue is addressed I'm sorry but I will not be reordering, and I would urge others to do likewise.

Your assumptions are your own, however, please review what you opened this topic with

There is somewhere between little and no need to start a storm about any issue with Shapeways, now I am not assuming, but I shall state that you are an adult (did you read the T&Cs yet?), and as you may appreciate there are many channels of communication open to you, and any Shapeways customer to resolve issues about any order that is placed - the big proviso is that each and every customer has also agreed to Shapeways T&C's when they sign in to order an item, so publically whinge or privately resolve, but don't expect support when YOU change the tune.

[edit] upon reflection, my words may be too blunt, but I wrote them, so they stay - appologies if anyone is offended - paul

---

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Fri, 29 Jun 2012 23:15:18 GMT
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aeron203 wrote on Fri, 29 June 2012 15:57it will take 10x more effort just to get things standardized in a way that they can make even the most basic changes without the whole thing collapsing.

I teach computer science at the Australian National University, including requirements for maintainability.

I think 10x may be an underestimate, I'd budget more, and allow considerable slack in the timeline.

I'm confident they're doing all that is humanly possible.

Had they attempted to get everything done "right" the first time, it would have cost too much to start up and demonstrate a proof of principle, the project would never have gotten off the ground. The development method chosen was entirely appropriate, it just has some inevitable penalty later.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Sat, 30 Jun 2012 11:40:55 GMT
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Zoe Brain wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 14:22A recent comment:

Quote:I'm one of those "3D-printing-sceptics" and have stated this fact repeatedly on this forum.

And I was actually about to place my first order this week end!

The latest from the same commenter, now that action is being taken:

Quote:I'm placing my order Monday!
(Zoe, you can quote that too!)

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by aeron203 on Sat, 30 Jun 2012 15:39:53 GMT
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I completely agree. Even the founders described the intial offering as a "prototype", and it said "beta" right at the top of the site, so this is clearly part of the plan. They now have funding to build it right, but we will have to be patient.

Obviously "10x" was not intended to be a specific quantity, but I should be careful throwing out any sort of numbers around this place.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by pfeiffer stylez on Sat, 30 Jun 2012 20:56:16 GMT
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Bathsheba wrote on Fri, 29 June 2012 02:38Polishing is a tumbling process, fragile parts don't survive it.
I don't want call Zoe's or yours experience into question,
but broken WSF is hard to imagine (for me)...
I use breaking points within my sprues, but that s**t just don't want break - I have to cut them apart...

Also, almost all my WSFp models are hollow, with 1mm wall thickness... there is not much room to make them more fragile than they already are...

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by ZoeBrain on Sun, 01 Jul 2012 03:16:58 GMT
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pfeiffer stylez wrote on Sat, 30 June 2012 20:56... broken WSF is hard to imagine (for me)...
I use breaking points within my sprues, but that s**t just don't want break - I have to cut them apart..

That's my experience too - nonethless, it happens. Here's one I can guarantee will have a high rate of breakage in polishing:

This one too - the propeller blades will snap, as the model is fairly chunky, with a lot of momentum.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Pilgrim1908 on Sun, 01 Jul 2012 05:52:44 GMT

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stop4stuff wrote on Fri, 29 June 2012 22:45Pilgrim1908 wrote on Thu, 28 June 2012 06:14I've just been told that Shapeways has decided not to refund sub quality prints - ie those where due to the failure of the Shapeways staff to align the model correctly in the print tray the model is marred by visible stepping and knitting. Please note this is the result of the actions of Shapeways staff and is not a problem with the materials or printing process. This is a big blow as I always had the confidence to order knowing that if there was a production issue Shapeways would correct it. Until this issue is addressed I'm sorry but I will not be reordering, and I would urge others to do likewise.

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[edit] upon reflection, my words may be too blunt, but I wrote them, so they stay - appologies if anyone is offended - paul

I'm aware that there is little point in entering into an argument here. The nature of the media is such that no positive outcome can be achieved. I would suggest however you reread what I wrote. I never claimed I had a model that had problems, simply that I had been informed of the change of policy. I know this is the case as I saw copy of the email which clearly stated this. So no change of tune, stance or anything else, How I chose to raise issues regarding a matter with a service provider remains my prerogative. I'm happy the natter has been resolved and will make no further comment

Thank you

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by natalia on Sun, 01 Jul 2012 13:55:28 GMT
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Hi Guys,

You all raise some good points, we are indeed doing what has never been done before and we

rely on your feedback as much as our own research to continually improve our service.

Best,
Natalia

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Bunrattypark on Fri, 06 Jul 2012 17:16:46 GMT
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I had the same problems with 1:76 scale model buses. Quality was a lottery. So much so that I ceased all activity at the beginning of this year, and my shop lies idle, waiting for some unspecified time in the future when these issues might be addressed.

Of the models I had printed, I suppose less than half were of acceptable quality. I never sent any back, as I understand that while sending one or two back may be okay, sending lots back is totally impractical, and costly.

I can make some use, with difficulty, of the sub standard models I received. But they are totally unsaleable to anyone else. I am having a hard time selling Shapeways as a good idea among my own modelling community, particularly with a queue of inquiring customers, and my shop effectively closed until further notice.

Specified print orientation will go a long way to solving the issues. A softer material more suitable for railway/aeroplane/vehicle models, but priced closer to WSF, would be a huge step forward too.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by GWMT on Fri, 06 Jul 2012 19:58:50 GMT
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I know what you mean, Bunrattypark. Eventually print orientation will be an option:

http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&th=10069& amp;start=0&

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue

Posted by ZoeBrain on Mon, 09 Jul 2012 02:41:31 GMT
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Different market - not in competition.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by PlainOrb on Thu, 26 Jul 2012 03:21:55 GMT
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Where is the feedback section ? It seems to be lost after shapeways' switching to the new look. I had one model printed twice, and I can definitely tell that each was printed in different direction. DIRECTION MATTERS !!

I think a designer should be at least able to decide which direction gets the best surface result. When a designer uploads a model, shapeways should assign a XYZ and allow the designer to decide which direction (X or Y or Z) gets the best result.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by natalia on Thu, 26 Jul 2012 22:09:42 GMT
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We are hoping to introduce the ability to specify print orientation soon.

Josh's post explains what we are working on and how it will make the future better for issues like this.

http://www.shapeways.com/blog/archives/1460-Inside-Shapeways-Building-an-Infrastructure-for-Growth.html

Best,
Natalia

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Phxman on Tue, 09 Oct 2012 07:27:27 GMT
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I would like to give a shout out for Shapeways.

I have had several prints of various items, and investment in FUD
certainly makes a difference.

Josh and his crew are obviously looking out for orientation in the loading:
to keep print marks, if not in the least obvious places, at least on flat surfaces
that can be burnished easily.

Thank you.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by mkroeker on Tue, 09 Oct 2012 09:04:46 GMT
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Seconded.
Also note that the inconsequential message that revived this old thread was from a probable spammer whose postings in the other forums have already been removed.

Subject: Re: Serious Customer Service Issue
Posted by Youknowwho4eva on Tue, 09 Oct 2012 14:19:20 GMT
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mkroeker wrote on Tue, 09 October 2012 09:04Seconded.
Also note that the inconsequential message that revived this old thread was from a probable spammer whose postings in the other forums have already been removed.
The spammer should be taken care of for now