

NEWSLETTER

20 APRIL 2026

Reflecting January - March 2026



Inspired by people, driven by innovation...



PDTA is hosted by the Central University of Technology, Free State

www.cut.ac.za

Setting the pace for 2026

Dear Valued Clients and Stakeholders,

The first quarter of the year always sets the tone, and 2026 has been no exception. It has been a busy and meaningful start for us at PDTS, reflecting both the pace of our work and the purpose behind it.

Over the past few months, we have had the opportunity to engage across different platforms, from connecting with manufacturers and SMMEs at the Free State Industrialisation Indaba to participating in SA Innovation Week in Johannesburg. These moments are important to us because they keep us close to industry, its challenges, and the opportunities where we can contribute.

At the same time, our work across product design and prototyping, short-run production, as well as graphic design and branding, has continued to make its way into industry and communities alike. Seeing ideas move from concept to real, usable solutions remains one of the most rewarding parts of what we do.

It was also our pleasure to host a Sketching and Drawing Workshop, providing practical training to students and SMMEs and creating a space to build foundational design skills that support their product development journeys.

What stood out most this quarter was the team's consistent delivery. They met project requirements, maintained quality standards, and responded effectively to client needs. While our ISO 9001:2015 certification provides the framework for how we work, it is the commitment of our people that ensures reliable and meaningful results. To our clients and partners, thank you for your continued trust and collaboration.

We value the opportunity to work alongside you in turning ideas into impactful, tangible solutions.

Warm regards,



Shelly Mona

Deputy-Director: PDTS

A new year begins, PDTS welcomes you

A new year begins, and with it, a renewed commitment to innovation, excellence, and impact.

This is the PDTS team; a collective of leaders, specialists, and creators who turn ideas into tangible solutions. From strategic direction to hands-on execution, every individual plays a vital role in strengthening product development and advancing industry.

As the music rises, so does our momentum. 2026 is here, and PDTS stands ready.

#PDTS #NewYearNewMomentum #InnovationInAction #PeopleBehindTheProducts



"2026 marks a renewed commitment to innovation, excellence, and impact. At PDTS, our team of leaders, specialists, and creators continues to transform ideas into tangible solutions — driving progress and advancing industry."

Turning ideas into life-changing medical solutions

Do you have an idea that could change or improve quality of lives? If you were given the opportunity to develop a medical assistive device with real social impact, what would you create? At PDTS, our Medical Assistive Device Unit supports innovators, students, healthcare professionals, SMMEs, and individuals with ideas that matter.

Whether your idea is still on paper or in its early stages, we are here to help you:

- Turn your idea into a functional product
- Assist with relevant funding applications
- Develop solutions with meaningful social and healthcare impact

Send us an email to set up a meeting or arrange a visit to our facility. **Email:** pdts@cut.ac.za



PDTS introduction to sketching and drawing

PDTS is a verified and recognised ECSA CPD service provider. CPD credentials: SAIMechE-1727-12-27

The workshop content includes fundamental drawing and sketching techniques, linework, contour drawing, and shading, isometric drawing, one-point and two-point perspective, calculating and applying shadows, enclosure and basic product form development, use of colour to enhance clarity and communication, planning and structuring new projects through concept sketching, practical application of skills through guided exercises. Throughout the workshop, participants completed a series of progressive sketching activities. All drawings and sketches were collected (electronically) and evaluated to measure individual progress. At the conclusion of the workshop, each participant received a certificate of completion along with individualised feedback.

By the end of the workshop, participants expected to have increased confidence in sketching ideas by hand, a foundational skill set for concept sketching and visual planning, the ability to use sketching effectively during project initiation, brainstorming, and problem-solving, practical experience in applying drawing techniques using pencil and paper.

This workshop supports PDTS's mandate to strengthen early-stage product development capabilities and promote practical, human-centred design thinking across disciplines.

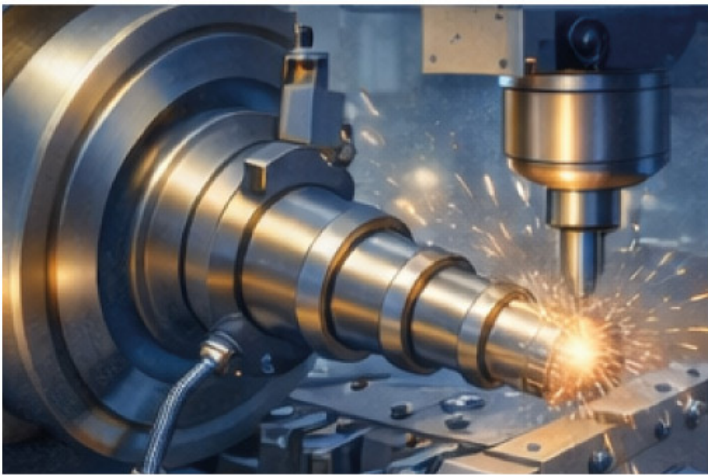
LEARN HOW TO DRAW
An Introduction to Sketching and Drawing
19-20 FEBRUARY 2026
Venue: CUT Hotel School
Using Lines and contours to communicate ideas and concepts
Unlock creativity.
PDTS is a verified and recognised ECSA CPD service provider
CPD CREDITS: 3
SAIMechE-1727-12-27
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Advanced manufacturing you can trust

Our Advanced Manufacturing Unit is fully equipped to support a wide range of precision engineering and production needs.

We offer CNC Turn-Mill Machining, CNC 3-Axis Milling Machining, CNC Tube Laser Cutting, CNC Tube Bending, Injection Moulding.

Whether you need to reverse engineer existing parts to the highest quality standards or design and manufacture unique components tailored exactly to your requirements, our team has the expertise and technology to deliver. Come visit us or give us a call if you require machining support — we'll work with you to see how we can best assist with your project. Let's turn your ideas into precision-engineered reality.




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Driving industrial development and inclusive growth

The Free State Industrialization Indaba 2026 was held on Thursday, 29 January 2026, at Mahube Tumelo Projects, Hamilton, Bloemfontein. The event brought together key stakeholders from government, industry, and innovation sectors to discuss strategies for advancing industrial development and fostering inclusive economic growth.

PDTS engaged with innovators, manufacturers, and SMMEs to explore collaboration opportunities and identify solutions with meaningful social and economic impact.

Collaboration, innovation, and industrial growth — shaping the future of the Free State.

#Industrialization #FreeStateGrowth #Innovation #EconomicDevelopment #PDTS #Collaboration



From idea to innovation: bringing your product to life

Do you have a product idea that could make a difference?

At PDTS, we help innovators, startups, students, and SMMEs bring their ideas to life. Whether your idea is just on paper or in the early prototype stage, we support you with turning your concept into a functional product, and product development guidance.

Contact us today to schedule a meeting or visit our facility. Send us an email to pdts@cut.ac.za

From idea to innovation — we help you create products that matter.

#ProductDevelopment #Innovation #IdeaToProduct #Prototyping #PDTS #Entrepreneurship



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Purposeful design quietly communicates your values

For PDTS, branding is far more than a logo or a visual mark; we consider it the perception you leave behind when you are not present. It is shaped through purposeful design that quietly communicates your values, strengthened by consistency that tells a clear and ongoing story, and elevated through simplicity that makes your message easy to understand and remember.

At its core, we believe effective branding is emotional; it connects with people's aspirations and identities, influencing not just what they buy, but how they feel about themselves when they engage with your brand. Branding is more than a logo.

“Your brand is what other people say about you when you’re not in the room.” – **Jeff Bezos**

Design with purpose - “Design is the silent ambassador of your brand.” – **Paul Rand**

The power of consistency - “A brand is a story that is always being told.” – **Scott Bedbury**

Simplicity Wins “If you can’t explain it to a six-year-old, you don’t understand it yourself.” – **Albert Einstein**

“Good marketing is emotional. People don’t buy products. They buy better versions of themselves.” – **Samuel Hulme**



This image is for illustration purposes only, and was generated using a combination of AI and Adobe Photoshop

Quality you can build on

From concept to prototype to production, quality is not an afterthought; it is integral to our system.

Our ISO 9001 certified Product Development Technology Station guarantees:

- Consistent, repeatable processes
- Reduced risk and accelerated development cycles
- Clear documentation and traceability
- Client-focused design and delivery

Whether you are creating a new product, enhancing innovation, or improving performance, we transform ideas into dependable, market-ready solutions - with quality embedded at every phase.

Let us collaborate to create something extraordinary together.

#ISO9001 #QualityManagement #ProductDevelopmentTechnologyStation #InnovationWithPurpose



SA medical device innovations to market

South Africa's healthcare industry is undergoing significant transformation — alongside an increasing demand for locally produced, compliant, and internationally competitive medical devices.

From initial concept to market launch, PDTS aids in:

- Product design and engineering
- ISO 9001 and 13485 Quality Management Systems
- Guidance on regulatory pathways with the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA)
- Risk management and usability engineering
- Clinical evaluation and technical documentation

Whether you are a startup based in Bloemfontein, Cape town or a well-established manufacturer located in Johannesburg, we are here to assist you in navigating compliance while fostering innovation.

Together, let us create medical devices that enhance lives — both locally and globally.

Contact us to discuss your project.

#PDTS #MedicalDevices #SAHPRA

Together, let us create medical devices that enhance lives,
locally and globally.



Empowering future designers through sketching

PDTS was proud to conclude the second day of our Introduction to Sketching and Drawing Workshop on Friday, 20 February 2026, alongside three talented and dedicated students from Motheo TVET College.

Over the course of the workshop, participants were guided through the fundamentals of sketching — from mastering basic line work and proportions to developing confident concept sketches that communicate ideas clearly and effectively.

This hands-on experience not only strengthened their technical drawing abilities but also built confidence in expressing creative concepts visually. Sketching remains a foundational skill in product development, serving as the first step in transforming an idea into a tangible solution. By the end of the session, it was evident that these future innovators had not only improved their skills but had also embraced the creative process with enthusiasm and confidence.

At PDTS, we are proud to play a role in nurturing emerging talent and equipping the next generation of designers with the tools they need to bring their ideas to life—because every great product begins with a simple sketch.



Engaging for impact: PDTS visits Lettie Fouché school

On Tuesday, 17 February, PDTS visited Lettie Fouché School as part of our brand awareness and stakeholder engagement initiatives.

We engaged in meaningful discussions and brainstorming sessions with the Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapist on how PDTS's medical assistive devices can support learners in navigating daily challenges more effectively.

This collaboration ensures that our medical devices are accessible to the people who need them most, while keeping our solutions practical and relevant. We value every opportunity to work alongside dedicated professionals committed to advancing inclusive education.

Special thanks to Lettie Fouché School for their warm welcome and collaboration!

#PDTS #MedicalAssistiveDevices #InclusiveEducation #AssistiveTechnology #Collaboration



Next level manufacturing capabilities

Take your Manufacturing capabilities to the next level with our fully equipped advanced machining and tooling workshop.

PDTS has CNC machines designed for real production, whether you need precision components, complex machined parts, or moulded products. Our facility is ready to support high quality manufacturing and tooling solutions.

For project inquiries or collaboration opportunities, contact us today.

#AdvancedMachining #CNCMachining #InjectionMoulding #Engineering #PrecisionEngineering #Manufacturing

Together, let's take your manufacturing to the next level with our fully equipped advanced machining and tooling workshop.



TIA
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Quality is not merely an objective

Quality serves as the cornerstone of our approach to building, innovating, and providing value to our clients. This year, our team will engage in a thorough Management Review, Internal Audit, and External Audit as part of our dedication to upholding compliance with the ISO 9001 Quality Management System.

These procedures guarantee that every product we create adheres to the highest standards of quality, consistency, and client satisfaction.

For our clients and partners, this translates to:

- *Enhanced processes and accountability
- *Ongoing improvement throughout our development lifecycle
- *Dependable, high-quality products designed to fulfil your requirements

“Quality management is not a one-time endeavour — it is a continual journey of enhancing our systems. We remain devoted to excellence at every phase of product development.”

Quality is the cornerstone
for providing value to our clients.



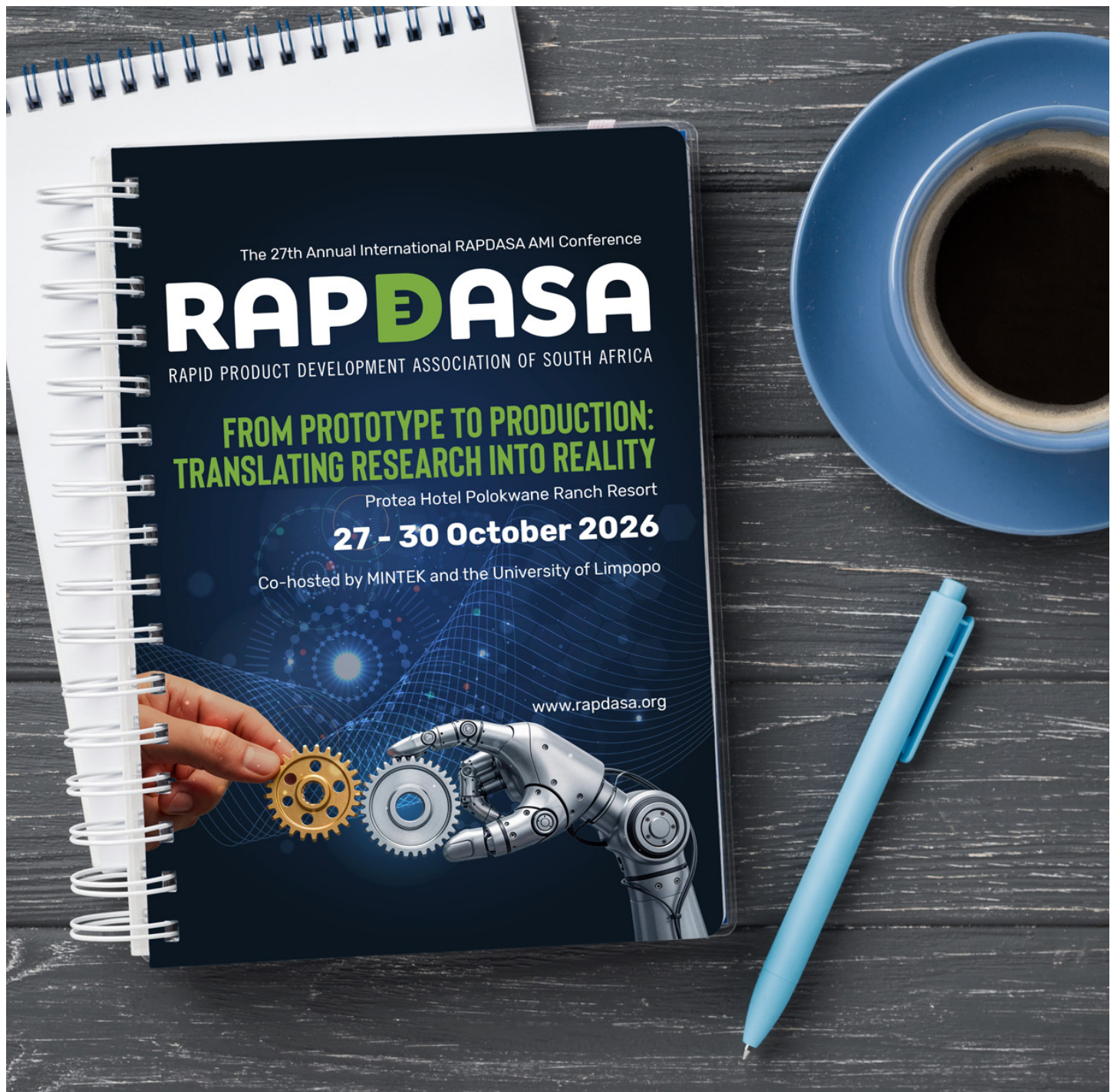
Crafting a brand experience: PDS and RAPDASA

It is once again a privilege for our team to partner with the Annual International RAPDASA Conference.

For almost a decade, the Product Development Technology Station (PDS) has proudly been part of the branding team behind this remarkable initiative.

Behind the scenes, many hours go into designing the conference proceedings, abstracts, papers, certificates, and name tags — each detail contributing to a professional and memorable event experience.

While much of the work happens quietly in the background, we are proud to play a role in something truly spectacular that celebrates innovation, collaboration, and excellence.



Turn ideas into visuals. Communicate with confidence.

Join our Introduction to Sketching and Drawing workshop from **7-8 May 2026** at the CUT Hotel School and learn how to use lines and contours to bring your ideas and concepts to life.

- FREE for CUT students and staff
- R2500 per person (external participants)
- Earn ECSA CPD credits with a verified and recognised provider

Whether you're in engineering, design, or business — sketching is a powerful tool you don't want to miss. Booking is essential: pdts@cut.ac.za

Seats are limited; secure yours today!

CUT
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PDTS is hosted by Central University of Technology, Free State
Thinking Beyond

LEARN HOW TO DRAW
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BOOKING ESSENTIAL

R 2500.00 per person
Free to CUT students and staff.
Bookings: pdts@cut.ac.za

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AGENCY
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Bring a pen, pencil,
eraser, pencil sharpener. We
will provide the exercise sheets.
Tel: 051 507 3530
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Web: www.pdts.co.za

SA Innovation Week

The Product Development Technology Station (PDTs) proudly exhibited at **SA Innovation Week 2026**, held from 16-20 March at NASREC Expo Centre in Johannesburg. PDTs joined key stakeholders in the innovation ecosystem to showcase our expertise in product design, prototyping, and short-run production. The event created valuable opportunities to engage with innovators, explore collaborations, and contribute to the commercialization of impactful technologies. A special thank you to the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) and the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) for their continued support in driving innovation in South Africa. We look forward to building on the connections made and driving innovation forward.

#PDTs #sainnovationweek2026 #technology #collaboration #TIA #DSTI #productdevelopment #CUT



The technology behind assistive device development

CNC LEADWELL:

This advanced CNC machining centre plays a critical role in precisely crafting the wheelchair's core structural components, including frame joints, hubs, and mounting brackets. With high accuracy and repeatability, it ensures that each component fits perfectly, contributing to smooth, stable, and reliable mobility. Its precision engineering capability allows PDTs to maintain consistent quality across every build, forming the backbone of a safe and durable wheelchair system.



DOOSAN DNM4500:

The DOOSAN DNM4500 enhances performance by delivering high-precision machining of essential components such as wheel hubs and axle mounts. Designed for strength and durability, it ensures smooth motion and long-lasting reliability under continuous use. This machine brings together speed, precision, and robustness—ensuring that every part contributes to a seamless and uncompromised user experience.



ARBURG 470C INJECTION MOLDER:

Focused on comfort and user experience, the ARBURG 470C Injection Molder produces ergonomic components such as seat shells, armrests, and footrests. These elements are designed not only for structural integrity but also for user comfort and aesthetic appeal. By combining advanced moulding technology with thoughtful design, this system ensures that each component supports both functionality and a high-quality finish.



CONVENTIONAL CENTRE LATHE:

A fundamental piece of engineering equipment, the conventional centre lathe is used to manufacture precision components such as axles, spacers, and bushings. These parts are essential for maintaining smooth movement and structural stability. With skilled craftsmanship and attention to detail, this process ensures that every rotating component performs reliably and contributes to the longevity of the wheelchair.



The technology behind assistive device development

AMOB CNC PIPE BENDER:

The AMOB CNC Pipe Bender shapes the structural framework of the wheelchair by forming high-strength tubular components. It enables the creation of sleek, ergonomic designs while maintaining the strength required for everyday use. This process transforms raw materials into the backbone of the wheelchair, ensuring both visual appeal and dependable performance.

RAYCUT 3KW LASER CUTTER:

This high-speed metal fabrication system delivers efficient and highly accurate cutting of mild and stainless steel sheets, with the capability to handle thicknesses of approximately 20–25mm. It allows for clean, precise cuts that reduce material waste and improve production efficiency. The result is a consistent supply of high-quality components that meet strict engineering specifications.

CNC LASER TUBE CUTTER:

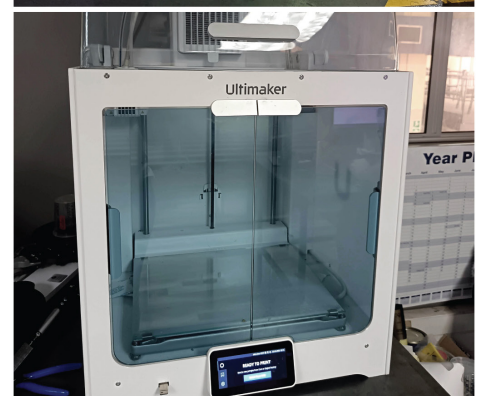
The CNC Laser Tube Cutter provides unmatched precision in shaping tubular components used in wheelchair frames. It transforms raw tubes into perfectly cut parts that fit seamlessly during assembly. This level of accuracy ensures structural integrity, reduces assembly time, and enhances the overall strength and performance of the final product.

LINCOLN TIG WELDER:

Using advanced TIG welding techniques, this system joins wheelchair components with exceptional precision and strength. It creates clean, seamless welds that not only enhance the structural integrity of the product but also contribute to a refined, professional finish. The result is a durable and reliable frame where every joint is built to withstand long-term use.

ULTIMAKER FDM 3D PRINTER:

The Ultimaker FDM 3D Printer brings innovation and customization into the manufacturing process by producing bespoke components such as custom grips, ergonomic handles, and specialised assistive parts. This technology allows for rapid prototyping and tailored solutions, ensuring that each design can be adapted to meet specific user needs while maintaining comfort, functionality, and modern design aesthetics.



Meet the creative and skilled team



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LATEST NEWS ON PDTS