FOUNDRY.

In step!

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Software company Foundry designs creative software and 3D content for the design and entertainment industries. While often seemingly inaccessible in a world of GCI graphics and special effects, 3D design software's practical applications, such as in designing shoes, helps bring the future to design.
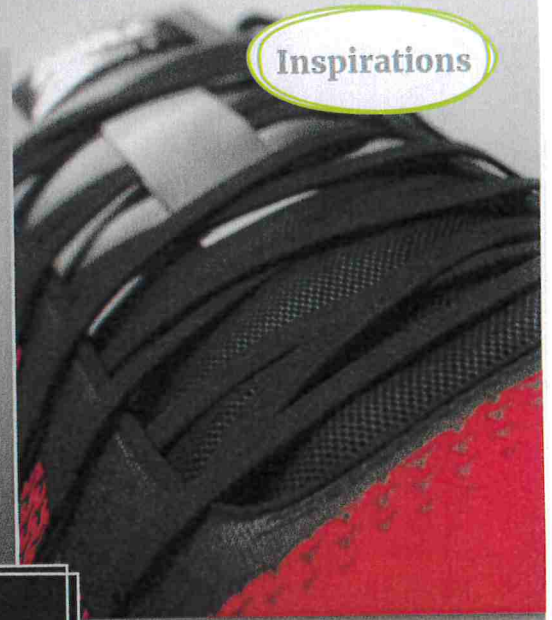

Virtual thinking

Think of shoe design, and you may think of all the sketches you see on Instagram and the hyper-stylised kicks from celebrity designers on Snapchat. But the reality of the footwear design process is actually far more advanced and, in the past decade, has come leaps and bounds to be a leader in the way we visualise products. The world's largest brands no longer accept simple 2D illustrations to fit into their organisations' manufacturing and marketing schedules. Instead, photo-realistic 3D models are created which are then passed on to the factory and to the buyers. Without ever making a 'real' prototype, decision makers at brands like Nike, Adidas and New Balance can see exactly what a shoe is going to look like and make confident decisions.

Once the manufacturing process has been complete, brands can also use that 3D shoe for their website, an Augmented Reality or Virtual Reality experience. You probably don't realise how much of our current online shopping experience is already purely in 3D.

To make these 3D shoes, designers can start from a completely blank screen, 3D scan an existing shoe, use reference photographs, or use a base model (called a last). It's a similar journey that a designer would have taken 100 years ago but now it's done completely on a laptop rather than with physical materials. The results are not just visually impressive but allow for adaptions and wholesale changes without massive costs and disruption.

About...

Foundry is a London-based company that produces software and technology solutions like Modo, Colorway and Nuke. It is the world-leader in creating photo-realistic digital content for film, TV and product design and has received seven Academy Awards for special effects and CGI. We built the software used to create Titanic, Avatar, Star Wars and Game of Thrones.

Foundry's education program offers free digital product creation solutions for students and teachers with access to full versions of Nuke Studio, Cara VR, Mari, Modo and Katana. Educators may also take advantage of discounts on the Creation Collective, for more design-oriented programs, and Classroom in a Box – a collection of lesson plans, videos and exercise files for teachers. They also hold talks, events and training sessions for education partners. ∎