

3D PRINTED CAR ► POWER WARS ► DISCO SPORT ► NEW MAZDAS

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CARS

With only a souped-up golf-cart engine, the Strati prototype can hit a top speed of more than 50 km/h.



HOW TO MAKE ANYTHING

HOW TO MAKE A CAR... IN TWO DAYS

THE LOCAL MOTORS STRATI ROADSTER IS THE WORLD'S FIRST 3D-PRINTED VEHICLE. SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY, IT'S ALSO A BLAST TO DRIVE.

Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne recently called out the car industry for the staggering amount of money it wastes in the design and manufacture of cars. His solution is based on classic business principles: consolidate and eliminate redundancy. Local Motors CEO Jay Rogers perceives the same challenge, but he's attacking it from a completely different direction. For Rogers, the problem stems not from business organisation but from the fact that we still build cars the same way we did in 1915, on assembly lines with thousands of individual parts. It doesn't have to be that way, and the proof is parked in his Knoxville, Tennessee, garage, charged up and ready for a drive.

Local's answer to the cost-cutting question is the Strati, the first 3D-printed car. It's a humble (albeit very cool-looking) thing. Built – printed – in Detroit, in collaboration with Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, the Strati is a small electric two-seater, the first of many models in Local's plans. Two factories, scaled to employ 100 people each, are under construction now and scheduled for completion by the end of the year. Local plans to build its own cars, but it could also end up working as a supplier for original-equipment manufacturers, some of whom have met with Rogers already. "One of them said, 'This would be great for prototyping,'" Rogers says. "And I said, 'Forget prototyping! This is how you make the car.'" That's the radical big idea, the one that prompted POPULAR MECHANICS to bestow a Breakthrough Award on Local Motors last year.

The world's first 3D-printed car is crude by design, its dashboard looking like stacked silicone beads from a caulking gun. Its flanks, meanwhile, are smooth, resembling the

