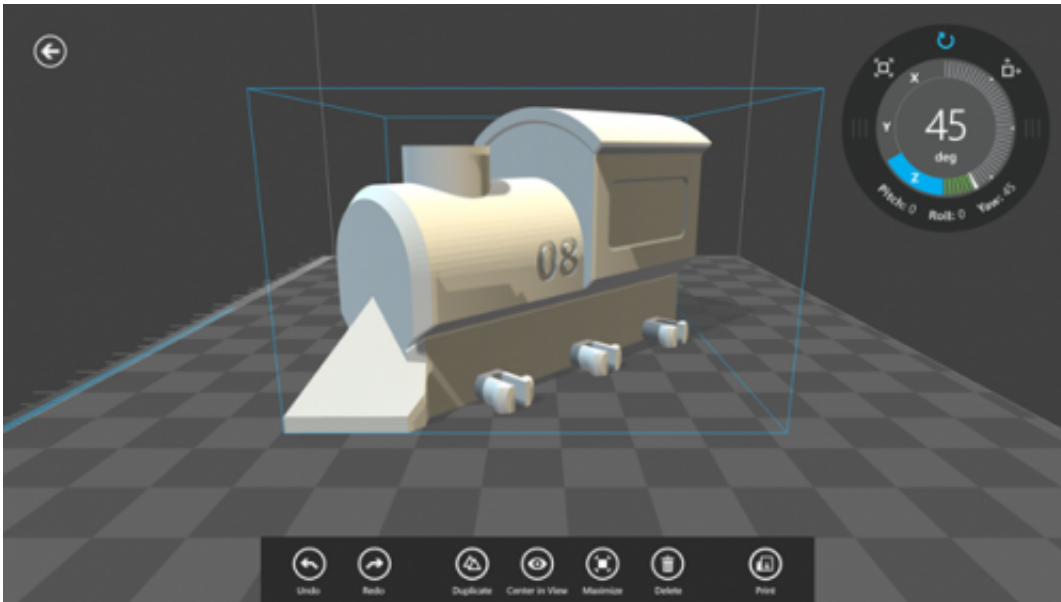


3D Builder is free 3D printing app for Windows 8.1

November 18 2013, by Nancy Owano



Microsoft continues to beat the drum as a technology company out to inspire and support 3D printing. After announcing earlier this year that it would be supporting 3D printing in Windows 8.1, Microsoft earlier this week took another step up when it announced the launch of its 3D Builder.

This is a 3D printing application for Windows 8.1 designed to further encourage the consumer growth in 3D printers. The app is being made

available for free, and it can be downloaded from the Windows Store. Users will need to have Windows 8.1 and also will need a Windows 8.1-compatible printer. "A few months ago, you may have heard that Windows 8.1 makes 3D printing possible because it is native to the operating system, meaning the OS offers plug-and-play support for printers, understands 3D file formats, and connects lots of apps with lots of hardware to deliver offering a seamless printing experience for customers," blogged Kristina Libby, Global Consumer PR Lead. "Now, with the 3D Builder app, we've made it even easier for people to create and print objects in 3D."

The user can create ornaments, toys or pocket items by drawing from a catalog of templates supplied (template designs include snowflakes, a money clip, and toy train, for example) or by customizing items and creating one's own. Libby, in her blog post, noted how one can be creative with designs via the user interface: "The clean, simple user interface lets you scale, rotate and adjust what you want to print." It is also possible for a user to add multiple objects to a single print, or to stack or push objects into one another to create new ones, she said.

Earlier this year, in another Microsoft blog, Redmond announced that the Windows 8.1 update will have built-in support for 3D printing. Microsoft also made a move to sell MakerBot printers in its retail stores, so that a wider audience would be introduced to the experience of designing and producing real items through a printer, namely, the MakerBot Replicator 2 machine. MakerBot, founded in 2009, has been a leading name in the desktop 3D printer market. The Replicator 2 is promoted as a fast and easy to use tool for making professional-quality models. Libby said, "3D Systems, MakerBot and TierTime will be supporting Windows 8.1 in time for the holiday season."

Microsoft's decision to develop a 3D printing app for Windows 8.1 comes at a time when Microsoft shows confidence that 3D printing will

experience growth in the coming years. In the June blog about 3D printing, Shanen Boettcher, General Manager of the Startup Business Group at Microsoft, said, "But will 3D printing go mainstream? We think so – which is why we've built it into Windows." This includes plug-n-play support for printers, enabling apps to submit 3D print jobs, and understanding 3D file formats. "We want this to be so simple that anyone can set up their own table-top factory."

More information: [blogs.windows.com/windows/b/wi ... -to-windows-8-1.aspx](https://blogs.windows.com/windows/b/windows-8-1.aspx)
[apps.microsoft.com/windows/en- ... e9-a62f-29590d5781f2](https://apps.microsoft.com/windows/en-...e9-a62f-29590d5781f2)

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