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(Article excerpt)

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## Technology Product Highlights from AIA 2008 Convention

The AIA 2008 National Convention and Expo was held in Boston last week from May 15 to 17. This year, it was preceded by not one but two additional conferences relevant to AEC technology: the AIA TAP conference which was held as a pre-convention workshop, and the DMVC (Design Modeling and Visualization Conference) by VisMasters, which featured a number of presentations on visualization as well as BIM. With so much of technology-related ground already covered in sessions in both these conferences, I focused my time at the AIA Convention this year exclusively to learning more about the technology updates and new solutions that were on display in the Exhibit Hall. The highlights of these are captured in this AECbytes newsletter, while a detailed overview of the TAP and DMVC conferences will be presented in the coming weeks.

### Printing, Publishing, Collaboration, and Other Solutions

On the 3D printing front, Z Corporation had some exciting news for Revit users at the AIA show, where it demonstrated the new STL Exporter for the Revit platform. Developed in collaboration with Autodesk, this new software utility generates a high quality STL file from models created in Revit Architecture 2009, Revit Structure 2009 and Revit MEP 2009 software, allowing architects, engineers and designers to use the easy and relatively affordable 3D printing technology developed by Z Corporation to create physical models of their Revit projects. The STL Exporter can be downloaded from the Autodesk Labs website. Z Corp's 3D printers are the fastest commercially available 3D printers—five to 10 times faster than other technologies—and the only ones to print in multiple colors (see Figure 7). I saw some examples of its textured printed models that had been exported from Revit, and was amazed by their realism and level of detail. The printing utility also comes with an option to slice up the model, which means that you can create separate models of all the floors that stack up accurately, allowing both the interior and exterior of the design to be better visualized.