



2026 EDITION

The 2026 Guide to Getting Parts Made in Canada

Costs, capacity, and how to stop getting burned by
unreliable suppliers.

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One More Thing - How The Assembly Works

You make a physical product. You need parts - CNC machined housings, 3D-printed prototypes, sheet metal enclosures, injection-molded components. And you're tired of the runaround.

Tired of uploading your designs to a quoting platform and waiting three days for a number that makes no sense. Tired of suppliers who hit their delivery date 60% of the time. Tired of wondering whether your CAD files are sitting on a server in a jurisdiction you didn't choose, training someone else's quoting algorithm.

This guide is for Canadian companies that make physical products - who need parts made and want to make better decisions about where, how, and with whom. No filler. Just the math, the playbook, and the programs that'll pay for a third of it.

All figures in this guide are in Canadian dollars unless noted.

Let's get into it.

1 There's More Capacity Here Than You Think

The Canadian Manufacturing Landscape in 2026

Canada has thousands of active machine shops, fabrication houses, and additive manufacturing service bureaus. Not all of them are taking custom work from SMEs, but a significant and growing number are - and many have open capacity right now.

The post-COVID reshoring wave wasn't hype. According to Statistics Canada, annual manufacturing capital expenditures grew from roughly \$25 billion in 2021 to over \$38 billion projected for 2025 - a massive ramp-up in domestic production capacity, driven by supply chain failures that cost companies months of production. The lesson was expensive and simple: a 15% unit cost savings from overseas evaporates the first time a shipment sits in a port for six weeks.

Now add the policy tailwinds. In February 2026, the federal government announced a \$6.6B defence industrial strategy explicitly designed to build domestic manufacturing capacity. The Buy Canadian procurement push is real - federal departments are now required to prioritize Canadian suppliers for contracts under \$100K, and the threshold keeps moving up. For companies selling to government or government-adjacent customers, domestic manufacturing isn't just convenient - it's becoming a compliance requirement.

ITAR Note:

US defence-adjacent work under ITAR restrictions is increasingly flowing to Canadian shops. Canadian facilities with ITAR compliance can handle controlled-goods work without US re-export headaches - same time zones, compatible quality standards, no tariff friction under CUSMA.

Regional Capacity Snapshot

Region	Profile
Ontario	Largest concentration. Auto supply chain expertise. GTA + Kitchener-Waterloo corridors. Strong in precision machining and tooling.
Quebec	Major aerospace ecosystem (Montréal). Competitive labour costs. Strong in 5-axis and complex geometry. Provincial R&D tax credits stack with SR&ED.
British Columbia	Tech hardware cluster (Vancouver). Growing AM capacity. Cleantech and marine specialization.
Prairies (AB, SK, MB)	Energy sector precision work. Large-format machining. Competitive rates. Alberta shops often have excess capacity.
Atlantic (NB, NS, PE, NL)	Marine and defence. Lower labour costs. Growing aerospace MRO. Often overlooked - that's an opportunity.

Quick Stat:

The problem was never capacity - it was discovery. Most hardware companies can name maybe two or three local shops. The actual network of domestic manufacturers is vastly bigger than what's visible from a quick Google search.

What's Driving the Shift

Three forces are converging in 2026:

- 1. Reshoring economics finally pencil out.** Ocean freight from Asia remains 30-60% above pre-pandemic 2019 levels (source: Freightos Baltic Index), and that's after rates have normalized from their 2021-2022 peak. When you factor in customs delays, brokerage fees, and the cost of your engineering team's time managing overseas suppliers, the 'savings' from offshore often net to zero.
- 2. Government money is flowing.** Between SR&ED, IRAP, and provincial programs (more on these later), the effective cost of domestic manufacturing can be 30-60% lower than sticker price. Most teams leave this money on the table.
- 3. Supply chain resilience is now a due diligence item.** If you're raising capital or selling to enterprise, "we have one supplier in Shenzhen" is a red flag in every due diligence deck.

2 AM vs CNC vs Injection Molding: The Real Math

Most teams default to the process they already know. That's expensive. The right manufacturing process depends on three variables: **volume**, **geometry complexity**, and **material requirements**. Everything else is noise.

Here's the decision framework:

Additive Manufacturing (AM / 3D Printing) wins when:

- Quantities are under 200 units
- Geometry is complex (internal channels, lattices, organic shapes)
- You're iterating on design and can't afford tooling between revisions
- You need parts in days, not weeks

CNC Machining wins when:

- You need tight tolerances ($\pm 0.025\text{mm}$ or better)
- Material must be production-grade metal or engineering plastic (not a printed analog)
- Quantities are 10 to 5,000 units
- Surface finish matters and you don't want post-processing on every part

Injection Molding wins when:

- Quantities exceed 1,000 units (and definitely above 5,000)
- Part geometry is stable - you're done iterating
- You need identical parts with minimal per-unit labour
- Material is a commodity polymer (ABS, PP, nylon, PC)

Cost-Per-Unit Comparison: A Real Example

Let's use a concrete part: an aluminum electronics enclosure, roughly 120mm × 80mm × 30mm, with mounting bosses, a cable cutout, and a light pipe feature. Moderate complexity. Here's what it actually costs at different volumes, produced domestically in Canada:

Quantity	AM (DMLS Aluminum)	CNC (6061-T6 Aluminum)	Injection Molding (Al tool + ABS)	True Cost with Carrying (CNC/IM)
1 unit	\$280-\$380	\$350-\$600 (setup-heavy)	N/A (tooling alone is \$18K-\$30K)	-
10 units	\$220-\$300/ea	\$120-\$180/ea	N/A	-
50 units	\$180-\$250/ea	\$65-\$95/ea	N/A (still amortizing tooling)	-
100 units	\$160-\$220/ea	\$45-\$70/ea	\$32-\$48/ea (but add \$22K tooling)	-
500 units	\$140-\$190/ea	\$30-\$50/ea	\$8-\$14/ea	CNC: \$36-\$65/ea / IM: \$10-\$18/ea
1,000 units	\$130-\$170/ea	\$25-\$40/ea	\$5-\$9/ea	CNC: \$30-\$52/ea / IM: \$6-\$12/ea
5,000 units	Not practical	\$20-\$32/ea	\$2.50-\$5/ea	CNC: \$24-\$42/ea / IM: \$3-\$6.50/ea

Note: These are 2026 Canadian market estimates including setup, programming, and finishing. Your part will vary. Get real quotes.

"True Cost with Carrying" adds 20-30% annually for warehousing, insurance, tied-up capital, and obsolescence risk on inventory held. AM is on-demand - no inventory, no carrying cost.

The crossover points matter:

- **AM → CNC crossover:** Around 10-30 units for most geometries. If you need fewer than 10, AM is almost always cheaper unless the part is geometrically simple.
- **CNC → Injection molding crossover:** Typically 500-2,000 units depending on tooling cost. A \$20K mold needs ~1,500 units at \$13/unit savings to break even versus CNC.

🔍 The Breakeven Myth:

"Injection molding is only worth it above 10,000 units." Wrong. With aluminum soft tooling (instead of hardened steel), mold costs can drop to \$8K-\$15K for simple parts. That puts the breakeven at 500-800 units for many geometries. Ask your supplier about aluminum tooling - if they only quote steel, they're optimizing for their margin, not your project.

Rule of Thumb:

Under 50 units? AM or CNC, whichever suits your geometry. 50-500 units? CNC almost always wins. 500-2,000? Run the numbers on soft tooling. Above 2,000? You should already have a mold.

The Bridge Production Strategy

Here's a move that smart hardware founders use: **order your first 100-200 units via AM or CNC while your injection mold is being cut.** Tooling takes 6-10 weeks. Instead of waiting, you ship product, get customer feedback, and make final design tweaks before the mold is finished. If you discover a needed change, you've saved yourself a \$3K-\$8K mold modification.

Bridge production costs more per unit, but the revenue you generate (and the design risk you eliminate) almost always outweighs the premium. Think of it as paying for speed and insurance simultaneously.

Material Availability in Canada

Domestic material supply matters more than most hardware companies realize. Common materials with strong Canadian availability:

- **Metals:** 6061 and 7075 aluminum, 304 and 316 stainless, mild steel, brass - no issues. Titanium: available but lead times can extend 1-2 weeks.
- **Engineering Plastics (CNC):** Delrin, UHMW, nylon 6/6, PEEK - all stocked by major Canadian distributors. Ultem and specialty grades may need a 1-week order.
- **AM Polymers:** Nylon (PA12, PA11), TPU, ABS-like resins - widely available. Carbon-fiber-filled nylon: growing availability. Metal AM powders (AlSi10Mg, 316L, Ti64): available from Canadian and US sources.
- **Injection Molding Resins:** ABS, PP, PE, PC, nylon - commodity availability. Specialty compounds (glass-filled, FR-rated): may add a week.

3 The 15-Minute Supplier Vetting Checklist

Finding a shop that can make your part is easy. Finding one that'll deliver quality parts on time, every time, at a fair price? That's the hard part.

Here are eight questions to ask any new supplier before you commit a dollar. You can get through these on a single 15-minute phone call - and that call will save you thousands.

The 8 Questions

1. "What's your on-time delivery rate over the last 12 months?"

Good answer: 90%+, stated with specifics. Red flag: vague ("we're pretty good"), or defensive. Shops that track this metric are shops that care about it.

2. "What's your current lead time for a job like this?"

You want a specific number in business days, not "a few weeks." Compare it to what they quoted. If the quote says 10 days but they say "we're running about 15 right now," believe the 15.

3. "Who's my point of contact, and what's their response time for questions?"

You want a name, not "whoever's available." Single point of contact means accountability. If they can't answer this, you'll be chasing people for updates.

4. "Can you show me a part with similar tolerances / finish / material?"

Not a portfolio photo - an actual part. If you're local, visit the shop. If not, ask them to send a sample.

5. "What's your inspection process, and will I get a report?"

At minimum, you want first-article inspection with measurements. For critical dimensions, ask if they have a CMM. If they say "we check everything," ask how. Calipers-only shops are fine for ± 0.1 mm work. For tighter tolerances, you need real metrology.

6. "What happens if a part is out of spec?"

Good answer: they re-make it at their cost, with expedited turnaround. Vague answers here are a leading indicator of painful disputes later.

7. "What's your capacity right now - how booked out are you?"

A shop running at 95% capacity is going to bump your job when a bigger client calls. You want 60-80% utilization - busy enough to be viable, not so busy that you're an afterthought.

8. "Can you provide references from companies similar to mine?"

Not "our biggest client is [Fortune 500]." You want to talk to someone your size, with similar volumes and requirements. Their experience predicts yours.

Red Flags That Should Kill the Relationship

- **Quote comes back in under an hour for a complex part.** They didn't actually review your requirements. That price will change - upward - after they start.
- **No written terms for IP handling.** If they won't sign a basic NDA or discuss how your files are stored, walk away.
- **They push back on a first-article inspection.** This is table stakes. Non-negotiable.
- **Communication goes dark for 48+ hours.** If they're slow before you've placed the order, imagine what happens after they have your money.
- **They can't explain their QC process in plain language.** If it's "we eyeball it," your parts will reflect that.

The \$500 Test Order Strategy

Before you commit to a \$15K production run with a new supplier, place a \$500 test order. One or two parts. Non-critical timeline but tell them it's urgent to see how they handle priority.

Evaluate everything: quote accuracy, communication speed, packaging quality, dimensional accuracy, surface finish, and - critically - whether the invoice matches the quote.

This \$500 buys you more information than any amount of due diligence. A supplier who nails the test order is worth paying a premium on the production run. A supplier who fumbles it just saved you \$15K in scrap and delays.

💡 The \$500 Test:

A \$500 insurance policy. Great supplier? You've got parts you needed anyway. Terrible supplier? You just avoided a \$15K mistake. Do this every time with a new supplier.

Build Redundancy

For any process critical to your product, qualify **at minimum two suppliers**. Yes, this means running the vetting process twice. Yes, it means placing test orders with both. The cost is trivial compared to having your entire production line dependent on a single shop owner's vacation schedule, equipment breakdown, or decision to take on a bigger client.

Redundancy isn't paranoia. It's operations.

Don't want to vet shops yourself? [The Assembly](#) matches you with pre-vetted Canadian service bureaus. No file uploads, no runaround.

4 Your Designs Are Your Business. Literally.

Let's talk about something most founders don't think about until it's too late: what happens to your design files when you send them to a supplier or upload them to a quoting platform.

The Upload Problem

Most online manufacturing platforms work like this: you upload a CAD file (STEP, STL, IGES), their system analyzes it, and you get an instant quote. Convenient. Fast. And worth understanding the tradeoffs.

Here's what you're agreeing to when you upload:

- Your complete 3D geometry now lives on someone else's server.
- That server may be hosted in a jurisdiction with different data protection laws than Canada.
- The platform's terms of service may grant them rights to use your data for "service improvement" - which can mean training AI models, benchmarking, or analytics.
- You have limited visibility into who accesses that file within the platform's organization.
- If the platform is acquired, your data goes with it - to whatever entity buys them.

This isn't hypothetical. It's the default business model of most instant-quoting manufacturing platforms.

🔗 Thought Experiment:

Imagine your closest competitor uploaded the same part to the same platform last month. Their file and your file now sit in the same database, processed by the same algorithms, accessible to the same employees. How confident are you in that platform's internal access controls? How confident are you that a future acquirer will maintain those controls? Now imagine that platform gets breached. Your complete product geometry is in the leak. That's a real risk worth weighing against the convenience of instant quoting.

The US CLOUD Act - Why Jurisdiction Matters

The Clarifying Lawful Overseas Use of Data (CLOUD) Act, passed in the US in 2018, gives US law enforcement the ability to compel US-based companies to produce data stored **anywhere in the world** - regardless of where the data is physically hosted.

What this means for Canadian companies:

- If you upload your CAD files to a platform operated by a US company (or a subsidiary of one), those files are subject to US government access under the CLOUD Act.
- This applies even if the platform says "your data is stored in Canada." The CLOUD Act reaches data controlled by US entities regardless of server location.
- Canadian privacy law (PIPEDA) doesn't override this. There's a jurisdictional conflict, and in practice, the US company will comply with US law.

For most consumer products, this is a low-probability risk. But if you're working on anything defence-adjacent, medical, or competitively sensitive, it's a real concern. And it's entirely avoidable.

🔒 CLOUD Act in Plain English:

If the company holding your data is American, the US government can access your data - even if the servers are in Canada, even if you're Canadian, and even without notifying you. The only way to avoid this is to use platforms and suppliers that are Canadian-owned and Canadian-hosted. That's the practical takeaway.

No CAD File? No Problem.

Full disclosure: this is how The Assembly works, and it's how we think more of the industry should work. Here's why:

There's an alternative to uploading complete CAD files to get a quote. Just tell us what you need.

This means providing:

- Dimensions, tolerances, and material specs - in plain language or a 2D drawing
- Photos or sketches of similar parts
- Functional requirements ("this face mates with a gasket," "this hole is a press-fit for a bearing")

A skilled manufacturer can quote from this information. They don't need your complete 3D model to tell you what a part will cost. They need to understand geometry complexity, material, quantity, and tolerances.

This approach keeps your complete design geometry off third-party servers. The manufacturer gets enough information to quote and produce accurately. You retain control of your IP.

Is it slower than instant quoting? Slightly. Is it worth it? If your product design is your competitive advantage - and for most hardware companies, it is - then yes. Absolutely.

To be clear: if you're making commodity brackets or simple enclosures, the IP risk of using an online platform is low. This section matters most when your part design IS your competitive advantage - which, for most hardware companies, it is.

Practical IP Protection Steps

1. **Never send a complete assembly file.** Break your product into individual components. A supplier making your housing doesn't need to see your PCB layout.
2. **Watermark your 2D drawings.** Include the supplier's name and date on every drawing you send. If it leaks, you know where it came from.
3. **Use Canadian-owned, Canadian-hosted platforms.** This is the only way to stay within Canadian data sovereignty.
4. **Get an NDA signed before sending anything.** A basic mutual NDA takes 10 minutes to review. If a supplier won't sign one, they're telling you something.
5. **Limit file access to need-to-know.** Your CNC supplier needs the machining drawing. They don't need the assembly drawing, the BOM, or the firmware.
6. **Ask where your files are stored and for how long.** A good supplier will have a clear answer. "Our shared drive" is not a clear answer.

5 The Government Will Pay for 30-60% of This. Seriously.

Canadian federal and provincial governments offer some of the most generous R&D and manufacturing incentives in the developed world. Most eligible companies either don't know about them or assume they don't qualify. They're wrong.

SR&ED (Scientific Research & Experimental Development)

What it is: A federal tax incentive program that provides refundable tax credits for eligible R&D work - including product development, process improvement, and experimental manufacturing.

What qualifies: Any work involving technological uncertainty where you're trying to achieve a technological advancement. Developing a new product? Almost certainly qualifies. Iterating on manufacturing processes to improve yield? Often qualifies. Routine engineering? Doesn't qualify.

Typical credit: For Canadian-Controlled Private Corporations (CCPCs), the enhanced rate is **35% refundable** on the first \$3M of qualified expenditures. That means cash back, not just a tax deduction. Above \$3M, it drops to 15% non-refundable.

What counts as expenditure: Salaries of employees doing eligible work, materials consumed in testing, and a portion of overhead. Contractor costs are eligible at 80%.

Common mistakes:

- **Not claiming at all.** This is the biggest one. If you're developing products, you almost certainly have eligible work.
- **Over-claiming.** Including routine production work or administrative tasks inflates your claim and triggers audits. Be honest about what's experimental.
- **Poor documentation.** CRA wants contemporaneous records - notes, test results, design iterations documented as they happen, not reconstructed at tax time.
- **Filing SR&ED without expert help.** Get an SR&ED consultant. Seriously. Their fee (usually 15-25% of the credit) almost always pays for itself in a larger, cleaner claim.

Timeline: Claims are filed with your corporate tax return. Refunds typically arrive 6-12 months after filing. Plan accordingly.

\$ Money on the Table:

Most eligible Canadian SMEs never file SR&ED claims - leaving real money on the table every year. For a company with \$500K in eligible R&D expenditure, that's \$175K in cash left uncollected (for eligible Canadian-Controlled Private Corporations at the enhanced 35% ITC rate). Every year. If you're developing physical products and not filing SR&ED, you're subsidizing your competitors who do.

IRAP (Industrial Research Assistance Program)

What it is: The National Research Council's flagship SME support program. Non-repayable contributions (grants, not loans) toward R&D projects.

How it works: You get assigned an Industrial Technology Advisor (ITA) - a human being who visits your company, understands your project, and helps you structure a funding application. The ITA relationship is the key. They're not just evaluators; they're advisors who can connect you to other resources.

Typical funding: \$50K-\$500K per project for salary costs of technical staff working on the project. Some projects get more. IRAP doesn't typically cover materials or capital equipment, but covers the labour of your engineers and technicians.

How to get started: Call the NRC. Seriously. Call 1-877-994-4727 or visit nrc.canada.ca/irap. Ask for an ITA to be assigned to your company. The first meeting is free and has no commitment.

Timeline: From first ITA meeting to approved funding: typically 2-4 months. Projects usually run 6-18 months. You get reimbursed as you submit claims (monthly or quarterly).

CanExport

What it is: Funding for SMEs to pursue international sales. If you're selling your product outside Canada, this covers market entry costs - trade shows, marketing, legal/regulatory compliance in new markets.

Typical amount: Up to \$50,000 per project, with up to \$99,999 per fiscal year. Companies can reapply year after year - there is no lifetime cap.

What it covers: Travel to trade shows, market research, legal fees for foreign market entry, translation, marketing materials, and in-market consultants.

Who it's for: SMEs with fewer than 500 employees and \$300,000 to \$100 million in annual revenue. You need to be export-ready - this isn't startup funding, it's expansion funding.

Canada Makes AM Demo Program

What it is: A program through Canada Makes (part of NGen, Canada's Advanced Manufacturing Supercluster) that pays for companies to try additive manufacturing for the first time. They'll fund up to \$5,000 to have a real part made using AM techniques.

Who it's for: Canadian companies that haven't used additive manufacturing before and want to test it on a real part. This is the lowest-risk way to see if AM works for your application.

How to get started: Contact Canada Makes directly. They'll help you identify a suitable part and connect you with an AM service provider. The process is straightforward and designed for companies new to additive.

Why this matters:

If you're reading this guide and thinking "maybe AM could work for us," this program eliminates the cost barrier to finding out. \$5K covers most prototype and test parts.

Provincial Programs (Selected)

Ontario:

- Ontario Innovation Tax Credit (OITC): 10% non-refundable credit on eligible R&D expenditures, stacks with SR&ED.
- Ontario Made program and branding initiative for domestically manufactured goods.

Quebec:

- R&D tax credit: Up to 30% of eligible R&D expenditures. Stacks with SR&ED. Quebec-based R&D teams can effectively recover 50-60% of R&D costs between federal and provincial programs. *(Note: Quebec's R&D credit program was restructured in 2025 under the new CRIC framework. Consult a tax advisor for current rates.)*
- Investissement Québec: Financing and loan guarantees for manufacturing equipment.

British Columbia:

- BC SR&ED tax credit: 10% refundable credit on eligible expenditures. Stacks with federal SR&ED.
- Innovator Skills Initiative: Wage subsidies for hiring technical talent.

Alberta:

- Alberta Innovates: Grant programs for technology development and commercialization.

- Innovation Employment Grant: 8% base rate on eligible R&D expenditures (20% on incremental spending above your 2-year average), with a \$4M annual spending cap.

Funding Summary Table

Program	What It Covers	Typical Amount	Timeline	Effort to Apply
SR&ED	R&D salaries, materials, overhead	\$50K-\$1M+ (35% of eligible costs)	File with tax return; refund in 6-12 months	Medium - track as you go, file annually
IRAP	Salaries for R&D project staff	\$50K-\$500K per project	2-4 months to approval; 6-18 month projects	Medium - ITA guides you through it
CanExport	International market entry costs	Up to \$50K per project	Rolling competitive basis	Low - straightforward application
Canada Makes AM Demo	First additive manufacturing part	Up to \$5K per project	Quick turnaround	Very low - they guide the process
Provincial R&D Credits	R&D expenditures (stacks with SR&ED)	8-30% of eligible costs	Filed with provincial tax return	Low - usually filed alongside SR&ED

Need parts made while you sort out your SR&ED filing? [The Assembly](#) has no MOQs and transparent pricing. Describe your project and get matched this week.

6 What to Do Monday Morning

You've read the data. Here's the decision tree. Pick your starting point and follow it through.

Path A: "I Need Parts Made"

Step 1 → How many units do you need?

- **Under 10 units** → Get quotes for AM (3D printing) and CNC. For simple geometry, CNC may be cheaper even at low volumes. For complex geometry, AM wins.
- **10-500 units** → CNC machining is almost certainly your best bet. Get three quotes. Check tolerances and lead times, not just price.
- **500-2,000 units** → Run the numbers on injection molding with aluminum soft tooling versus CNC. If your design is stable, molding may already win. If you're still iterating, stick with CNC.
- **Over 2,000 units** → You need injection molding (for plastics) or progressive die / high-volume CNC (for metals). Get tooling quotes from at least two suppliers.

Step 2 → Get quotes from three suppliers. Not one. Three. Compare not just price, but lead time, inspection commitments, and communication quality. *(Don't have three suppliers? The Assembly can match you with vetted shops in 48 hours - just describe what you need.)*

Step 3 → Place a \$500 test order with your top choice (see the vetting checklist above for what to evaluate).

Path B: "I Need a Reliable Supplier"

Step 1 → **Pick a process** (AM, CNC, sheet metal, injection molding - whichever you need most).

Step 2 → **Identify 3-5 candidate shops** using your network, industry directories, a marketplace, or [The Assembly's vetted network](#).

Step 3 → **Run the 15-minute vetting checklist** on each one by phone. Eliminate anyone who can't answer the eight questions.

Step 4 → **Place a \$500 test order** with your top two candidates. Same part, same specs.

Step 5 → **Evaluate both** on quality, communication, on-time delivery, and invoice accuracy. Qualify both as approved suppliers.

Step 6 → **Split your production** or designate a primary and backup. Now you have redundancy.

Path C: "I'm Leaving Money on the Table"

Step 1 → **Call an SR&ED consultant this week**. Most offer a free initial assessment. They'll tell you in 30 minutes whether you have an eligible claim and roughly how much it's worth.

Step 2 → **Call the NRC at 1-877-994-4727** and ask for an IRAP ITA to be assigned to your company. This is free and creates no commitment.

Step 3 → **If you're selling internationally**, apply for CanExport before your next trade show.

Path D: "I Just Need This Handled"

You don't want to become a procurement expert. You want parts on your desk.

Step 1 → Go to theassemblystudio.com. Describe your project - a photo, a sketch, dimensions, whatever you've got.

Step 2 → We match you with a vetted Canadian service bureau that fits your process, material, and volume requirements.

Step 3 → Work directly with the shop. We make the introduction; you own the relationship. No file uploads to our platform, no middleman markup on ongoing orders.

Time from "I need a part" to "I'm talking to the right shop": typically 48 hours.

🕒 **Optimize for reliability first, price second.**

The cheapest part that arrives late, out of spec, or not at all is infinitely more expensive than a fairly priced part from a supplier who delivers every time. Optimize for reliability. The cheapest quote means nothing if the parts show up late, out of spec, or not at all.

One More Thing

If you followed Paths A, B, or C above, you have everything you need. This guide is the playbook - go execute.

But if you looked at those paths and thought *"I don't have time for this"* - that's exactly why The Assembly exists.

Here's how it works:

- 1 Describe your project.** A photo, a napkin sketch, a 2D drawing - whatever you have. Dimensions, material, quantity, and what the part does. No CAD file upload required.
 - 2 We match you.** Within 48 hours, we connect you with a vetted Canadian service bureau - right process, right capacity, right location.
 - 3 You work directly with the shop.** We make the introduction. The relationship is yours. No platform lock-in.
- ✓ **No IP exposure.** Your design files never touch our platform.
 - ✓ **Canadian-owned, Canadian-hosted.** No CLOUD Act exposure.
 - ✓ **Vetted network.** We've already run the 15-minute checklist on every shop in our network.
 - ✓ **No MOQs. Transparent pricing.** You see what you're paying and why.

[Describe Your First Project →](#)