

NT CADCAM QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 . MAY 2008



Introduction

Richard Cave-Penney, Managing Director



Welcome to NT CADCAM's first customer quarterly newsletter.

In order to improve the communication between NT CADCAM and its customers we have created a quarterly newsletter. We hope this will help to keep you informed of the group's progress, product developments and useful hints and tips for all our design engineers out there.

Over the coming months we will have several additions to our highly supported product portfolio from the latest 3DVIA the tool that allows you to find, upload and create your 3D content online to DFM Pro a suite of tools for designers, that facilitates upstream manufacturability validation and identification of areas of a design that are difficult, expensive, or impossible to manufacture. We will also be extending our MoldFlow suite and will be supporting the latest CircuitWorks package now on offer with SolidWorks Office Premium. If you would like the opportunity to find out more about any of these NEW and exciting products before your competitors do, please call your local Account Manager who can tell you more.

Finally, on behalf of everyone here at NT CADCAM, I would like to express our sincere thanks for supporting us over the years. NT CADCAM's business would not be in such a strong position without its valued customers and dedicated team of sales, support, finance and administration.

New Technology CADCAM
the customers choice in design & engineering solutions

A Little Something For All Our Customers

One of the best features of 2008 is the shortcut menu. This is a fully customisable menu available on the “s” key. The menu changes depending whether you are editing a part, assembly or drawing. So your most used commands are always on the tip of the mouse.

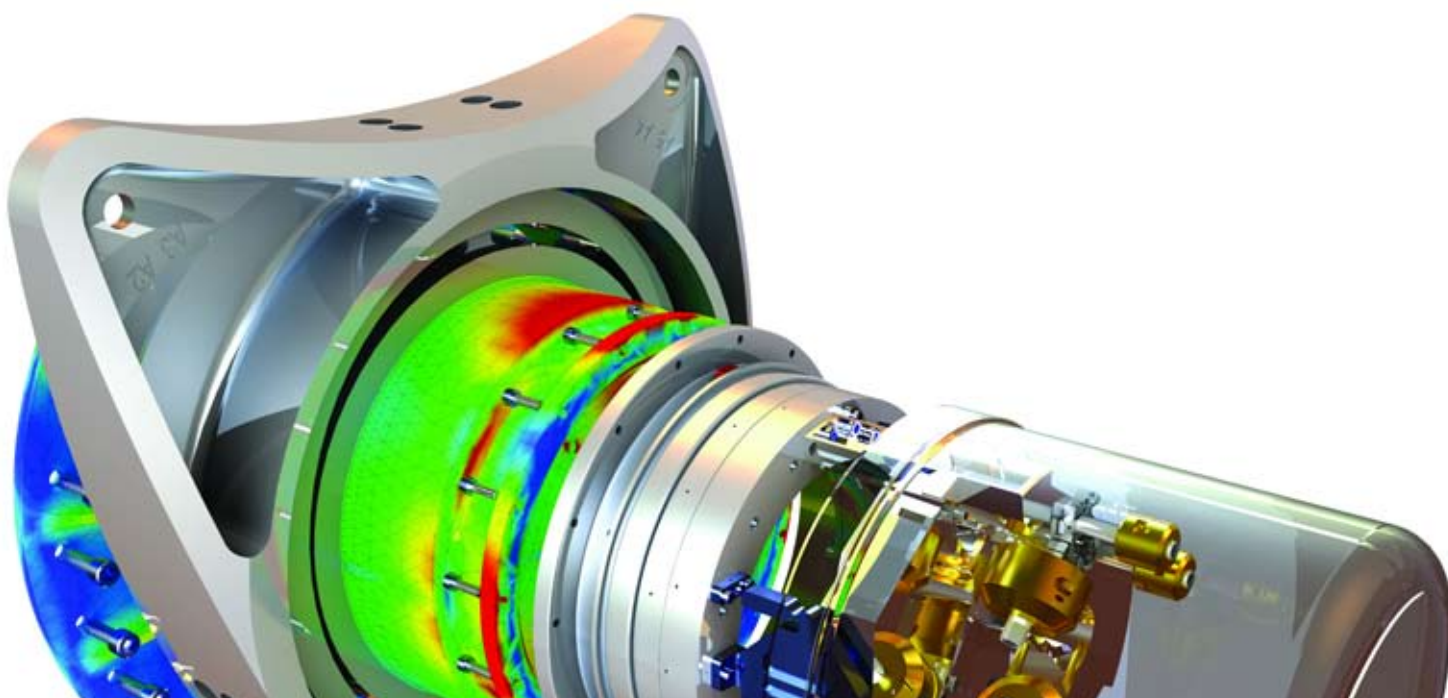
Commands can be added or deleted by simply right clicking the toolbar and choosing customise. You can then drag items on and off the toolbar, pay special attention to the “flyout” toolbars, it’s a great way to get lots of commands in a small area. To change the layout of the toolbar whilst editing drag the edges to stretch and stack the icons.

Latest Annoucement

The last quarter has continued to be a whirlwind of activity for NT CADCAM, with excellent results coming from both SolidWorks sales & professional services. NT CADCAM has always been a forward thinking company and thrives on its innovating ideas. Richard Cave-Penney, Managing Director of NT CADCAM alongside Laurence Marks an experienced and well respected analyst of his time, have joined forces in developing a new and exciting company.

Strategic Simulation Analysis Ltd (SSA) is the latest company of the NT Group, specialising in maxmizing ROI when investing into analysis software. Laurence Marks quotes

“ Cost savings only come from analysis if it is made an intrinsic part of the design process and linked directly to the test program to keep it grounded in the real world. To gain the maximum from the analysis process, integration with CAD has to be planned and the modelling approach optimised to unlock the full potential of analysis. Simply taking complex CAD assemblies used to define products for manufacture does not often result in useful analysis. ”



3DVIA: a practical solution for you to achieve more business...

Build your clients confidence: make it obvious and easy for them to do business with you!

Better communication and information from you to your market audience is not only expected – it is vital. Your equipment's unique features and your after-sales support benefits need to be clearly identified and understood by the viewer.

3DVIA takes your raw 3D CAD engineering data and transforms it easier, quicker and more economically, into your desired literature. Your marketing and sales teams can now swiftly and accurately create best in market literature with 2D and 3D technical illustrations and author content, all via a simple-to-use desktop content-creation system.

This is what users of 3DVIA have to say-

"Users trained on maintenance procedures using seamage were 30% more likely to pass their certification exam in the first attempt." Snecma Services

"Using animations for field service documentation has cut our translation costs by as much as 70%." John Deere

"We reduced our assembly preparation time by 50%." Thales Alenia Space

"We reduced technical illustration creation time by 90%." PSA Peugeot Citroen

If you design in SolidWorks, or any 3D design software, detailed drawing and model information can be immediately transformed into presentation graphics, exploded views and animations for your publications.

Here are some areas for which you can produce documentation and graphics whilst still designing the product!

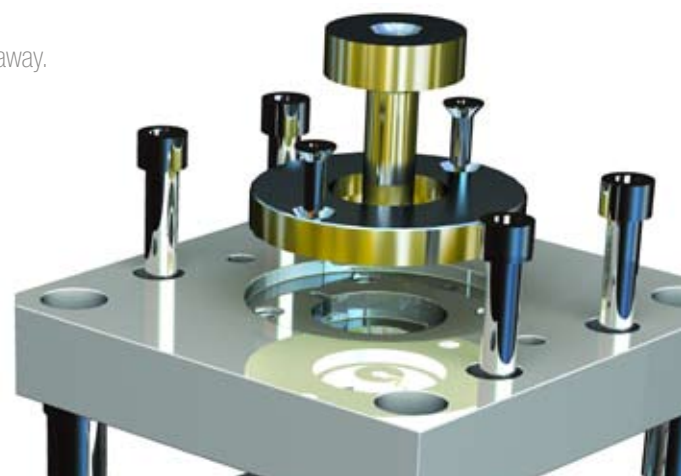
Departmental utilisation, simply at a touch of a button-

- Marketing- Illustrations, exploded views
- Customer Service- Visual operating instructions, roll out step-by-step field service guides
- Sales and Training- Accurate product catalogues and sales brochures. Clear in-depth visual presentations and demonstrations
- Manufacturing- Visual assembly instructions and manufacturing process instructions
- Product Development- 3D Animations, multi-CAD, functional validation

Launch your product with superior presentation and support documentation straightaway.

Publication costs are significantly reduced and you're first to market!

For further information or demonstration please call today 01844 295235 or email sales@ntcadcam.co.uk



Don't Ask Me Again

What are the consequences?

If you find that the prompt "Unable to locate the file _____. Would you like to find it yourself" no longer appears when you open a document with broken references, you have most probably ticked the "Don't ask me again" option at some time.

To rectify this...

Go to Tools, System Options, Advanced. In the list of dismissed messages, tick the entry "Unable to locate the file _____. Would you like to find it yourself"

Subsequently, on re-opening a file which has missing references, the previously dismissed prompt will re-appear, enabling the correct locations to be referenced.

SIMPO Sets its Sights On Mainstream Moulding

SimpoeWorks® is a fully-featured general purpose plastic injection simulation software for:

- Fill analysis
- Pack analysis
- Cool analysis
- Warp analysis

Plastic Injection For Everyone

SimpoeWorks® is the missing link for a truly Collaborative Product Development strategy. Plastic injection simulation is, thanks to SIMPOE, now available to everyone. So if you don't have 20 years of practical experience and don't want to rely on countless expensive prototypes then SimpoeWorks is the tool for you!

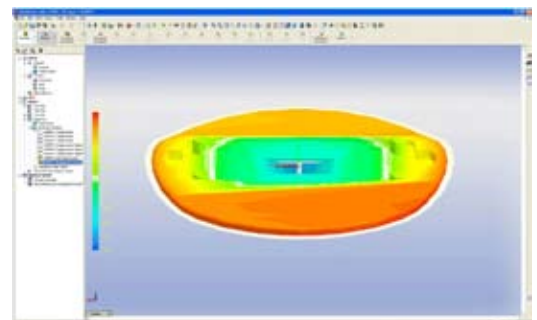
You don't have to be an expert to use SimpoeWorks®. It is used in the Product Development Process by:

- Design Engineers
- Mold Makers
- Plastics Injection Manufacturers

From reading of your CAD data, to meshing, solving, & results processing, SimpoeWorks® does it all. So whether you are creating an automatic mesh, setting the process conditions, or viewing the results, you never leave the SolidWorks environment.

You can also create a surface mesh for a quick and efficient thin-part analysis or a full 3-D volume mesh for the most complex parts including thick and chunky parts.

For further information or demonstration please call today 01844 295235 or email sales@ntcadcam.co.uk



Get The Right Hardware For The Job

There has been a lot of discussion about what is the best hardware for SolidWorks and so here is a quick guide of what to look for.

CPU – This is the core part of any SolidWorks workstation and is the key part for system performance. Up until recently processor performance has been a simple case of just buying a bigger number e.g. a Pentium 4 1.5Ghz processor would be slower than a Pentium 4 2.0Ghz processor by approx 25%. Now with the new range of processors there is much more to consider.

First is the number of cores the processor chip contains and the number of CPUs the system has. Many people are being misled into thinking a Quad core 2Ghz processor gives the equivalent speed of a 4x2Ghz, 8Ghz this is very much NOT the case. To make the full use of multi-core processors software has to be specifically written to take advantage of this. This is not a trivial task for software developers and much code has to be totally rewritten.

So what to buy for SolidWorks? If you are not using PhotoWorks or Cosmos focus on single core performance this will give the best price performance for SolidWorks. A fast dual core processor is a very good compromise for SolidWorks. SolidWorks gets a whole core to run on and all those background applications run on the other core with SolidWorks utilising the additional processing power when possible. If though, you do a lot of analysis or rendering, then it may be better to use a quad core or dual quad core processors but remember there will be a trade off between the number of cores and speed. We recently ran into a customer who had purchased a quad core workstation for SolidWorks but found his laptop ran faster! A 2.6 GHz dual core laptop versus a 1.8 GHz Quad core Workstation!

Graphics Cards – This is always a difficult question as graphics cards are always changing. As a good rule of thumb only ever purchase a card that has been tested by SolidWorks and use the tested driver as on the SolidWorks Web site http://www.solidworks.com/pages/services/VideoCardTesting.html?lsrc=quick_links

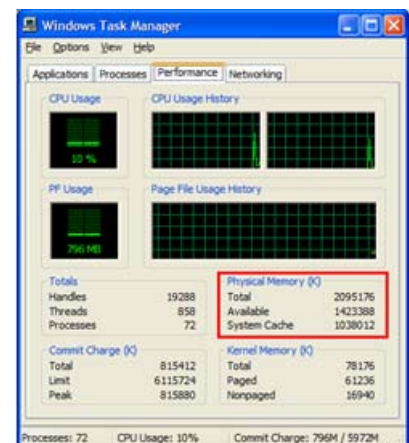
It doesn't get any simpler.

Generally we prefer to recommend Nvidia Quadro cards as the driver quality seems to be higher.

Memory – Today memory is very cheap and there really is no reason not to be running with sufficient RAM. To get an idea if more ram is required watch task manager and check the physical RAM, if the "Available" gets low then you need to consider more RAM.

Before just adding more ram though check you can make use of it. The 32bit versions of Windows XP and Vista are limited to the total memory they can use so expanding a 32Bit system any more than 4gbytes is pointless.

Also if you are running a 64Bit operating system that is capable of using more than 4gbyte before adding more memory check your Motherboard can make use of it many systems max out at 4 or 8 GBytes of RAM.



Summary:

Focus on Single core performance for SolidWorks. If you are doing a lot of analysis or rendering if the budget allows consider Quad Core or more.

Next, put money towards memory (RAM). An easy way to determine how much you need is by watching the task manager. If you use more than you have, buy more (make sure your motherboard is expandable)! Windows XP Professional x64 Edition is the solution for users who need more than 3GB of memory for SolidWorks.

Finally, buy a stable, OpenGL, professional level graphics card, avoiding the cards with current limitations/issues highlighted on the SolidWorks Web site.

These are the three hardware items that will directly affect your SolidWorks performance. Faster hard drive speeds can improve the performance of your machine while opening and saving files, but do not affect general performance.

A Close Network

Through close relationships with some of the world's foremost component suppliers, CAD2 design specialist computer workstation solutions that excel in the most demanding of user environments.

As the world's only independent computer workstation manufacturer to have been awarded Solidworks Solution Partner Status, CAD2 is uniquely positioned within the industry to provide ultimate workstation platforms for maximum Solidworks productivity. Working directly with some of Solidworks most prestigious clients CAD2 has consistently demonstrated the capability to significantly improve corporate design productivity by using the very latest 64bit computer workstation & graphics technologies.

From simple single part designs to complex 50,000+ part assemblies CAD2 have the expertise available to design specialist, workstation solutions that enable leading Solidworks professionals to complete complex design, analysis or rendering tasks in record time. Specialist system engineers strive to maximize the performance and stability of every CAD2 workstation, to drive increasingly proficient design teams facilitating both increased financial return and creative efficiency with a reduced time to market (TTM).

CAD2's latest 64bit 3D CAD Workstation, their "X64" series, delivers superb levels of performance. Fully certified for Solidworks 2008 and beyond and available with the world's fastest most powerful 3D design processors, up to 8GB of high speed system memory and a whopping

2GB of dedicated graphics memory (100% Solidworks certified) combined and all offered with a variety of hard disk storage options. Featuring CAD2's unique after sales service and workstation technical support as standard, if you would like more information please speak to your local Account Manager.



Your Side Of The Story

We had been a Pro/ENGINEER customer for many years, however costs...

Perry Slingsby Systems Ltd is a brand known for its excellence in designing and engineering solutions for remote intervention needs across the world in industries such as Oil and Gas and Defence. The product range includes trench and submarine cable plows and submarine rescue systems.

Experience and engineering capability are crucial to Perry Slingsby Systems Ltd's continued success; so the company has always utilised the best tools available for its skilled workforce, including 3D computer aided design software.

Andy Dixon, Drafting Supervisor for Perry Slingsby Systems Ltd, says, "Whilst we had been using Pro/ENGINEER for many years the maintenance cost for the system had become very expensive, so much so that we could not justify moving to the current release and were falling behind in terms of the latest software and its advantages."

In addition, the design team were having problems with interlinks and document issue control for their large assemblies; and this, combined with the unresolved high maintenance cost problems, led to a decision to reinvestigate the 3D design software market.

Perry Slingsby Systems Ltd reviewed the latest offering from Pro/ENGINEER, alongside competitors, Autodesk Inventor and SolidWorks. Andy comments, "All the companies could offer the functionality we required. In summary, Pro/ENGINEER continued to work out to be expensive, with many features we required being considered as add-ons, attracting a purchase and maintenance premium each time; whilst Autodesk Inventor and SolidWorks both offered excellent value. What won it for SolidWorks was that it offered a lot as standard in the box; the performance of features like eDrawing was exemplary; and the ease of use of SolidWorks."

NT CADCAM Ltd has been responsible for the supply, training and support for SolidWorks. Andy says, "NT CADCAM Ltd provided an excellent demonstration of SolidWorks. They have a unique time-served team, with depth and knowledge of both the software and engineering skills; hence we confidently placed our SolidWorks order with them."

Andy adds, "NT CADCAM Ltd's UK-based helpdesk is easy to communicate with, their technicians are clued up and they know what they are about. This service is an improvement for us and we look forward to a successful and long-term relationship with them."

Andy Dixon, Drafting Supervisor for Perry Slingsby Systems Ltd



The NT CADCAM Interactive Support Centre Just Got That Much Better...

So how can you quickly get to log support calls with NT CADCAM, check the status of a support call or book yourself into a training course? A really neat and quick method is to load the NT CADCAM Interactive support tool. This little download is available from the NT CADCAM website:- <http://www.ntcadcam.co.uk/NT-Interactive-Support-Centre-Download-Installation.htm> It adds a tab to your SolidWorks installation that gives you direct access to NT CADCAM support and services.

For most users the first button and most important button is that of the online support request. This is the fastest and most efficient way of accessing an NT CADCAM support engineer.

Simply log in using your username and password. If you don't have a login, contact support and we will be happy to set one up. Here you can record the problem and upload any files that may be pertinent so that we can quickly get back to you to resolve the problem.

It's also here you can find the link to our Webex. Through here we can log on to your system and either share our desktop to demonstrate how something works or take control of your desktop to resolve the issue.

You'll also find self help links and links to our News and Events. You can have a look at our free COSMOSWorksExpress training (it's been very popular) or browse our services directory where you'll find a list companies offering services to the SolidWorks community

For more information on anything featured in this quarters newsletter please visit www.ntcadcam.co.uk. Alternatively please contact your local Account Manager.

