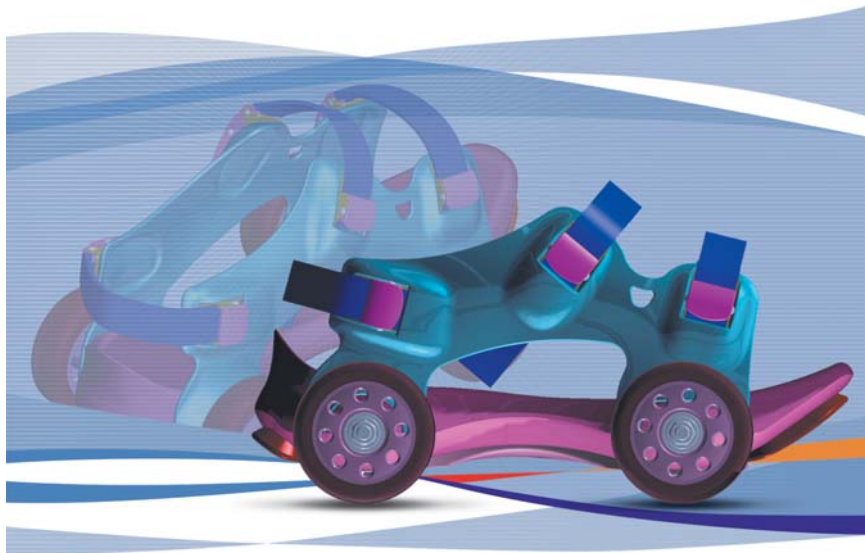


GID Development Corporation boosts efficiency and profits with CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM



“If you really get into some of the finer features of CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM, you can become a powerhouse as an SMB.”

Jim Grimes, Founder and Lead Designer, GID Development Corporation

Overview

■ Challenge

GID Development Corporation needed to be able to efficiently respond to customer requests to design and bring to market the broad range of products presented by its entrepreneur inventor clientele.

■ Solution

To improve its design capabilities and efficiencies and to manage its development processes, GID implemented CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM.

■ Benefit

With CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM, GID has streamlined its design processes, improved its development efficiencies and capabilities, boosted customer satisfaction and increased its profits by as much as 12% per project.

Small business thinks big

With just six employees, calling GID Development Corporation a Small and Medium-sized Business (SMB) almost feels like an understatement. But it is a small enterprise that thinks and acts big.

The company, a design boutique which has worked with customers on projects ranging from innovative office organizers to a new-age quad roller skate with a low center of gravity and self articulating wheels, considers itself an advocate for the entrepreneur inventor, according to Pat McCarville, GID’s president.

“We level the playing field for our customers to go from idea to market and compete with large enterprises in the same product category,” he explains. “But we couldn’t do, or even conceive of doing, that unless we had

technology to make us efficient and ensure our designers’ creativity was not limited by their available tools.”

Early on, McCarville says, GID recognized that to be competitive it needed to differentiate itself by embracing technology “like no other company at its level would or could.” And it has.

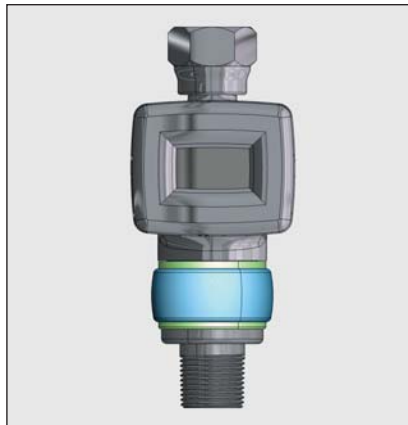
CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM put GID a step ahead

GID’s existing CAD tools were bogging down the speed and creativity it could bring to its designs. So company founder and lead designer Jim Grimes dug deep into his technology budget to make, what he says felt then like a leap of faith to adopt CATIA V5 as the company’s 3D design solution, but has become a critical step in GID’s success.

“The engineering and design disciplines that Jim has been able to master utilizing Dassault Systèmes’ CATIA V5 software rival anything that any team of engineers at any enterprise level is able to do,” McCarville says. “Everything has been perfected to the point that we don’t tell our clients we specialize in one type of product. We make every type of product, from patented orthotic devices for the relief of heel pain to digital air control valves for automotive paint spray guns, but we couldn’t do it without embracing this technology and capitalizing on it.”

The company’s business model, he says, is based on best practices that have evolved from the broad range of diverse projects the company completes. And, McCarville says, those best practices, rather than being limited by the capabilities of the technology, are instead driven by them.

“Our best practices have been derived from the designer’s ability to implement and use certain tools provided in our 3D virtual design software,” he says. “With Imagine & Shape, designers can derive the structural concept design in collaboration with the client to get agreement before proceeding to more time consuming design efforts that are more difficult to change and modify. With the client’s approval of the structural concept design, we can proceed in a timely and more cost effective manner to the model and prototype phase.”



GID also has begun implementation of SMARTEAM to automate its development and manufacturing outsourcing processes as the company moves forward strategically for the future. SMARTEAM, Grimes says, allows GID to control and manage design revisions and updates, assemblies, Bill of Materials and other aspects of development, freeing his time as a designer.

“Although the designers’ inputs on revisions, updates, and other changes are crucial, their time is best spent designing, while others in our organization use the design data to implement supply chain management functions consistent with the design requirements” McCarville says.

CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM allow a small business to work “big”

CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM have allowed GID to streamline and improve its processes from 3D design all the way through communication with suppliers, allowing the company, as McCarville points out, to become “multi-task capable.”



“We do everything in the ‘virtual world’ now before we get into any hardscape – like prototypes or pre-production manufactured products or finished goods,” he says. “CATIA is a real selling point with our small clients.”

Designs that used to take GID weeks to complete, now take just days – and that is something that pleases customers and frees this small company to take on more projects. “You can deliver a design a lot quicker and it really ‘wows’ people,” Grimes says.

McCarville says the biggest time savings are realized in a project’s initial phase, where GID can provide the client with a structural design concept that is consistent with their expectations, thanks to CATIA V5.

“Imagine & Shape allows the designer to quickly develop several concepts which can be easily modified in collaboration with the client to achieve a single design that can then proceed to the next development phase,” he explains. “Time savings of 30% have

been achieved in the completion of a project's first phase."

In particular, Grimes says, several CATIA V5 modules, such as Imagine & Shape, Functional Molded Parts, Core & Cavity and Mold Design, have improved GID's design processes. And advanced surfaces, such as those he designs with Imagine & Shape, he says, simply cannot be designed with other CAD tools.

Grimes also is impressed with CATIA V5's Knowledgeware tools which, he says, have allowed GID to automate many design steps through the use of templates.

"If you really get into some of the finer features, you can become a powerhouse as an SMB," he says.

"Not only does CATIA V5 help us go from a conceptual design all the way to the complete design, but when we're through with the design, we can convert it to Core & Cavity and design the mold plates," he says. "The total PLM solution allows us to take an inventor's product and develop it to completion and then take it directly to our Chinese

manufacturing partners to make it, reducing the low cost of a Chinese mold maker even further by designing it for them. I can't say enough about this software's ability to do that."

And SMARTEAM, Grimes says, gives McCarville the capability to use product design files to communicate directly with the supply chain, freeing designers from the process.

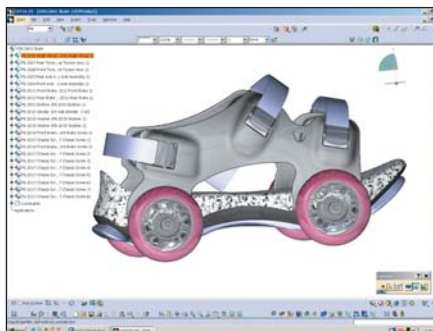
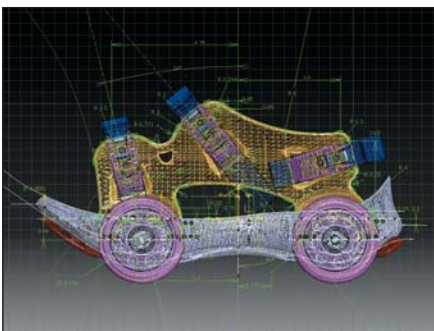
"We see SMARTEAM as a strategic part of our plan as we go forward as a company," Grimes says. "Before SMARTEAM, we had no revision control. And that kept me embroiled in the processing and manufacturing side, diluting my design time."

But with SMARTEAM, Grimes says, designs can be managed and stored in the vault, allowing him to "effectively forget about them" and go on to the next project, while knowing he can quickly find and reuse any part in the vault to avoid redundant design.

"By being able to manage across products, I don't have to get involved in the continuum of support for the sourcing

"We completed 20% more projects in FY2005 than in 2004, without adding to headcount. Prior to our effective implementation of CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM, our margin per project was 9% to 12%, compared to our current rate of nearly 21% for FY2005."

Pat McCarville, President,
GID Development Corporation



end," he says. "And for a small company, it's really important not to clutter up your design time. SMARTEAM was a logical next step for us."

Endless possibilities

Grimes believes GID's use of CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM gives their small company a big competitive advantage.

"If you're not using CATIA V5 10 years from now, you're out of business," he predicts. "If you don't invest in this in a very strategic sense, the real leading edge is going to be beyond you and you're just going to fall away."

McCarville and Grimes say they want to position GID to be able to collaborate with people throughout the "disengaged" global enterprise of the future. And they say PLM solutions, like CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM, are the key to "threading" their small business into that future.

"Our idea is to invest in it, learn it and roll with the changing landscape," Grimes says.

In the meantime, GID is reaping many rewards from their investment today. "We've streamlined our design processes and we're saving time," Grimes says. "And that improves our efficiencies and capabilities, keeping our customers happier and boosting our profits."

"We completed 20% more projects in FY2005 than in 2004, without adding to headcount," McCarville says.

"Prior to our effective implementation of CATIA V5 and SMARTEAM, our margin per project was 9% to 12%, compared to our current rate of nearly 21% for FY2005. And with our recent purchase of several new CATIA tool suites and improved proficiency with existing tool suites, we are projecting a 26% project margin for FY2006."

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