

Coast Composites Delivers Big with CATIA V5 and ENOVIA SmarTeam



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Jerry Anthony
President
Coast Composites

Some small companies see their size as a disadvantage. But Jerry Anthony, president of Coast Composites, a tooling systems supplier to the commercial and military aerospace industry, is working hard to keep his company small and responsive.

Like its competitors, Coast is under constant pressure from its OEM customers to deliver faster and at lower cost. But unlike most of its competition, Anthony says, Coast believes that adopting cutting edge technology can help it set itself apart and stay solidly ahead of the pack.

Anthony has pushed this company of less than 115 employees to remain small on headcount, while making strong technology investments. He believes that adopting paperless, automated processes guarantees Coast's ability to remain agile and at the top of its game. Coast knew, Anthony says, that to maintain its competitive advantage it needed to improve communication of complex design and development data throughout its workforce and automate repetitive tasks. Coast also understood that

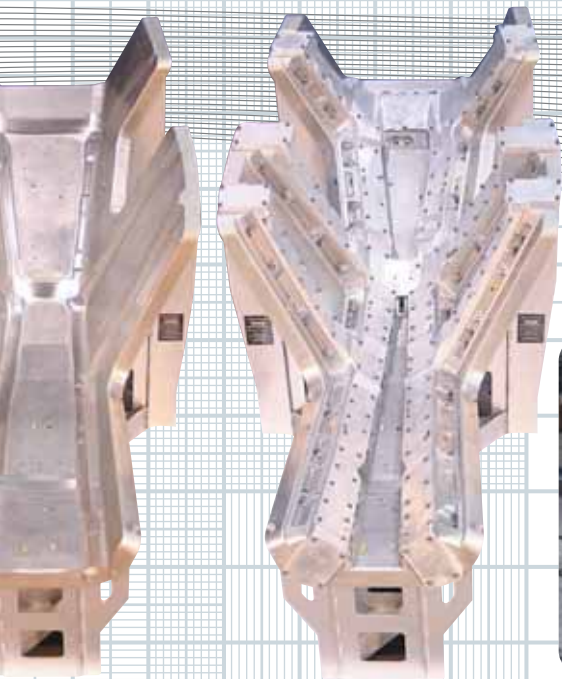
it needed to effectively manage and control changes to reduce errors and design time.

IN STEP WITH ITS CUSTOMERS

Anthony is keenly aware that Coast's success relies on building close-knit collaborations in which it works "with," rather than "for," its key OEM clients. And he knew that meant achieving consistency and compatibility with those customers.

So Coast selected CATIA V5 as its design application platform, which allows it to operate in the same environment as its OEM customers. "With CATIA V5, it's much easier for us to communicate with our customers and when the product's lifecycle can be embedded in CATIA, it's easy to see why one would want to gravitate that way," Anthony says.

And to effectively manage changes and improve collaboration and communication throughout its busy workforce, it chose ENOVIA SmarTeam, which embeds nicely within its existing CATIA environment.



"We're always dealing with new designs and data for new products, because we're helping to build plane number one of a new line, not number 1,001," says Anthony. "When we're working on any new military or commercial airplane program, for instance, a mold tool can change ten or 20 times throughout the design and build processes. In this situation, change control is huge.

"ENOVIA SmarTeam is a way for us to manage change control and it does a very effective job of that," Anthony adds.

That same reliability and consistency that Coast's customers look for, also was important to Anthony in a software partner. From a stability standpoint, Anthony says he has confidence in Dassault Systèmes to "be there" for Coast for the long term. "That's a big issue and driver for us now," he says.

OPENING DOORS WITH GENERATIVE MECHANICAL DESIGN

Anthony and his colleagues say they are experiencing many benefits from the Generative Mechanical Design (GMD) approach based on ENOVIA SmarTeam and CATIA V5.

The GMD approach creates intelligent features that encapsulate the design intent, manufacturing processes, analysis and optimization models, along with expert system rules, in one 3D entity. The GMD design features then react to customers' inputs, based on embedded rules, and automatically update all downstream processes and models.

The powerful combination of the GMD design methodology with its collaboration capabilities is allowing Coast to automate communication and workflows and reuse existing know-how and designs. It also has allowed the company to respond to customers more quickly and reduce delivery times by as much as 40 to 60%.

GMD Knowledgeware has become a particularly powerful tool for Coast and the company is using the technology to expedite its design and manufacturing processes. Darrell Brooks, CAE Automation Manager at Coast, says it has been able to reduce the design cycle on tools that have repetitive tasks by 30%.

Knowledgeware features allow Coast to do repetitive tasks quickly, letting one designer do the work of two and allowing the company to schedule more projects in the same time frame, Brooks says.

"To say it's a huge advantage is an understatement," he adds. And Coast uses the advantages it has gained with Knowledgeware in its customer development.

"We now market the fact that we can use the GMD approach to create design concepts and NC programming and we're actively telling our customers about how we can reduce our development time by 40-60% with Knowledgeware," Anthony says. "That has really opened doors for us that we didn't have before." In addition, because Dassault Systèmes provides all of the necessary programming infrastructure for the automation, which gets

automatically updated, Anthony explains, Coast is freed from burdening its own staff with managing upgrades and software maintenance.

"Knowledgeware is an astronomical benefit to our company," he adds. "It gives us the competitive advantage. It's huge."

DELIVERING BIG

Anthony has used technology to grow Coast's business without growing its workforce. And he quickly points out that software, hardware and automation have been critical to the company's current success and will remain so for its future.

"We wouldn't be where we are without CATIA V5 and ENOVIA SmarTeam," Anthony says. "And we're looking at growing, especially the design and NC programming side of our business, at a rapid pace."

GMD based on CATIA V5 and ENOVIA SmarTeam will play a critical role, he says. For instance, Coast will be using the GMD approach to automate more of its inspections processes.

"Approximately 50% of the revenue generating capability at Coast is based on the advantages of using CATIA and embedded products, like ENOVIA SmarTeam and Knowledgeware," Anthony says. "The potential is just unlimited as far as we can see.")

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