

# Gilmore Group

Builds brands with CATIA



## Overview

### ■ Challenge

*Gilmore Group needed sophisticated surface modeling capabilities to design and build an interior mock-up of a new very light jet (VLJ) in just nine months.*

### ■ Solution

*Gilmore Group chose CATIA for its strength in complex, compound surface geometry and its ability to accelerate the iterative process.*

### ■ Benefits

*With CATIA's parametric design capabilities, designs move quickly between iterations, and even the most complex shapes are readily machined.*



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Louis Lombardi, Managing Director,  
Gilmore Group

## GilmoreGroup

### Making brand value tangible and touchable

If you have ever shopped at a Walgreens drugstore, conducted a transaction at a Bank of America branch or eaten at a Dave and Busters restaurant, you have stepped into the world of the Gilmore Group.

The New York City-based design company is not a traditional brand marketing firm, content to design logos, signs and advertising slogans. Instead, Gilmore Group is focused on consumer experiences and everything that goes with them, from the way a storefront looks to passersby to the lighting, colors and surfaces that greet customers once they walk inside.

"For us, the single greatest element to building brand value is the experience

you have with that company's physical elements – its spaces, its products, its packaging," says Louis Lombardi, Gilmore Group Managing Director. "It's those tangible experiences with the brand that influence consumers and build a company's value."

The company has proven empirically that its approach works. After Gilmore Group helped Fleet Bank design its branches, for example, virtually all of its locations met or exceeded their sales expectations. When Gilmore Group's principals (while working for a prior firm) helped Heinz design new packaging for brightly colored condiments aimed at children, the company's market capitalization soared 8 percent. "That's the power of on-target design, research and creative thinking," Lombardi says.





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### Helping design corporate jets that embody brand value

When a very light jet (VLJ) manufacturer began developing a new aircraft, it retained Gilmore Group to translate the company’s brand values into a sleek and comfortable passenger cabin. From the outset, Gilmore Group executives knew they needed the power of CATIA, part of the Dassault Systèmes Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) Solution suite, to accomplish their mission.

“I know that I couldn’t have done this project without CATIA, even though my background is industrial design and I’ve used a number of the top 3D systems,” Lombardi says. “I don’t think there’s anything on the market that comes close to CATIA in handling complex, compound surface geometry – surfaces that break in two directions at once. For those you need transitions and a robust package that can manipulate those surfaces into something you can cut with tooling.”

Gilmore Group’s VLJ customer expected it to deliver a fully functional cabin mockup in time for a pivotal trade show less than a year after purchasing CATIA. Lombardi used his knowledge of other packages, coupled with a

personalized, real-time web training session arranged by his Dassault Systèmes value-added reseller, to jump in head first. “To go from knowing nothing to modeling some of the toughest shapes in a plane in the time we did was phenomenal,” Lombardi says.

He recently completed a week of traditional training, and is eager to sign up for more. “I wish I had been able to take this class before we started the VLJ project,” Lombardi says. “In that one week, I learned enough to have knocked at least two weeks off the work we did, and that will make every new project more efficient.”

### CATIA: Creating the shapes designers imagine

How a consumer experiences a company’s spaces is critical to building brand value, Gilmore Group’s final deliverable on the VLJ project was a fully functioning cabin for the trade show. Gilmore Group worked with a fabrication shop in Dallas to fabricate the components and assemble a full mock-up. The power of CATIA made it possible to design, refine and build the interior in a span of less than nine months, even with limited knowledge of the software.



“Its support for the iterative process is a big attraction to CATIA,” Lombardi says. “For me, the virtual will probably never replace the actual experience of the space, because that’s the essence of what we do. Plus, the only way to test is to put the product in the hands of your customers or, in this case, put your customers in the space you’ve designed to see how they react. But one of the great values of CATIA is that it reduces the number of times we need to physically build, test and revise, because it gives us such a powerful visualization tool and the means to create the shapes we imagine.”

The templates and knowledge-based capabilities built into CATIA also accelerate the iterative process by making it fast and easy to change the mass or shape of a design, Lombardi says. A designer just enters the new parameters, and the part automatically adjusts to fit them. “CATIA makes our business more efficient,” Lombardi says.

Photorealistic renderings, too, are important to Gilmore Group’s work. “Pictures engage our clients in a more enriching dialogue than a wire-frame model will ever be able to,” Lombardi says. “So now that we’ve learned the

basics, we plan to begin using the rendering component in CATIA for the iterative process. It will allow us to create many design iterations, with complete changes in shape and form, and execute them much faster than we’ve done in the past. That’s a huge plus for us, because it means we can evaluate a larger number of iterations more quickly, which should lead to a superior design.”

Once again, the success of what Gilmore Group created was proven by the product’s performance: according to media reports, its customer took more than 100 orders for its new VLJ in the first month, an exceptional launch record.

### **A future of designing with CATIA**

Since the VLJ project, Gilmore Group has applied CATIA to packaging design, where its 3D visualization and parametric design capabilities are proving invaluable. As more designers become trained, Lombardi believes CATIA will replace the packaging-specific software Gilmore Group has relied on for years.

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He also sees a growing role for CATIA in reverse-engineering designs modeled in clay. "I think we'll continue to work in the way that's easy for us, which involves modeling in clay, building in foam, and then digitizing those models in CATIA for the final detailing," Lombardi says. "The software lends itself to that process very well."

Since the advent of CATIA PLM Express, a flexible and scalable solution geared to the needs of small and medium businesses, Gilmore Group has begun to explore the potential to expand its selection of CATIA modules. "We're eager to take advantage of the head start we have with CATIA in our industry," Lombardi says.

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Dassault Systèmes  
9, quai Marcel Dassault, BP310  
92156 Suresnes Cedex France  
Tel: 33 (1) 40 99 40 99



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