



Autodesk to Acquire MechSoft Technology to Advance Its Strategy of Delivering Engineering Capabilities to the Design Department

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Manufacturing Customers to Benefit Over Time From 'Functional Design'

CHICAGO, National Design and Engineering Show, Feb 24, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via Comtex/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK), the world's leading design software and digital content company, announced today an agreement to acquire certain assets of MechSoft, Inc., an Autodesk Inventor(R) Certified Applications Program partner and developer of the award-winning MechSoft product. This move advances Autodesk's goal of delivering engineering capabilities to the design department to help customers build products based on the concept of "functional design." Functional design is a new, more direct way to design in 3D. Autodesk plans to integrate key components of MechSoft's technology into future versions of Autodesk Inventor Series.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20000518/SFTH083LOGO>)

"By incorporating this proven technology into our design tools, we are able to further extend the value of our solutions and help our customers improve their mechanical design process," said Robert Kross, vice president of the Manufacturing Solutions Division at Autodesk.

The Advantages of Functional Design

Functional design moves beyond 2D drafting and 3D modeling, enabling users to work in terms of mechanical relationships, rather than geometric descriptions and constraints. For example, the engineer designs a gear set based on loading and reduction ratios rather than size and placement, and then lets MechSoft generate the geometry as needed. This engineering functionality means that users can shorten design cycles and optimize as they design.

The MechSoft, Inc. asset acquisition, which is expected to close in March 2004, is a major step in Autodesk's efforts to build engineering functionality into its market-leading 2D and 3D mechanical design software. Although Autodesk did not disclose the terms of the acquisition, MechSoft's technology will significantly complement Autodesk's solutions with many tools that enable users to embed engineering calculations into their designs based on how parts function. Specifically, these tools include:

- More than 50 calculators and design wizards (e.g. bolted joint, shaft generation, gear, cam and spring wizards) that provide critical engineering information during the product development process, resulting in huge savings in manual calculations and lookups for each and every component;
- A drag-and-drop content library consisting of more than 1.5 million parts representing all prominent international standards; and
- A built-in mechanical engineering handbook that provides instant access to reference materials that design engineers use daily.

Autodesk Inventor and MechSoft: Pioneering 1944 Hiller Helicopter Recreated

Charles Bliss is a lead engineer on a project charged with modeling the historic XH44 (eXperimental Hiller 1944) helicopter on loan to the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos, Calif. The XH44 was the pioneering helicopter for Hiller Aviation, and they wanted a permanent replica at the Hiller Aviation Museum; however, the plans no longer existed. With only archived photos and limited access to the historical helicopter, the project was extremely challenging.

By combining Autodesk Inventor(R) Series software with MechSoft technology, the Bliss team was able to model the airframe. Generating models of the mechanical components, which were inside inaccessible housings, posed a bigger challenge. To overcome this hurdle, they entered known data into MechSoft wizards, which in turn automatically created the gears, bearings, and shafts. Because it allowed them to change the design variables and quickly see the corresponding changes to the components, the team could very rapidly determine which gears could handle the load and would fit the casings.

"With MechSoft and Inventor, it couldn't be simpler. Knowing the loads and speeds, MechSoft can find the parts that work. It frees me up to think about my designs and worry less about whether a component is going to fail," said Bliss. "Instead of poring through catalogs and doing calculations, I just tell MechSoft what I need the parts to do and it finds them for me, presenting me with all the choices that fall within the range I specify. It puts all the handbooks I need inside Inventor, which removes the guesswork."

A Comprehensive Portfolio of Manufacturing Solutions

Delivering on its strategy to help customers create, manage and share their digital design data and solve critical business challenges, Autodesk offers the most comprehensive portfolio of integrated 2D and 3D design and data management solutions on the market. Autodesk's manufacturing solutions include Autodesk Inventor Series, the no. 1 best-selling 3D mechanical design software, and Autodesk Inventor Professional -- both with Autodesk Vault data management built in; AutoCAD(R) Mechanical and AutoCAD(R) Electrical software; and the Autodesk Streamline(R) collaboration service. In addition, customers can take advantage of widely available third-party applications purpose-built for Autodesk software and they can utilize Autodesk Professional Services to garner greater value from their software.

The easiest way to keep Autodesk design tools up-to-date is through the Autodesk(R) Subscription Program including Support services. For an annual fee, the program provides the latest versions of licensed Autodesk software, offering a budget-conscious way to stay current with the latest technology. For products like Autodesk Inventor Series and Professional, the program provides a timely cycle of new releases with rich new content as soon as it

becomes available. Customers can also access Autodesk Consulting and Training services to maximize the value of their investment in Autodesk technology. For more information about Autodesk Subscription, visit www.autodesk.com/subscription.

About Autodesk

Autodesk is the world's leading design software and digital content company, offering customers progressive business solutions through powerful technology products and services. Autodesk helps customers in the building, manufacturing, infrastructure, digital media, and wireless data services fields increase the value of their digital design data and improve efficiencies across their entire project lifecycle management processes. For more information about the company, see www.autodesk.com.

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