

## Editor's Pick: CAM System Integrates with SolidWorks

MecSoft's new VisualMILL for SolidWorks provides up to 5-axis toolpaths directly from 3D models.

by Anthony J. Lockwood | Published July 8, 2009

## Dear Desktop Engineering Reader:



Over the years, MecSoft carved out a name for itself in two ways. First, there's VisualMILL, a robust CAM system that comes as a standalone product and serves as a plug-in, general-purpose machining engine for Alibre and Rhino. Second, affordability. MecSoft provides VisualMILL in full-function, tailored-to-the-job packages. This means that they do not nick you with extra costs every time you need to do something. They've just done it again with VisualMILL for SolidWorks, which starts out at \$999 and tops out around \$4,000 for the full enchilada. Oh, and there are no maintenance fees for your first year and only a maximum of \$399 after that. As I said, affordable.

Still, I know that marketers love to toss out the word "affordable" whether it applies or not. So, you decide. Here's what the \$999 version of VisualMILL for SolidWorks gets you beyond the typical CAM tools that you expect: 2.5- and 3-axis solid, surface, and STL manufacturing; DXF and IGES translators as well as other CAD imports; and a configurable postprocessor. Depending upon the version, you also get such CAM features as continuous roughing and finishing; pocketing; profiling and engraving; surface-, solids-, and mesh-based machining features like finishing and curve projection; and, of course, 5-axis high-speed machining.

More than that, you get complete integration within SolidWorks, including full model associativity. VisualMILL becomes a part of your SolidWorks environment. That means from a single window you can generate, say, a 3-axis toolpath directly from your SolidWorks models. No fiddling with conversions to get the file into your CAM package and then rebuilding it. Hit the link to the 3-minute video in today's Pick of the Week write-up to get a feel for how integration can bring new efficiency to your process.

The idea underlying VisualMILL for SolidWorks is efficiency, ease of use, and robustness at an affordable price. You can check that out for yourself by signing up and downloading a near full-function demo version from the link in <u>today's write-up</u>. By near full-function I mean that features like saving geometry are disabled. You can also sign-up for a webinar later this month or arrange for a private, online demo. With the economy as it is, you need to maximize everything you have and do while minimizing your overhead. VisualMILL for SolidWorks could do exactly that for you. It's well worth your time learning all you can about this one

Thanks, pal. -- Lockwood

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