

Sidel uses CATIA V5 to leverage knowledge, improve quality and productivity



Overview

- *Sidel needed a design solution that would capitalise on its know-how and existing designs to improve responsiveness to customers and design quality*
- *Sidel uses CATIA V5 and its knowledgware capabilities to design all its new bottle shapes*
- *CATIA V5 has enabled Sidel to enhance its responsiveness to customers, product quality and overall productivity.*

Drawing on existing know-how to drive future success

Sidel works with top-tier clients, including Pepsi-cola, Coca-Cola, Danone and Nestle, from its headquarters in France in their design of PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic bottles. It also manufactures molds and blowing machines.

The Engineering and Design departments at Sidel have used a wide range of design tools to meet their specific needs. But in 2001, Sidel reviewed potential new design solutions for its Shape Design and Mold Design offices to meet growing customer requests for increasingly complex designs on shorter deadlines.

“We see the increased reactivity of our Shape Design Office in handling customer change requests every day with CATIA V5.”

*– Céline Linhone,
Shape Design Office manager, Sidel*

Sidel also wanted to capitalise on its existing company know-how and best practices, as well as extensive existing design histories to drive productivity and quality improvements throughout the design process.

After thorough market research and a pilot implementation in conjunction with IBM business partner Dassault Solutions France (DSF), Sidel chose CATIA V5, developed by Dassault Systèmes, in mid-2002 for usage in the Shape Design Office. In parallel, the company decided to employ the solution for mold design as well. The close relationship of DSF was important in the customisation of CATIA V5 functionalities.

CATIA V5 improves customer responsiveness, quality and productivity

Sidel's design teams have found CATIA V5's contributions far exceed the functionalities of 3D design. With the integration of Sidel's existing corporate know-how into CATIA V5, the company has extended the use of the design tool to include activities such as parameter setting for bottle bottoms and optimisation of shapes in accordance with Sidel best practices.



"Another asset of CATIA V5, which is of primary importance to us, is the quality of the surfaces, as well as the history of their design," says François Lesueur, project leader for new software selection for the Sidel Shape Design Office. "This facilitates modifications and provides a complete view of the design process. You can move back the limits of the complexity of a bottle design, while gaining in terms of the quality."

Responsiveness to customers is also important for Sidel. "We see the improved reactivity of the Shape Design Office to customer requests daily," says Céline Linhone, Shape Design Office manager. "Indeed, some customers provide us with digital files originating from various CAD systems. It is then necessary to rework these geometries in order to bring in our know-how in the field of stretch blow molding. CATIA V5 is also an improvement over our former tools in terms of surface quality, and because it simplifies modification existing 3D shapes."

CATIA V5 integrates with other design tools to improve mold design

Integration with existing in-house design tools was an important aspect in the selection of CATIA V5, especially for the Shape Design Office. "It is important for us that the vast majority of specific software applications can be integrated into CATIA V5 using CAA V5 development programmes," says Linhone.

The Mold Design Office often needs to revise the models of the Shape Design Office to include its know-how in machining and blowing conditions.

"This is why the possibility to modify and edit the history of the design supported the choice of a unique solution," says Lionel Dubos, Mold Design Office manager. "We now design our new molds on CATIA V5 and we hope to reduce the number of reference assemblies."

A smooth transition to CATIA V5

Sidel's designers found the transition to CATIA V5 to be smooth and simple and said its user-friendliness allowed designers to be productive right after the first training course.

"We have currently improved our productivity with regard to the modification of 3D models thanks to the associativity of the geometry, but we are impatient to discover the future possibilities of CATIA V5 in terms of fast design," Lesueur says.



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