



Energy Absorption Systems, Inc. Leverages Autodesk Inventor Series for Efficient, Cost-Effective Product Design

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Autodesk Helps Highway Safety Equipment Maker Streamline Workflow so Design Engineers Can Focus on Product Innovation

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Jun 16, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK), the world's leading design software and digital content company, today announced that Energy Absorption Systems Inc. (EASI) has adopted Autodesk Inventor(R) Series for its complete design needs. The solution provides EASI with the ability to automatically update all drawings when a product element changes, the capacity to evaluate design performance in advance of production and a seamless transition path from 2D to 3D. Autodesk Inventor Series, the world's #1 selling 3D mechanical design software, enables EASI design teams to create, manage, and share designs for efficient and cost-effective product development.

A subsidiary of Chicago-based Quixote Corp., EASI is the world's leading producer of highway crash cushions and other highway safety devices used by transportation departments and other customers throughout the United States and in 57 other countries. Completing product development and documentation in separate departments meant that changes to a specific part or a product required revisions to all related drawings, documents and models. EASI selected Autodesk Inventor Series so that design and documentation work is easily synchronized. Autodesk Inventor Series gives them the flexibility to create product development and engineering drawings within the same software environment. Using Autodesk Inventor Series, changes to a particular element automatically updates the 3D product model, so it remains accurate throughout the product lifecycle.

"For companies such as Energy Absorption Systems where product design is a matter of life and death, it's crucial to streamline design processes while ensuring quality and performance," said Robert Kross, vice president of Autodesk's Manufacturing Solutions Division. "Autodesk Inventor Series helps manufacturers easily test and evolve designs with greater potential for success at the physical prototype stage, and ultimately increase product quality at a lower cost of development."

Better Testing, Fewer Prototypes

For complex, data-intensive projects such as a truck-mounted crash attenuator with multiple moving parts, EASI relies on Autodesk Inventor Series to create an accurate 3D model that helps design engineers visualize product function to identify issues before working drawings are created. Because strict safety guidelines must be met before product government certification is approved, performing advanced stress analysis and testing ensures greater quality designs and fewer prototypes, resulting in significant savings for EASI. Autodesk Inventor Series is compatible with ANSYS stress evaluation software, so that engineers can test design improvements and gain greater certainty about design function once a product reaches the prototype stage.

"Autodesk Inventor Series gives us an edge in a competitive environment allowing us to create more effective designs by automating the work that was required to update an assembly when one part changed -- and that has cut development time considerably," said Pat Leonhardt, product development manager, Energy Absorption Systems Inc. "Performing stress analysis before the model leaves the department means we have the opportunity to reduce the number of prototypes built. We can avoid costly mistakes that might not show up until production is underway."

Risk-Free Transition from 2D to 3D

EASI's product development and documentation engineers have long used AutoCAD(R) software's drafting tools. Autodesk Inventor Series allows EASI to reuse legacy 2D designs created with these tools and even re-evaluate drawings to find opportunities for product enhancements. Developing new designs with Autodesk Inventor Series helps maintain 3D models that reflect the latest data, so that engineers can start work on new products or enhancements using up-to-date, proven designs.

"We needed to find a design solution that would please everyone and accommodate technology our teams were accustomed to using," said Phil Steiger, senior network administrator, Energy Absorption Systems Inc. "We looked at other products on the market, but Autodesk Inventor Series offered the best combination of performance and lowest cost of ownership. Standardizing on one package throughout the department saves us time and money, we have an easier time supporting one product versus several, and if one change is made to a specific model all of our supporting documentation is kept up-to-date. With all licenses on the Autodesk Subscription Program, EASI has access to value added tools and software updates and can plan for our IT budgeting more accurately. These factors combined are a great benefit from an IT management perspective. Overall, Autodesk Inventor Series had the best compatibility with existing data for re-use of designs, and clearly promised the easiest, safest transition to 3D design."

EASI engineers also can share accurate, up-to-date design drawings and data with other departments for compelling sales presentations and demonstrating complex concepts to customers. An added benefit of using Autodesk Inventor Series is the ability to create an animation of the parts working together which can be easily downloaded onto a CD and sent to a customer to visualize the products in action. Looking ahead, EASI anticipates integrating Autodesk Inventor with its ERP system so that part numbers will be linked to reference drawings in order to share design data throughout the organization.

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 available -- helping customers design better quality products, accelerate time to market, and achieve maximum project visibility and collaboration. Unlike other offerings on the market today, these solutions are easy to deploy and use, and help companies easily transition from 2D to 3D design. Autodesk's manufacturing solutions include Autodesk Inventor Series, the world's #1 selling 3D mechanical design software, Autodesk Inventor(R) Professional, AutoCAD(R) Mechanical and AutoCAD(R) Electrical software -- all with Autodesk(R) Vault data management capabilities built in; and the Autodesk Streamline(R) collaboration

service. In addition, customers can take advantage of widely available third-party applications purpose-built for Autodesk software.

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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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