

# Ashlar-Vellum Channel Partner Newsletter

## June 2007

### Snap-on True-fit Center to Open

Ashlar-Vellum has received final approval to open a support center for Snap-on Tools in Kiev. Snap-on Tools has long been an OEM customer for Graphite, using the software to design custom foam inserts for drawers in tool chests that fit each tool. The True-fit support center will provide drafting support to expedite the



design of those foam inserts as well as custom programming for Snap-on in close proximity to the Ashlar-Vellum development staff. Consulting contracts like this one provide a constant revenue stream to Ashlar-Vellum allowing

for more development resources. They also provide a wider internal customer base so that bugs can be found and fixed more quickly. Finally, they provide a nice commission or finder's fee to our associates who help secure these deals.

### Open Beta for Cobalt<sup>TM</sup>, Xenon<sup>TM</sup> & Argon<sup>TM</sup> v8

In an unprecedented move, Ashlar-Vellum has opened beta testing of Cobalt, Xenon and Argon on certain platforms to the public. Both current and potential customers can download and run the software. Customers who have upgraded to v8 can use their permanent codes. Prospective customers and those who are on a previous version must receive a two-week trial beta registration code from us.

Cobalt, Xenon and Argon are all available for the Windows platform for XP or Vista. For the Mac Power PC, Xenon and Argon are both available, but not Cobalt. The Mac version will also run successfully on the Intel Mac. Mac customers with a Cobalt v8 serial number can use it to run Xenon v8 temporarily until Cobalt is in beta on Mac.

**Open Beta Versions Available for v8**

Windows	Cobalt Xenon Argon
Mac Power PC (Works on Intel Mac)	Xenon Argon

### Crash on Launch Bug Smashed

The crash on launch bug which has recently plagued about 50 Ashlar-Vellum customers has been exterminated in all its mutations and the fix is now being compiled into upcoming service packs and hotpatch releases. Graphite v7



SP3 is the first to be released this month with the fix. Graphite v8 SP0 Hotpatch 3, and Cobalt, Xenon and Argon v7 SP2 Hotpatch 4 will be released with the fix in mid July.

## New Support Procedures

Ashlar-Vellum is implementing some new procedures offering a full range of free and paid technical support through our website, email and telephone.

### Support Tickets

Starting shortly, ALL interaction with our support staff must start with a support ticket. This system has several advantages to you as the VAR, to us and to the customer:

1. It provides an organized place to view all correspondence related to a ticket.
2. It establishes a quick communications link that is especially helpful for:
  - Communicating long filenames, download links, and registration codes, all of which are impractical and error-prone to deal with over the telephone.
  - Establishing an electronic link needed for sharing screens through Acrobat Connect should an issue need to be elevated to this level.
  - Allowing not only all of our support team, but also product management, channel partners, corporate management, and development to monitor issues and offer additional advice.

Tickets to initiate a support activity may be obtained free from our website or via email. A support ticket does not necessarily entitle a customer to free support. Customers who call without a support ticket will be offered the opportunity to submit one over the telephone for a US \$10 charge.

Each new issue will need a new support ticket. Calling without a ticket will not result in getting faster service via telephone. Our goal is to respond to, *though not necessarily resolve*, a question within four business hours (Monday-Friday 9am-3pm Central Time).

### Free vs. Paid Support

A variety of support options are available ranging from free to US \$29 per issue to US \$150 per hour depending on the medium and the age of the software.

	Email	Phone
Current Version	Free	US \$39
Purchased/ Shipped in past 90 days	Free	Free
One Version Back	Free	US \$39
More than One Version Back	US \$29	US \$39

### Email

Free email support is available for those on the current version or one version back with a support ticket. Those not on the current or immediately past version can gain assistance through email at US \$29 per issue.

### Telephone

Free telephone call backs are available to those with existing support tickets who have purchased a new license or upgrade within the last 90 days (or received a newly released pre-purchased upgrade).

Those outside the 90-day window can obtain telephone support with an existing ticket for US \$39 per issue.

### Additional Services

Ashlar-Vellum offers a number of additional services for customers who require emergency help, assistance reinstalling software on new computers or file translation services. See this quarter's *Design Explorer* for details.



## New Phone System

Ashlar-Vellum is madly working on the installation and configuration of a new Voice Over Internet Protocol telephone system. With the implementation of this new system we will become a more virtual organization. This new phone system will provide several benefits to you:

- It will be possible to have a low cost telephone number in each country so that you can be connected directly to our support, customer service, operations and sales departments.
- Those working remotely will be as accessible as those working in our building.
- It will facilitate us moving to 24-hour support services in the future.
- For a small amount you can purchase an extension so that you can look like you're part of our offices. Customers calling in can be routed to you directly through their telephone country code.
- Those calling for telephone technical support will have direct access to our support team in Kiev.
- Voicemail to email capabilities will provide better handling of messages and easier routing.



## Second Quarter Design Explorer Published

The quarterly Ashlar-Vellum user newsletter, *The Design Explorer* was published this month and sent to customers and prospects via email except in those countries where our channel partners are translating them into their own languages.

Pages 8-12 of the newsletter contain an updated list of the features, benefits and sometimes some extra information about the new things coming in Cobalt, Xenon and Argon v8.

There's also a longer article outlining Ashlar-Vellum's new support procedures and services.



## Meet Nisha Patel

Nisha helps out with IT, tech support and sales from our Austin office, where she's recently moved from Minnesota. Nisha has excellent experience with software applications on both Windows and Mac platforms and has managed large computer labs.



## Last Chance to Upgrade from 2.7

The deadline to upgrade old Vellum 2.7 and earlier licenses at a discount has been extended to July 31, 2007, simply to give

users who learned about it in this quarter's *Design Explorer* a chance to get their orders placed. An email was sent to all customers

holding these older licenses with contact information for the VAR of record for easy ordering.

## Xenon and Cobalt Trade-in to Graphite

In an unusual move, Ashlar-Vellum is offering Xenon and Cobalt v5 and v6 customers a chance to trade in their 3D modeling software for a license to Graphite v8. The rationale behind this is that many of these users only use the Graphite courtesy license to their software and don't really

want all the overhead associated with full 3D modeling. To that end an e-mail offer went out with two options:

- The standard, straight-across Xenon or Cobalt v5 or v6 to Xenon or Cobalt v8.

- The limited time opportunity to trade in their big Xenon or Cobalt v5 or v6 for a sleek, trim new license to Graphite v8 e-only for only \$495. Offer ends July 13th, 2007.

The emails listed the VAR of record with contact information for easy ordering.

## Virtual Production Update

We are continuing to move the production of our CDs, DVDs and printed manuals to on-demand production houses. We have found a source with facilities in both North America and Europe and are continuing to search for a resource serving Australia and

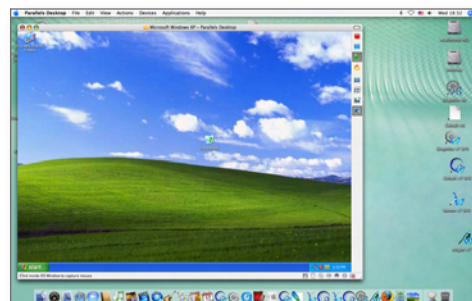
New Zealand. Using these facilities, disks and manuals can be shipped directly to the customer or to you, if you prefer. If you have localized your documentation or disks you can also set up your own account with these companies to print on demand, saving time, money and

inventory costs. More information will be coming as this unfolds.



## Warning: Parallels v3 Breaks Cobalt!

The latest in the Mac Intel saga is that version 3.0 of the Parallels Desktop for Mac has been released claiming to have high performance support for 3D graphics. Unfortunately, this software, which allows users to run Microsoft Windows in a window under Mac OS X, manages to break our 3D



Warning! Parallels v3 is not compatible with Cobalt, Xenon or Argon.

modeling software so that the Drafting Assistant doesn't show in Cobalt, Xenon or Argon. Please caution customers to continue to use Parallels v2. There is also a new offering from VMware that we are investigating. Apple Computer's own Boot Camp is still the best bet for running Cobalt, Xenon or Argon on the Mac Intel.