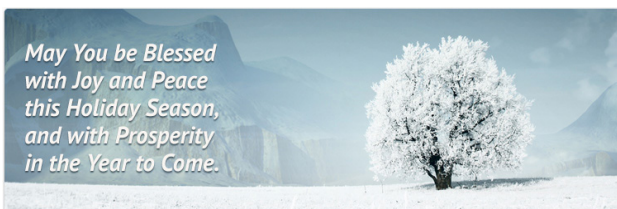# The Design Explorer

## The Ashlar-Vellum User Newsletter

Fourth Quarter, 2012

## Wishing You a Blessed Holiday Season

The Ashlar-Vellum administrative office in the U.S. will be closed December 24th through January 2nd. During this time, orders will be processed by our European office and registration codes sent to you via email. Please be sure to send orders to order.processing@ashlar.com. Shipping of physical materials will resume the week of January 3rd.

May You be Blessed with Joy and Peace this Holiday Season, and with Prosperity in the Year to Come.

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Requests for demo codes will also be monitored and fulfilled. Technical support will be handled as usual through our website. To start a support ticket, go to our Support Center or send an email to support@ashlar.com.

We wish you joy and peace this holiday season.

## Graphite™ v8 SP4 Released

Service pack 4 for Graphite v8 has been released and is available for download. If you're a Graphite v8 user (including courtesy licenses through Xenon or Cobalt v8), from within Graphite go to **Help>Check Web for Updates** to access this latest version. The new service pack includes:

- An updated PDF export feature which includes bitmaps.
- An enhanced PDF export feature which optionally exports visible layers only or current sheet only.
- An updated Dimension Tool Palette which resolves issues with macros and linear dimensions.
- No temp files in the drawing folder.
- An updated Save Palettes function that includes saving the screen position of the navigator palette.
- A new software installer preventing installation by non-administrators.
- An enhancement that launches multiple .vc6 files within the same instance of Graphite when double clicking on a file icon.
- Improved flexibility within the Undo system regarding customized system configurations.
- A bug fix for Windows 7 that corrects the printing of duplicate pages.
- Code Signatures for both Apple and Microsoft operating systems for streamlined installation.

**ASHLAR·VELLUM** ™
*Software that works the way you think.*

## Stealth Award Given

Great news! Last month we received word from a leading market research and analysis firm that Ashlar-Vellum is being given their 2012 Global CAD and Modelling Software Product Differentiation Excellence Award. Considering the 10,000 pound gorillas that are our competitors, that's pretty exciting.

Now the bad news. Unless we pay them $40,000 we are not allowed to even mention the name of the firm giving us the award, let alone receive any benefit from it, such as announcing it in a press release, using quotes from the report, using their logo on our website or in our newsletters, or even linking to their website. Never mind the thought of having copies of the report for anyone to read.

Ashlar-Vellum Winner of the 2012 Global Product Differentiation Excellence Award in Computer-Aided Design & Modeling Software

This is somewhat annoying since Robert and Julie Bou both spent a great deal of time and effort working with their analyst to give them the necessary information in a clear and concise way. In the end, they've basically parroted back our own words.

If we were Ford motor company the $40,000 would be a no brainer. Since we're not, that amount for their marketing hype is a little steep. Other colleagues have told us they've also received these types of awards from prestigious name research firms. So you can see how the game is played.

In the meantime, "mum's" the word.

## Graphite™ v6 Obsolete in April 2013

Graphite v6 licenses will be 10 years old in April of 2013 and will no longer be eligible for upgrades to later software. Earlier this month, those still on Graphite v6 were notified via email and offered a 20% discount on upgrades from Graphite v6 to Graphite, Xenon or Cobalt v8 until December 31st, 2012.



From January 1st until the 31st, 2013 will be offering 10% off the upgrade price. In February and March, v6 licenses can still be upgraded at the regular price. As of April 1st, 2013, Graphite v6 licenses will no longer be eligible for upgrade.



To take advantage of this sale to upgrade Graphite v6, contact your dealer, call Ashlar-Vellum directly at **+1 800 877-2745** or order through our web store using coupon code **C6V6V820** before December 31st, 2012, or **C6V6V810** before January 31st, 2013.

# Cobalt™, Xenon™ and Argon™ v8 SP3



New service packs for Cobalt, Xenon and Argon v8 was released this week and is available free of charge to all licensed users of Cobalt, Xenon or Argon v8. This new service pack includes:

- The addition of a message warning of possible compatibility problems with Windows 8.

- A bug fix eliminating the shift of certain types of objects after reopening the file.

- An enhancement linking to the v8 documentation addendum in the Help menu.

- A bug fix that re-enables adding of associative geometry to empty drawing views.

- Updated palettes for arrowheads and fill patterns within Mac OS X 10.7.3 (Lion).

- A bug fix so that files are saved properly after a sheet view layer has been deleted.

- A bug fix that allows original materials to remain when new materials are applied and undone.

- A bug fix to enable positive lower tolerances to be displayed on dimensions.

- A bug fix re-enabling the default settings for the select chain short cut.

- A bug fix eliminating a problem in Hidden and Hidden with Dimmed display mode selection sets when copying objects.

- A bug fix to properly handle Cobalt's constrained sketches when selected for extrusions and other actions.

- An enhancement to automatically resize the status line, message line and other interface objects according to the dock size and position.

- Improved flexibility with fractions and decimals for X,Y, Z coordinates in both Mac and Windows.

- Enhancements to the Drafting Assistant for better operation near the origin point, along construction lines and at the creation points of construction lines.

- Enhanced Preferences dialog box to accommodate extra long text lines.

- An updated PDF export feature which includes bitmaps.

- An enhancement improving printing of perspective views.

- The elimination of extraneous document redraws when switching documents.

- A bug fix eliminating crashes within the pen arrow sizes dialog box.

- An enhancement for improved compatibility with Windows 7.

- Code Signatures for both Apple and Microsoft operating systems for streamlined installation.

- A bug fix to expand the range of focal lengths supported in perspective views.

# The Art of Engineering in Cobalt™

*Troy Gleeson has been using Ashlar-Vellum CAD and 3D modelling programs since the mid 90's, first with Vellum Solids™, and then with its successor, Cobalt™. Working in industries as diverse as aviation to Broadway theatre, each time, Cobalt has been his tool of choice. As he tells it: "I use Cobalt for everything. It's simply the most versatile package I've ever worked with, especially for geometry creation." He continues:*

**"I find, after having worked with Ashlar-Vellum products all these years, trying to design complex geometry in any other program is like trying to do surgery without a scalpel, and the ability to generate, what is in parametric terms, an 'assembly' of many interlocking parts, on the fly and in one file, invaluable."**

A man of wide-ranging interests and many projects, Gleeson loves Cobalt's flexibility because it bridges the gap between art and engineering and works well in conjunction with other programs. Cobalt's Organic Workflow™ fits seamlessly into his design process, offering not only 3D modelling but also functions for art and engineering. For him, Cobalt has been a drawing program for creating technical illustrations, a modeller for creating 3D geometry from hand drawings, even a page layout system for a 400-page manual. He's used it in conjunction with Photoshop and also with SolidWorks for assemblies and finite element analysis.

Using Cobalt, Gleeson can maintain flexibility while designing the complex surfaces of the optionally manned composite aerial drones for Berkut Engineering & Design. Even under stressful conditions on the shop floor he can have a part ready for machining in less than half an hour.

Gleeson especially likes Cobalt's parametrics because they're on-demand. Unlike exclusively parametric modellers, such as SolidWorks and Pro/E, Cobalt gives Gleeson the ability to use parametrics only when he wants them and break those links when he doesn't. He likes this for two reasons:

- It reduces the complexity of the file, not only making it smaller in size, but also eliminating the interlinking relationships that are no longer required.
- It enables him to move a part without moving all of the creation geometry associated with it.
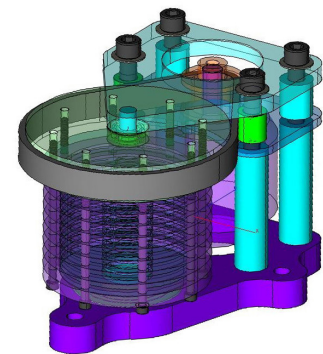
Finally, he likes Cobalt particularly because it has modelling tools that are not available in any other 3D modelling package.

He puts it simply:

**"Cobalt is just superior in terms of creating all this geometry. It's no where near as cryptic. It has better solid tools. It's got better surface tools. It's got better drawing tools. It's just got more, better tools."**



*Interactive Version*



This portable Elizabethan theatre packs in flat pieces like an exhibit and can be used anywhere, indoors or out.



Gleeson designed this fluid-dampened servo mechanism for a camera crane with a clutch pack that applies torque without requiring a large gear train.



This fluid-dampened, three-axis tripod for tactical shooting came out of technology that Gleeson originally developed for cameras cranes in the motion picture industry.



Gleeson's concept for the Griphon flying car.

**Background/Contact**

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