

Guide to Buying CAD/CAM Software Supplier Magazine – Mar/April 2015

Anne Charlton, Marketing Manager, Integrated Joinery Solutions



INTEGRATED
JOINERY SOLUTIONS

One of the most important decisions for any joinery business is the choice of CAD/CAM software. It is the brain that powers both design and production and can be a key factor in the success of your business.

To be competitive in today's market, especially manufacturing, you must be conversant with the latest technology that is available to assist your business, including software.

As more and more software solutions enter the market, the choices become overwhelming and it is difficult to wade through the oversupply of information to reach the right solution for your business.

As each business is unique you need to conduct your research on 3 key levels;

- 1. Software functionality**
- 2. Developer credentials**
- 3. Reseller credentials**

Remember you are not just buying a software product, you are buying into a long term relationship with both the developer and reseller of the software. So it needs to be a good fit for your business on all levels.

1. Software Functionality

Every business has different needs when it comes to the functionality of the software. A few of the factors to be considered are:

- type of joinery designed/produced
- construction methods used
- type of machinery connecting to
- budget

This is the hardest step in the process and thorough research needs to be undertaken. List what you need from the software as a starting point including where your current software is not meeting your needs and any parts of your process that need improving. If you formulate this as a checklist you can rate solutions and find the one that best fits your needs.

As a starting point it is possible to assign broad categories to software that tend to fit to different market niches:

Library Based Solutions; these are a drag and drop style solutions which are likely to fit better with businesses that work with standard joinery of set dimensions and styles. These solutions are generally an entry point for businesses and are priced accordingly.

Some examples of businesses that may suit this type of software are window, door, wardrobe manufacturers as well as standard kitchen manufacturers.

If this type of solution meets your needs ensure that the library of units offered is suitable for your business as it is may not be possible to work outside the provided library.

True 3D Solutions; these solutions allow you to draw joinery items from scratch. They may come with a library of units but their strength is freedom of design.

They allow the user to draw complex or curved shapes and thus are the solution of choice for commercial, shopfitting and custom joinery businesses.

There are vast differences in the solutions on offer in this category so be sure to follow a stringent process and ask the tough questions. Some of the questions you may want to ask are:

- is it designed specifically for the joinery industry
- does it have in built joinery functionality
- is it an integrated solution
- do you need additional software to run to machine
- are all dimensions fully parametric
- how easily can you make changes to existing models, especially complex or curved designs
- can you set up your own library units
- does it offer advanced shop drawing functionality creating dimensions, sections, detailed views
- can you amend the model from the shop drawing interface
- does it support a wide range of import and export formats, both 2D and 3D, to communicate efficiently with your business partners

Guide to Buying CAD/CAM Software Supplier Magazine – Mar/April 2015

Anne Charlton, Marketing Manager, Integrated Joinery Solutions



INTEGRATED
JOINERY SOLUTIONS

- does it understand production and support an efficient setout process that reduces double handling
- is machining visual, with full production information attached
- does it cater for your chosen construction method
- can you alter the construction method
- can you customise the toolbar
- does it have other modules that may be useful to your business such as quoting

2. Developer Credentials

It is vital that your software has a secure future to ensure that you gain a return on your investment. You need to research who is behind the development of the software and ensure they are a good fit for you. You cannot afford to invest in a solution that does not have the backing of a strong development company behind it. Below are some key questions to ask:

- What is the developers annual revenue
- How many years have they been developing software
- How many employees do they have
- How many full-time programmers work on the solution
- What is their business philosophy and does this fit with your goals
- How many resellers do they have in their network
- What % of annual turnover is allocated to annual product development
- What % of their workforce is allocated to annual product development
- Do they have a structured approach to product upgrades

If they are a small developer then you need to ask some tough questions to ensure that the solution has a long term future.

You need to know exactly how many developers they have working full-time on the software, how they plan to address a key member of the development team leaving and what their plan are for business succession.

The industry has seen businesses being stuck with outdated software due to small development companies closing down or not having the resources to keep pace with industry needs and advancements in technology.

3. Reseller Credentials

The local reseller of the software will be your main contact point. Purchasing the software is just the beginning. You will work closely with the local reseller and must establish a close business relationship that can be maintained over many years.

You are looking for a professional business that can work alongside your business to embed the software and provide ongoing technical support.

Some key points to consider here are:

- Are they joinery specialists that understand your business
- How many years experience do they have
- Do they just sell the software or do they support it too
- How many in-house employees do they have
- What is the ratio of sales to support staff
- Is support provided by the reseller or is it outsourced to another company or even overseas
- Is support provided by local joinery qualified technicians
- Do they offer a range of after sale services to assist your business such as setout, library building and consulting

Guide to Buying CAD/CAM Software Supplier Magazine – Mar/April 2015

Anne Charlton, Marketing Manager, Integrated Joinery Solutions



INTEGRATED
JOINERY SOLUTIONS



**Joinery software
with the right
credentials**



- Developed by Missler, a global company with 30+ years experience
- Developed for the joinery industry
- Design to Build philosophy
- In Built joinery tools
- Caters for range of production methods
- Links to all major machinery companies
- Supported by local joinery professionals with 15+ years experience

Your Joinery Automation Experts



INTEGRATED
JOINERY SOLUTIONS

31/20-24 Gibbs St, Miranda NSW 2228
sales@integratedjoinery.com.au
www.integratedjoinery.com.au
Ph: 02 9526 8300