



Press Release

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Build your own solutions with 'the graphical Google for engineers'

CADFind Sketch & Search can find 2D and 3D engineering drawings from a sketch and 3D CAD solid modelling environments and has now been released in a version that allows users to build custom applications to meet their own special business and engineering requirements.

The CADFind retrieval process is so simple that a company's wealth of past designs, including those only held in 2D formats, can be checked as a normal part of the way that the designer creates or modifies parts in their 3D CAD system. In addition, companies could save thousands of pounds in part design by allowing the user to search, retrieve and use geometrically similar parts from their database, based on a customer drawing, simple sketch and 3D models.

"I have used various versions of CADFind over the last three years," says CAD Designer Tom Tanner. "I've found it to be a great time-saving tool for doing my design and drafting work as it's easy to use and its automation means there is not much technical input required from me."

However, the most innovative element of the new programme is the facility which allows the user to incorporate CADFind's unique searching and database capabilities in their own stand-alone or web applications. This new application programming interface (API) is unique to CADFind and is currently unavailable in any other standard commercial package – domestically or internationally.

An example of the use of this API technology can be seen in a research website developed with Aston University to explore the way designers use graphical search systems. The website - <http://camac.aston.ac.uk> - allows users to search an on-line database using a CAD sketch or 3D model. This collaboration will help Applied Search Technology Ltd continue to create innovative products that reflect the market requirements as closely as possible.

"We are currently working on several different formats of the software that can be used by designers in many different industries," says Dr Doug Love, Research Director of the company behind CADFind: Applied Search Technology. "We want to bring in modifications such as 'cleaning-up' tools, better integration with CAD software and different ways of uploading parts – all to make the process of part retrieval easy and less time-consuming for the designer."

A workable demonstration programme of CADFind is available to download at <http://www.sketchandsearch.com>. If you would like any more information or would like to review CADFind, please contact Paul Burkwood on 07810125991 or email paul@astltd.com.

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Notes to editors:

Applied Search Technology Ltd was formed in 2004 by Doug Love, Jeff Barton and Neville Holmes as a 'start-up' through Aston University's Business Partnership Unit. It is currently based in Aston Science Park on the University campus. CADFind is the result of many years of research into part retrieval and classification and the system has been tested on genuine engineering databases of over 400,000 drawings.

The vast majority of current retrieval systems, like those used by product data management systems, work by using text descriptions. However, this causes difficulties when there are multiple types of part or parts which are the same but have multiple descriptions. CADFind works the way designers do - the user sketches what they want and CADFind locates it. Once a part is found the 3D model or 2D drawing can be loaded back into SolidWorks for viewing or modification. Interfaces are available that allow CADFind to interact with all the main 2D and 3D CAD systems.

Part coding systems (or Group Technology codes) are a proven technology and have been around for many years but they have always needed a skilled engineer to interpret the drawing and produce the code. Manual coding rates rarely exceed 100 parts per day per engineer meaning it would take a skilled engineer well over a year to code a modest database of 30,000 parts. With CADFind one click coding, no skill is required and parts can be added to its database almost instantaneously.