

# **Actify®** **DesignShare™ — Frequently Asked Questions**

## **What is DesignShare?**

DesignShare is a set of software applications built on top of Microsoft SharePoint. These various applications, composed of both “web parts” and server-based applications, interoperate to provide a complete collaboration solution for manufacturing information workers.

## **What benefits do I get from DesignShare?**

Using DesignShare allows manufacturing information workers to collaboratively find, use, share and manage product information of all types, including 2D and 3D product data, using a technology platform that you already have in house and on every person’s desk in the company – Microsoft Office.

## **How much does DesignShare cost?**

DesignShare is available in several packages, depending on the number of users you need to support. There are small packages for small groups or for trial implementations, all the way to company-wide packages that allow for unlimited users. In addition, we have both license purchase and subscription pricing. Please see your Actify representative for more details.

## **What is SharePoint?**

SharePoint is a Microsoft server product that is part of the Office Platform, and is fast becoming the de-facto collaboration solution for many manufacturing companies. SharePoint automatically creates and manages websites that are based around documents, meetings, projects, and teams and which are tightly integrated with the various Office client applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

## **Do I have to buy SharePoint?**

That depends on your implementation goals. SharePoint comes in two versions – Windows SharePoint Services (WSS), and SharePoint Portal Server (SPS). WSS allows multiple teams and projects to create multiple sites, but is limited to use on one server. WSS is available as a free add-on from Microsoft to any WindowsServer2003 machine. If however you have multiple instances of WSS-enabled servers that you wish to manage as a collection, then SPS is required to enable cross-site searching and single-sign-on. SPS is a licensed Microsoft product and you should get pricing from your Microsoft account representative.

## **What if I don’t know anything about SharePoint? Does Actify provide SharePoint installation assistance?**

No, Actify itself does not provide installation or implementation assistance. However, many Actify partners do, and your local Actify representative can help connect you with the appropriate partner for your needs.

## **If I already have SharePoint installed, does DesignShare require that I set up a new SharePoint installation?**

No! DesignShare was engineered to be added to any existing SharePoint installation, and requires no special version of SharePoint to be set up.

**What impact does DesignShare have on my SharePoint installation?**

Very little. There are a few files added, and very few that are modified. The details of these are outlined in the DesignShare Installation Guide.

**What exactly does DesignShare allow me to do?**

DesignShare currently provides the following functional capabilities:

- \*\*Uploading of native CAD files and/or assemblies to be published as .3D data for use with SpinFire Professional or SpinFire for Microsoft Office, or for direct use from within SharePoint
- Uploading of any project-specific information or data directly to any SharePoint document library concurrently with (\*\*).
- Management of the publishing queue jobs from within any SharePoint webpage
- Check-in, check-out, versioning, and change notification for any project file of any document type, including .3D files
- View, measure, and markup .3D files from within any SharePoint document library or web page
- Future versions of DesignShare will include form and workflow management (Version 2.0), information rights management, and intellectual property exchange management

**Is DesignShare a replacement for a PDM or PLM system?**

Absolutely not. PDM/PLM systems are “systems of record”, meaning that the data they contain is the “corporate master.” As such, change activity to this data must be strictly controlled to ensure compliance with both internal procedures and in some cases – even regulatory compliance.

DesignShare is designed to be used in conjunction with PDM/PLM systems, NOT replace them. A typical implementation involves determining how the data contained in the DesignShare system can be synchronized to the PDM/PLM system to ensure that the most recent “published” version of any data is available to the information consumers.

By putting some management around the collaborative activity that involves the use of product data, DesignShare can help with expanding the control and visibility of how and where product information is used. It complements PDM/PLM efforts to a high degree.

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## **Does DesignShare work with SpinFire Professional?**

Yes! There are two ways in which SFP can interoperate with DesignShare.

- There is a free plug-in for any SFP 8.0 or later license that allows you to check-in and check-out your .3D files directly from within SFP. This gives you all of the management capabilities of DS and allows you to “publish” rich packages of information for use by other DS users who may not have SFP on their machines.
- You also have the option of activating any .3D file from within any document library with SFP, which eliminates the need to “download” the data and then activate it.

## **Can I use DesignShare to provide my suppliers and partners access to my project information?**

Yes. SharePoint was designed specifically to allow for the creation of “extranets”, or websites that are exposed or accessible to people outside the company.

## **If I set up an extranet and allow my suppliers and partners to access the data, do they need a license of your software?**

No. DesignShare cares only about the total number of users allowed – not where they are located. So, your suppliers and partners would be able to log onto the extranet site, and access the product data you have made available to them, or if you decide to allow it, they can also push information to you into the site, or markup the information directly from within the site itself. No license is required.

## **If my suppliers or partners have SpinFire Professional or SpinFire for Microsoft Office, can they use it to access my extranet?**

Absolutely. They would be able to interoperate with your DesignShare site just as if they were employees. However, they may be subject to restrictions on access and usage if you have set up your extranet this way.

## **Can DesignShare manage my SpinFire data?**

Yes. DesignShare makes use of standard SharePoint document libraries. This means that you can use the check-in / check-out capabilities of DesignShare to ensure that only the checked out version can be modified. This prevents someone from over-writing good changes, or not having the most current version. You can elect to have versioning turned on or off for individual document libraries.

## **Can DesignShare notify me of changes made to information that I think is important?**

Yes. DesignShare uses the standard features of SharePoint to allow you to set “alerts” when a piece of information – which could be a document, a list, a discussion thread, or a library – is changed, added or deleted. You have full customization over how and when you receive these alerts.

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## **What about workflow?**

Today, DesignShare has no integrated workflow. However, that will be part of DesignShare 2.0, expected to be released in the spring of 2007.

## **Can I customize my DesignShare pages to look like I want them? Can I include my company logo?**

Yes. DesignShare web pages are in fact standard SharePoint web pages. This means that you can make any changes to the appearance of an individual site, or to all the sites as a group, as you wish. In addition, each page can be rearranged and have individual web parts added or removed as you see fit. All this is done from a drag-and-drop interface; no knowledge of HTML or web programming is required.

## **What about the DesignShare web parts themselves – can they be customized?**

Yes, to a degree. The DesignShare web parts are standard SharePoint web parts. This means you can make them available to anyone for use in any web page. You can specify how much “real estate” on the screen they occupy, where they are placed on the screen, and what actions should occur when they are used. You cannot however physically change the web parts themselves. In other words, they are “configurable,” but not “modifiable.”