

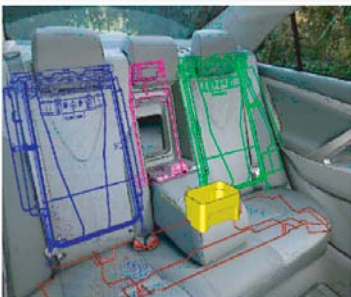
Automotive Seat Supplier Wins Gold with KeyCreator Direct CAD

Alex Products Inc. is a fully-automated tier 2 seating supplier to the automotive industry. With over 30 years of manufacturing experience, Alex Products provides its customers with the "Best of the Best" in automotive seating. Specializing in welded assemblies of formed wire, tube and stampings for interior automotive components, the company has become a recognized leader in the manufacture of the metal part of seat cushions, seat backs, armrest frames and visor rods.

Quality design capabilities and unique capabilities in machine building have set Alex Products apart from its competitors. Using cutting-edge technology, the company builds its own machines to handle even the most specialized customer request. Alex Products has been awarded the highest honors in the automotive supply industry by delivering customer satisfaction, quality, and excellence – one part at a time.

"KeyCreator acts as our critical front-end tool to the manufacturing process," said Shawn Ramey, Product CAD Engineer for Alex Products. "Our engineers take advantage of a broad range of product capabilities – everything from model import, visualization, and verification to model repair and editing. Then we are able to provide each of our downstream departments with data in their preferred format, ready-to-use thanks to KeyCreator."

Alex Products receives 3D models and drawings from customers in a wide variety of different formats. The most common CAD files being provided include IGES, STEP, UG, and CATIA V4 and V5. "KeyCreator is the easiest, fastest and most reliable tool for handling multiple file formats," explained Ramey. "In our business, we don't have a choice in the format or geometry our customer sends. No matter what we get, KeyCreator software has no trouble handling the file, even in wireframe. Unlike other systems in use, KeyCreator allows us to start working immediately, even if data is incomplete.



Alex Products also uses KeyCreator as a collaboration tool with their automotive customer's engineers. When the team at Alex Products sees an opportunity to propose changes to reduce manufacturing costs or structural failures, they will quickly model the changes for consideration. This collaborative approach has added value for customers and helped the company earn the Johnson Controls, Inc. Supplier Gold Award for nine consecutive years. The requirements for the award is quite stringent, requiring the company to ship millions of parts per year, defect free while maintaining a 100% record for on-time delivery. Alex Products is truly "The Best of The Best".

"The automotive industry is more competitive than ever, so it's critical to be fast. We meet that challenge by using the most reliable data to deliver quality parts," continued Ramey. "We spend time up-front validating that both the CAD model and the print match. If we wait to do so later in the process, it's too late and can significantly impact the cost and time to delivery. Because of the breadth of tools in KeyCreator, we can discover and resolve problems early in the process."

In order to remain the best, Alex Products is vigilant about deploying state-of-the-art technology. Company engineers use only best-of-breed CAD/CAM software at each stage of the manufacturing process. Every 12 months, the company evaluates each CAD tool for functionality, performance, cost and innovation. KeyCreator has proven time and again its value. Considered the right tool for the job, KeyCreator gets high marks for ease of use, model import flexibility, ability to work with any geometry (solids, surfaces, and 3D wireframe). According to Ramey, "we achieve real productivity gains with KeyCreator over parametric systems. The parametric approach is more appropriate for repeatable design processes, but does not excel when manipulating and using existing data or data outside the initial design environment."

Alex Products has built a reputation of taking on the most difficult and demanding projects. The company relies on KeyCreator software to deliver components built to the most rigorous customer specifications at the highest level of quality found across the industry. "Best of the Best" nine years running is a testament to the company's success.