

# MASTERCAM SHOP TALK



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## Introducing Mastercam Shop Talk

Greetings! *Mastercam Shop Talk* is a quarterly publication exclusively for our Mastercam Maintenance customers. This newsletter features news about the current Mastercam products and tips for more efficient use. ■

### TECH TIPS

#### **Windows® Updates and Google Earth™ Interfere with Mastercam**

Lately, we've been getting reports about customers who cannot run Mastercam after installing Google Earth or certain Windows updates. Some customers might receive an **Unhandled exception** error. The problem is that installing these other products corrupts the Microsoft® .NET Framework. To fix the problem, you need the cleanup tool. Please contact your Mastercam Reseller for the tool. Once you have the tool, follow these instructions:

#### **Solution:**

1. Download the **dotnetfx\_cleanup\_tool.zip** file to your hard drive.
2. Unzip **dotnetfx\_cleanup\_tool.zip**.
3. Run **cleanup\_tool.exe**.
4. Restart the computer.
5. Go to **Start, Programs, Microsoft Updates** and then choose **Custom**. It will automatically check your computer and it should list all the .NET Framework files.
6. Install .NET Framework 1.0.
7. Restart the computer.
8. Repeat steps 6 and 7 for .NET Framework 1.0 SP1, .NET Framework 2.0, and .NET Framework 2.0 SP1.

**Note:** *The cleanup tool is a Third Party Product and is not supported by us, but it has been used successfully by many customers.* ■ (TT0408)

## Mastercam®

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## Operations Manager: Resizing Full-Screen Window

Although the ability to resize the **Operations Manager Window** helps you manage your screen, it is possible to make the window full screen so that the edges of the window cannot be accessed. This prevents you from resizing the window. Without resizing the window, even if you re-dock it to its default size and position (to the left of the graphics window), it will resize to full screen the next time you move it.

Follow these steps as a workaround:

1. Double-click the title bar at the top of the **Operations Manager** window to re-dock it in the default position.
2. Drag it to the Mastercam title bar. This gives you access to at least one side of the window.
3. Manually adjust the window size.

**Note:** *If dragging the window to the title bar makes the top of the window unreachable, minimize and then restore the Mastercam window. The Operations Manager window will adjust.* ■ (TT0408)

## PDMWorks® and Mastercam

PDMWorks—an application for SolidWorks® that is now called SolidWorks Enterprise PDM—is a security vault that controls access to SolidWorks files. This vault lets you select a file and open it with a program. If you try to open a file from within the vault with Mastercam, Mastercam crashes while opening the file. You must first check the file out of the vault, and then it can be opened with Mastercam. ■ (TT0408)

## Translators, Add-ons, and .ACC Files

Can't remember which translator or add-on requires an **.ACC** file in the main Mastercam folder? You can find this information on our website:

- On our main Mastercam website, under **Support>Tech Tips>File Converters:**  
<http://www.mastercam.com/Support/TechTips/converters/converters.htm>

HASP customers who have purchased an add-on that requires an access code need to create an **.ACC** file in the root directory of their Mastercam installation. Follow these steps:

1. Open the **.DOC** file that was received. This can be either an e-mail or a printed document.
2. Copy the access code **only**.
3. Paste the access code into a blank text file using any text editor, such as Notepad.
4. Save the file to the root folder of the Mastercam installation. Use the file name that is specified in the **.DOC** file.
5. The result is a file with an **.ACC** extension. For example, with Mastercam Engraving, your **.ACC** file would be **engrave.acc**, and the only thing in the file would be the access code.


If you are unsure which information you need, refer to your .DOC file. Here's an example of the access code for Engraving:

```

Access code for Engraving

Access code file name is engrave.acc

Serial #           Access Code
-----           -
?????|           136837904265
    
```



NetHASP customers who have purchased an add-on do not need an .ACC file. However, the shortcut with the startup icon requires the proper startup command. Details can be found in the MCAMX3\_Installation\_Guide.pdf document that is installed in the \Documentation directory. For further information about Startup commands, please see the next article, *Manage Startup Options with Mastercam Launcher*. ■ (TT0408)

### **Manage Startup Options with Mastercam Launcher**

For many years, you've had the ability to customize how Mastercam starts up by adding startup commands to the desktop shortcut.

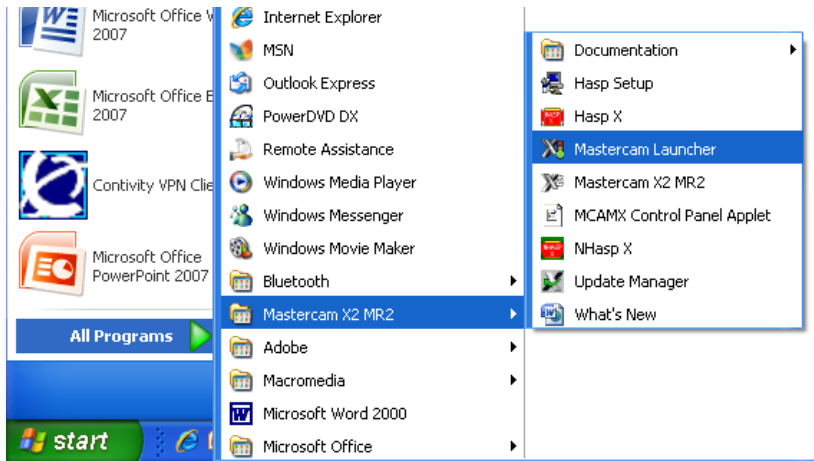
Mastercam X2 MR2 made it easier to do this without having a list of commands taped to your monitor. It included a new utility called Mastercam Launcher. The Mastercam Launcher is designed primarily for NetHASP clients and Mastercam Resellers. Use it to customize the startup settings for a particular Mastercam seat or license.

You can set the following Mastercam startup options:

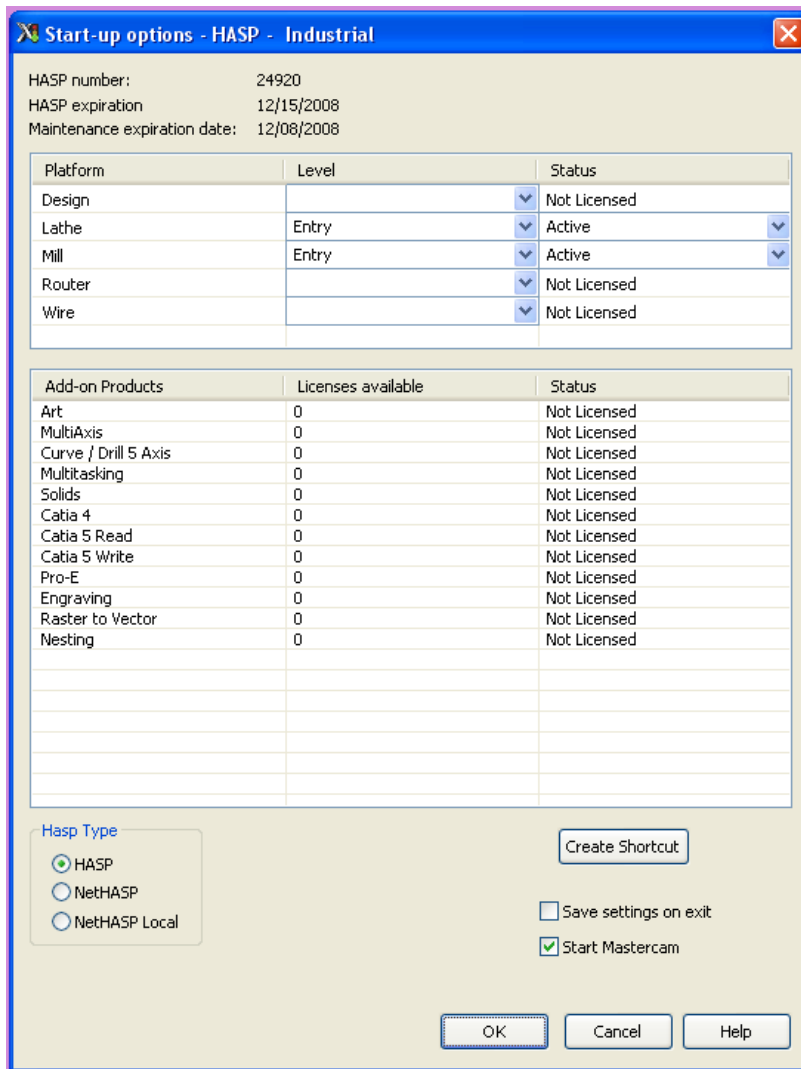
- Assign product/platform levels and availability, such as Mill Level 1.
- Edit the availability of Mastercam Add-on products and their status.
- Configure Mastercam to start with either a HASP or NetHASP.
- Create a customized Mastercam shortcut on the desktop based on the current settings.
- Save the current settings or open Mastercam when you click **OK**.

To start Mastercam Launcher, follow these steps:

1. In Windows, click **Start, All Programs**.
2. Navigate to your latest Mastercam install (this must be X2 MR2 or later).
3. Select **Mastercam Launcher**.



Then, simply select the start-up options that you want to use.



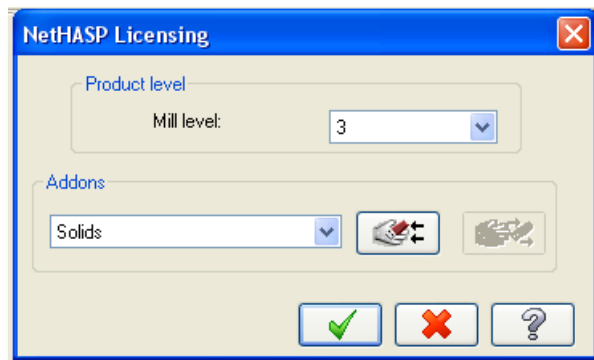
Click the Help button for more information about the fields and options. ■ (TT0508)



## New Tools to Manage License Usage

A new feature in Mastercam X3 that some of you will definitely want to take advantage of is the NetHASP® Licensing control. Use it to determine which licenses are in use or released during your session of Mastercam. To use it, select **Settings, NetHASP Licensing** from Mastercam’s main menu bar.

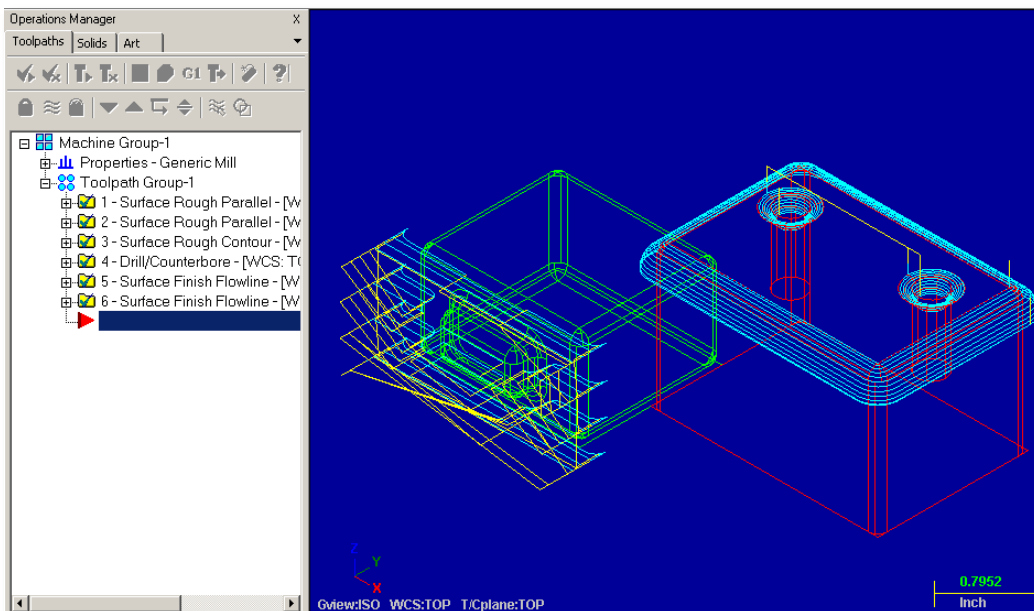
The NetHASP Licensing control lets NetHASP users change their product level or select an add-on while running Mastercam. For example, if you are using a Mastercam Solids license and someone else on your network needs to access the same license, you can “release” the license and let another user “grab” it.



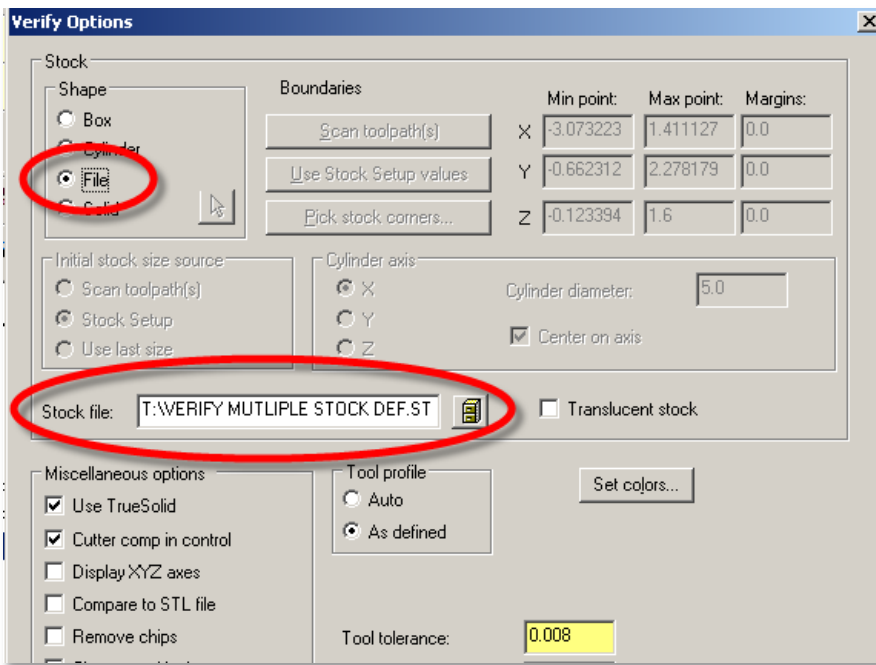
**Note:** this function is not available with standalone HASPs. ■ (TT0608)

## Verifying with Multiple Stock Models

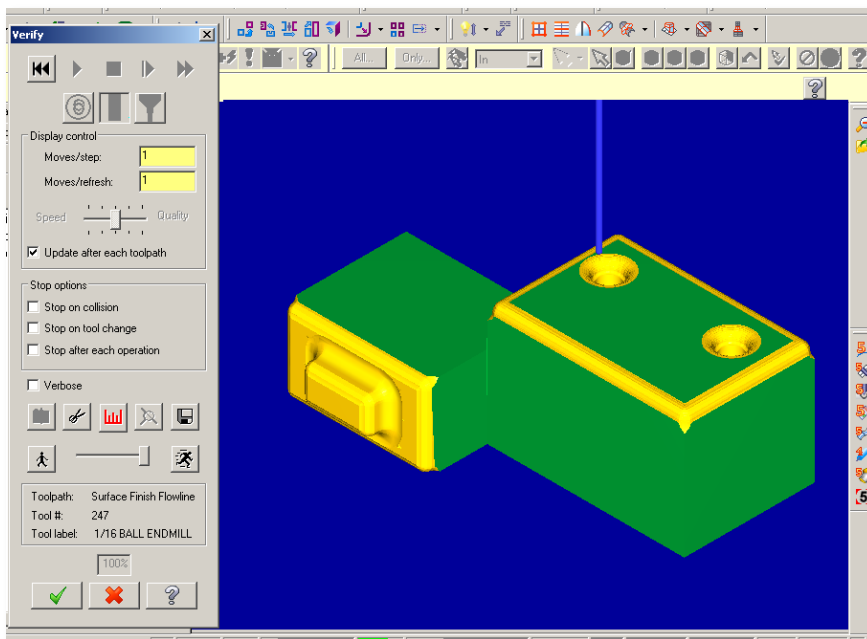
Did you know that you can use multiple stock models when verifying a part? In the following example we have two separate solid bodies that we want to use in a single **Verify** session:



For a part such as this, you can use multiple stock models in **Verify**. Simply create multiple solids and save them to a single .STL file. Then, in **Verify**, select the .STL file to define the stock.



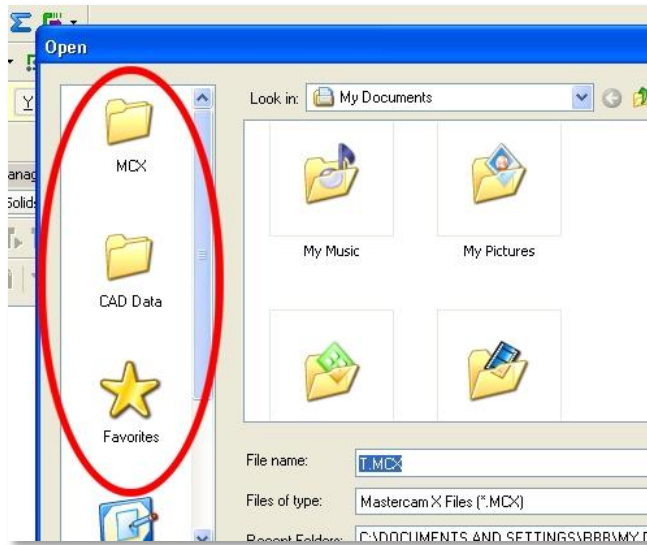
Verify as usual. Your multiple stock models should display as shown here:



Remember, you can also select an .STL file for a stock model in the Stock Setup tab in your Machine Group Properties. ■ (TT0608)

## Adding Folders to the Open and Save Dialogs

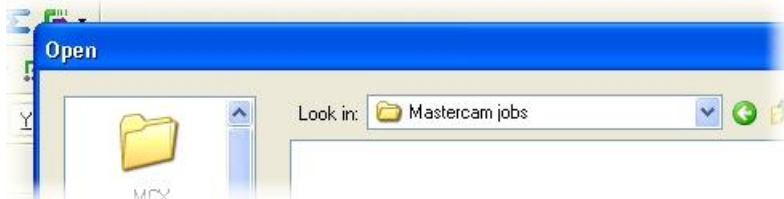
Mastercam X2 MR2 added the ability to use shortcuts to frequently accessed folders. These are available in the **File, Save** and **File, Open** dialogs.



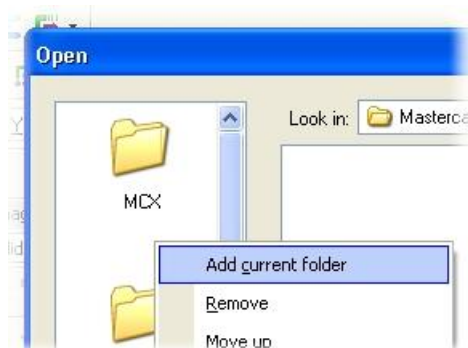
One click takes you directly to the folder instead of using the other navigation controls. You can add, remove, and rearrange this list of shortcuts to speed up access to folders commonly used.

By default, this pane includes **MCX**, **CAD Data**, **My Network**, **Desktop**, and **Favorites**. To add your own folders to this pane, follow these steps:

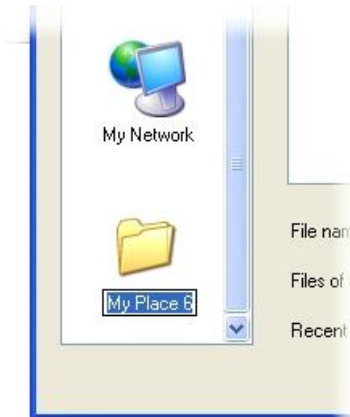
1. In either the **Open** or **Save** dialog boxes, navigate to the folder as usual.



2. Right-click in the left pane and choose **Add current folder**.



3. A shortcut named **My Places n** (where n is a number) will appear. Rename it to the desired name.



You can rename a shortcut at any time, using the **Rename** option in the right-click menu. Rearrange shortcuts to put the most commonly used items at the top with the **Move up** and **Move down** choices from the right-click menu. ■ (TT0708)

## HELP DESK

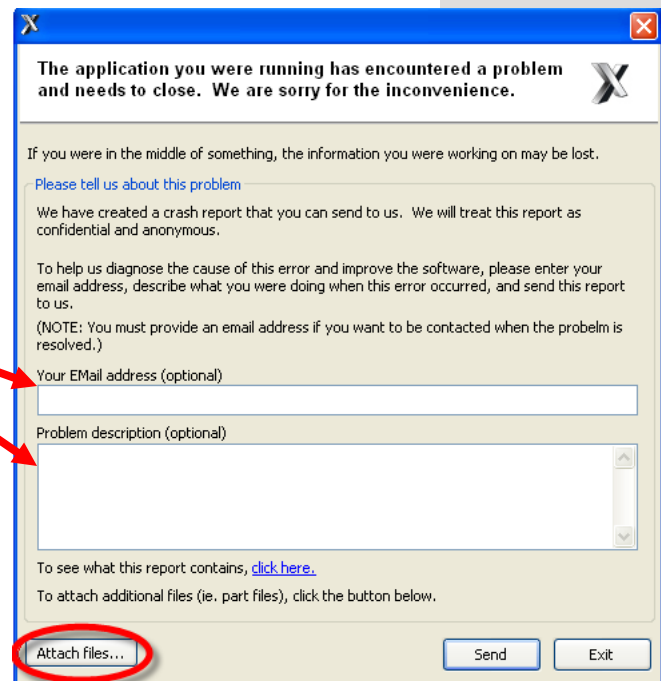
### *Tips for crash reports*

We use the information from crash reports to find where in the program the crash happened. Sometimes we can fix it from that information, but we also need to duplicate the crash so we can test it once the correction is made. We cannot do that without more information from you. Please help us help you by following these tips.

**Tip #1**—You will receive an automated reply when the crash report has been logged into the system, usually within 24 hours of when you sent it. If you do not receive this reply, either you did not include your e-mail address, the report was prevented from being sent (see Tip #6), or it was lost in transmission.

**Tip #2**—Include your e-mail address so we can contact you for more information. We also use the e-mail address to query the database.

**Tip #3**—Use the **Problem description** space to tell us what was happening just before the crash. Were you loading a file? Regenerating one toolpath or a dozen? Trimming an arc? There are often many paths to a particular section of code. Any extra information you can provide on exactly what you were working on before the crash is very helpful in sorting out the problem.



**Tip #4**—You can also attach the file you were working with when the crash happened. Click **Attach files** to select files.

**Tip #5**— One crash report is enough to get things rolling. If the crashes continue, create a Zip2Go file with the **.MCX** file that was open at the time of the crash. Send it to your Mastercam Reseller with the reference log number that was included with the automated reply.

**Tip #6**— Make sure that your office or workstation is not using a firewall that is preventing the report from being sent. If so, contact your Mastercam Reseller and they'll help you gather the necessary files. ■ (TT0408/TT0608)

## “Disconnected” SIMs

If you get the following message, there are a few things to check before contacting your Mastercam Reseller, which are outlined below.



## HASP or NetHASP

### General issues

- Ensure that the SIM is securely attached to the port. Remove and reattach it, to force Windows to recognize it.
- If it is a USB SIM, it should be lit.
- Make sure that the SIM is physically intact.

**Important:** *If the cover on your SIM has become loose or detached, please contact your Mastercam Reseller for replacement instead of repairing it yourself. If the cover is not attached properly or is otherwise forced, it could cause a short circuit inside the SIM that can overheat and catch fire!*

- Run **HaspX.exe** or **NhaspX.exe** and make sure that all the data is correct.
- Switch the port.
  - Try the SIM in a different port.
  - Try the SIM on another system.
- Check for conflicts with other software. In some cases, virus protection and spyware programs have caused conflicts.
  - Disable these programs. If the problem goes away, then you can decide whether to uninstall the other program(s) or move the SIM to another system. (Black ICE™ is one program with which we have had conflicts.)

## Power saving options—especially USB and hard drive

Your local power saving settings can also conflict with your SIM. Follow these steps:

### USB settings

1. Start Control Panel and select **System**.
2. Select **Hardware** tab.
3. Click **Device Manager**.
4. Open **Universal Serial Bus controllers**.
5. Double-click **USB Root Hub**.
6. Select the **Power Management** tab.
7. Turn off the **Allow the computer to turn off this device to save power** option.

### Power options

1. Start Control Panel and select **Power Options**.
2. Select **Power Schemes** tab.
3. Select **Never** for all the options and click **Apply**.

## Update Mastercam

- Update to the latest version of Mastercam. ■ (TT0708)

## *Groups and Large Files*

If it seems that a relatively simple part file has a very large file size, with only a couple of toolpaths and wireframe geometry, one possible reason might be a large number of geometry groups in the file. This typically occurs after multiple file merges. To solve the problem, delete the groups and resave the file.

Each time a file is merged, a group is created with that file's name. The groups make it easier to manipulate the incoming geometry. However, they also make the file much larger. For example, consider the following files:

- One part file, **A.MCX**, contains 4 rectangles and a basic contour toolpath. All rectangles were created in file A instead of merged in. The file size is about 394 KB.
- Another part file, **B.MCX**, also contains 4 rectangles and a basic contour toolpath. However, 3 of the rectangles were merged in from another file. The file size is about 413 KB.

If the groups are deleted from file B and the file is re-saved, the file size decreases to the same size as file A. ■ (TT0708)

## HOT TOPICS

### *New Machine Shop Up and Running*

We know you like looking at machines, and we are very excited about our new state-of-the-art machine shop in our new addition, so we've included some pictures of it for your enjoyment. This view shows the machines that were in our old machine shop: our Haas and Makino VMCs, and our venerable DynaPath knee mill.



This is our newest acquisition, a Tsugami mill/turn machine with bar feeder.



They will all be a great help as we continue to prove out Mastercam MultiTasking and develop applications support. ■ (TT0708)

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**Mastercam**