VirtualWork
A newsletter for customers and friends
10 Years (1994-2004)

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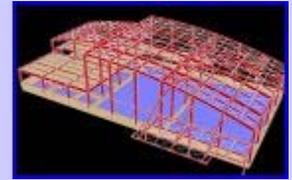
Snow on the Mountains

Change in the Weather
In Bozeman, MT we have had frost, snow on the ground, and there is now a bit of snow on the mountains. It is a reminder that life is short and time passes quickly. We need to focus on the things that are really important in life. With that in mind, do you really want to install Windows XP Service Pack 2?

Our Experience
The engineers at IES have been working very hard to bring you new products, improvements in existing products, and doing the hard things like testing Windows XP Service Pack 2 (XP SP2). We thought we had better share our experience with you before you jump headlong into your own snow drift.

We are currently *50-50* here with XP SP2. One machine installed it OK and with a few tweaks and quirks is basically working. Another machine died big-time and has had to get rebuilt from the ground up. **No big deal**, just 20 hours wasted reinstalling operating system, updates, applications, tweaking settings, and restoring data files.

A Help File Fix
On the machine that "works" with XP SP2, there are some very interesting behaviors that can be show-stoppers or just plain annoying. Suddenly all the IES help files (User's Guides in compiled help format) do not display properly. Instead of useful information you get "Action Canceled" a message coming from Internet Explorer when you try to bring up a help page. The solution it turns out is a new 'lockdown' on an old technology for displaying help pages from .CHM files. You can re-enable this technology with a simple tweak to your system registry. Download this file and Merge the .REG file it contains. (The .REG file contains a single entry to go into your System Registry, you can merge the file by double-clicking on it in Windows Explorer.)

Other behaviors may not be so easy to fix: Annoying warning messages when you try to run certain programs, or Displays that do not work properly because Windows XP has rejected your video card driver as "unsafe". If you have driver problems, you can usually install the latest

VisualAnalysis Reports
Hidden Features in VisualAnalysis, Part 4

VisualAnalysis Reporting Philosophy
The goal of VisualAnalysis reporting is two fold:

   1. At first, it is *Possible* to create the report you need.
   2. Later, it is *Easy* to recreate that same report!

It may take you a while to set up a perfect report with just the information you need. There are many options and settings that make initial setup rather difficult sometimes. But once you have waded through all these options and created the report, you can save it as a style. From then on, it should be as easy as using **Report | Report Wizard...** to get to your report again, even in other projects!

If you are constantly tweaking reports and making changes, perhaps you have yet discovered the *Report Styles* feature!

Reporting What You See
In VisualAnalysis, the right-click menu is the key to efficiency. This is true for reporting as well. When you are looking at a graphic window that has been filtered and adjusted to show specific things, you can get a report of these same things. If you want to report just some of the items you see, first select them, otherwise select

driver from your video card or printer manufacturer's web site.

Our Recommendation Here
You may want to wait a bit. If you have an older machine that has been upgraded many times, you might want to avoid this service pack altogether.

Microsoft is probably **not** going to release an update to this major service pack, but they will eventually document *'work-around'* solutions to problems that come up.

Pre-Election Poll

IES Annual Survey
The marketing department really wanted to dump $100 Million into a television ad campaign to bring out the customers for the IES Annual Vote (Customer Survey). Alas, we found only $19 left in the marketing budget (an hour of Terry's time?) so we decided to do a little web survey.

How We Work:

1. IES wants to **create** tools you need.

2. Therefore, we have to **know** what you need.

3. So, Please Tell Us What You Need! *(Survey is over)*

Its all very simple and should only take about 3 minutes of your time, so please help us out, then you can sit back and wait for IES to create the *"Instamatic Engineer Cloner"*, the *"Structural Profit Maximizer"*, or whatever other tools you have been fantasizing about this year.

Take the 3 Minute Customer Survey *(Survey is over)*

QuickRFooting 1.0 Enters Beta

Alpha Beta See?
Last month we introduced the QuickRFooting tool with an alpha test (the software is incomplete and undocumented), this month we have a beta test ready. The beta test contains essentially complete and partially tested software with most of the documentation. This version is also easily installed and uninstalled. Give it a try and use the built-in features to offer your comments and suggestions on this new tool.
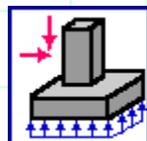
Pre-orders Accepted Now

nothing (click on the background of the window). Then right-click and choose the **Report THIS** command from the context menu, where **THIS** will depend on the Window type and what is selected.

Fixing Up a 'Broken' Report Style
Sometimes you have a report style that you made months ago, but it does not work quite the way you intended. If you find yourself regularly tweaking a report *after* you open it, then you may need to do a little maintenance on your style. Go to **Report | Manage Report Styles**, then select your report and click the **Modify** button. Perform your tweaking here and it will "stick" so you will not have to do it every time you open the report.

Updates

IES is regularly trying to ensure the highest quality software is available to our customers. We are striving to reach the place where everybody just loves to run our tools because they ALWAYS work!

To this end we have corrected a number of problems discovered in the last month and tweaked a few features. Here are the latest versions with highlights on some of the key fixes:

VisualAnalysis 5.1 Package. Fixed a few minor issues and a couple "big" ones:

Plane Frames with members rotated by a theta angle, could have given some strange design checks due to KL/r errors.

Plate Global results were incorrect for Envelope load cases and are no longer available. (Advanced level)

QuickRDesign 1.0. Made some minor tweaks to improve a few things. Also:

Load cases were getting

IES is now accepting pre-orders on the QuickRFooting product. You may purchase the new software tool on our web site or through the 800-707-0816 number and we will not process the order until the product is ready to ship, which we expect by the end of the month or the first week in October.

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'categorized' for deflection checks, so only the 'other' category was actually used.

There was a crashing problem if you were not also licensing VisualDesign 5.1.

To see all of the latest changes, to install your software on another machine or to just reinstall your software to be on the safe side, visit the Customer Install & Reinstall Page.

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Send Email to IES Support
Sales phone: 800-707-0816