virtualwork

a newsletter for customers and friends

Volume 11.2, Second Quarter 2005

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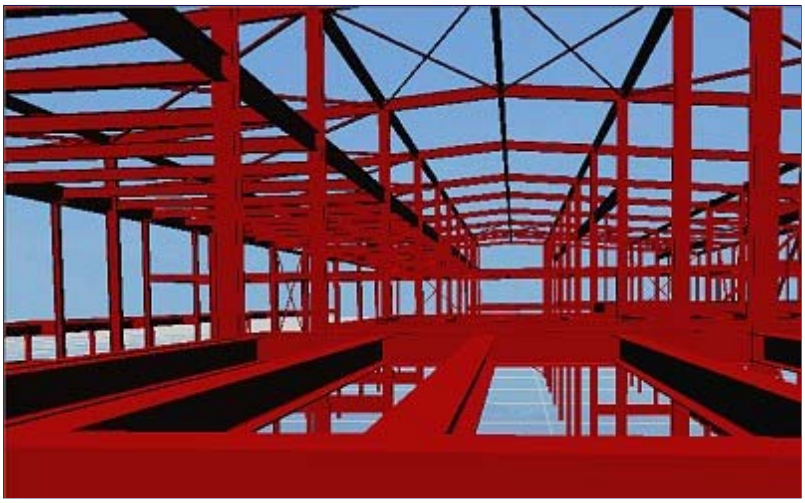
Visualize This!

Seeing is Believing

VisualAnalysis has always been about clarity, simplicity, and quality. Version 5.5 is the result of customer suggestions as well as frustrations with our previous releases. We envisioned our task over the previous year as one of fixing the most annoying problems customers were experiencing as well as implementing solutions or improvements for the **most exciting** requested features.

The result this effort is now available for free-trial and for production work. It has been tested, and retested, and beta tested. It is not perfect, by any means, but it is "good enough" to be much better than version 5.1 and orders of magnitude better than 4.0.



An Overview, A Glimpse

Physical Members or **Combined Members** introduced in 5.0 are now *automatic* and very handy! You can combine member elements into a single "combined" member for editing, viewing, and reporting, while internally the finite element analysis "sees" the individual elements. You can now split a combined member, and perform other operations that were impossible before. Makes modeling much simpler.

Automatic K Factors are now calculated for you. This is a real time saver for the design of columns in steel, wood, or concrete. Of course you can override the values if you have better ones.

Engineered Wood Design: LVL and PSL and more. Design structural composite lumber shapes with VisualDesign. Use the Shape Database Editor (now shipping with ShapeBuilder 4.0) to add any specific manufactured shapes you need.

Activation Explanation

Examinations of Expirations

IES is rolling out a licensing activation system with VisualAnalysis 5.5 (and all future IES products). The activation system requires that you 'register' your installation of our software on each machine. This will help us understand how and when our software is installed. It will help us keep the cost of software down and also provide the option of a "leased" software license with a hard expiration date.

What is Activation?

Essentially each time you install a new IES license key on your machine, the software is under a very short expiration period until you activate it. When you activate you provide IES with your name, company name, license key, and a unique 'Machine ID', and we return an activation number to remove the expiration.

What Activation is Not?

Activation is not an invasion of privacy or "spying". We are simply monitoring the each installations of software that we own. Our license agreement for single-users allows you to use the software on more than one machine (say one at work and one at home), but does not allow distribution of license keys. We are now choosing to

Achieve higher quality presentations with a completely overhauled **Picture View**. Cool new zoom and pan features, faster rotations, and it now supports selection and editing of model objects. Now you can check and correct member orientation errors visually! The printed window is also much more attractive making your reports shine for clients.

Read All about VisualAnalysis 5.5

There is so much more. Literally dozens of new features, hundreds of minor improvements and fixes. We have an upgrade guide available when you install the free trial. Or you can read it on the web site along with a more complete list of new features.

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Upgrade FAQs

Answers to Questions about VisualAnalysis 5.5

Q. How much is the upgrade to VA5.5?

A. Upgrade prices range are low:

Upgrade	Basic	Std. or Adv.
VA Only	$95	$225
VA Pkg	$175	$295

Q. How do I know which products I have?

A. Go to the Help | About VisualAnalysis menu item. It will list one or more of the following in addition to VisualAnalysis {Basic, Standard, or Advanced}:

- VisualDesign
- VisualTools
- Moving Load Tool

You license the "VisualAnalysis Package" if you already have a license for VisualDesign.

Q. Can I still run VA 4.x or VA 5.1?

A. Yes! We install these products in different folders and they all use their own files where necessary. They do share some data observe the process.

How to Activate.

Activation should normally be a simple click of a button and a 10-30 second wait while information speeds across the Internet automatically. In case this fails, or your machine is not connected to the Internet, you may email the information to IES and we will activate you 'manually'. You do not need to activate immediately, but you should do so as quickly as possible to avoid a lock-out.

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Updates

Bug fixes, defect corrections.

One, Two, Skip a Few!

New updates are now available for the following products. If you are a few releases back, now is a great time to catch up.

For a detailed history of changes in the programs please look to our release logs. To install the latest update please go directly to our web site and the Install & Reinstall page.

- VisualAnalysis 5.10.0021
- ShapeBuilder 4.00.0006

Planning Your Update

Please be aware that updates within a major version are free and highly recommended! The only exception to this is if you are under a deadline to get a project finished. In that case, following the old maxim: *"if it ain't broke, don't fix it"*, works as well for software as it does for cars.

Need to Re-Install?

If you ever find yourself needing to install IES software again, we would like to encourage you to reach for your old IES CD and place it gently under your coffee cup: they make wonderful coasters!

Then proceed directly to the Install/Reinstall page on our web site to install the latest release with all the bug fixes and updates.

files in IESCommonFiles, where the format or information has not changed. For the most part the systems are independent and compatible.

Q. Will VA5.5 open my old project files?

A. Yes, in theory. We have tested with a number of different projects and the '**critical information**' is guaranteed to migrate from old projects. There have been many low-level improvements in both file-format and data, so there may be a few items you need to 'reset' or adjust. If you have any major problems, send the project file to us and we will correct the problem in the way the software imports old projects.

Q. Can I save from VA5.5 to an older format?

A. Yes, VisualAnalysis, can save to VA5.1 format. The 'critical information' only is saved (no results or window layout). This is primarily **provided for emergency use** if there is some problem during the 'transition period', or to exchange a file with someone who does not have the latest release. Again, if you experience any problems, notify technical support as we have not tested all possible configurations, but we will work on any problems as they are discovered.

Q. New releases always seem 'buggy' is this one different?

A. Yes, we hope so, but we won't know for certain until hundreds or thousands of engineers start using it on a daily basis. We have tested this release more than any other previous release, and built upon ten years of experience and proven product technology. We have also "tightened the screws" on our procedures, used the best compilers, debuggers, and code-checking utilities available. We have instrumented this new release with **automatic crash reporting** technology, so that if it does crash, the software will automatically 'report home' so that IES engineers will know about the problems quickly.

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No web access? Call IES today for a replacement coaster! (The can also slice and dice in an emergency.)

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Beta Testers Rewarded

Engineering crash course!

Perhaps like like to see the dreaded "Application Error" message. Perhaps they find it **thrilling** to be the first to take advantage of new features. In either case, there are a few smart or **brave** IES customers who have paid a high price to help ensure that your analysis and design software is worth the money you pay for it.

IES is happy to announce that the following customers have earned a **free upgrade** for their stellar efforts during the past two months:

- Steve Brackman
- Michael Emde
- Jeff Johnson
- Arthur MacLeod
- Peter McCormack
- Steve McNally
- John Riley
- Terry Wolfe

Thanks guys!

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Quick Links:
Product Information & Pricing
Latest Updates
Secure Order Form
Online Technical Support
Send Email to IES Support
Sales phone: 800-707-0816

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