Proposed

1 min TIP

Seeding SolidWorks

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June 27, 2008

SolidWorks

In every failure lies the seeds of success - Deepak Chopra

- Those of us old enough to remember using CadKey and Pro/Engineer can also remember "Seed Parts" that you loaded at the beginning of every part to set up datum planes and other parameters.

- SolidWorks uses a similar technique where the user picks a template to start new objects

  - *SolidWorks drawing templates are very common but what about part templates?*

Location of Files

- Whenever you start a "New File" in SolidWorks, the contents of C:\Program Files\SolidWorks\data\Templates are displayed.
  - Actually it uses any directories listed in the System Options – File Locations – Document Templates.
- As a default, SolidWorks has three files here – part, assembly, and drawing.

- *There's lots of room for improvement to these 3 files!*

Drawing Templates

- Start a new drawing.
- Set the drawing format you match your company standard or customer.
  - As a contractor, we have 12 drawing templates for our own drawings, 10 customers, and a blank A size patent format.
- Set all the text heights, arrow head sizes, and units as you like.
- Save as "DRWDOT" in the correct directory.

  - *These templates improve consistency throughout departments since everyone starts out the same!*

Template Caution

- Drawing templates can and almost always do have a drawing format inside.

- Drawing formats do not have to have a drawing template.

- Changing a template does nothing to an already created SolidWorks drawing.

  - *You can apply (and reapply) a drawing format at anytime while you are working on a drawing – a template is only used once when you create a new drawing!*

Assembly Templates

- Start an empty assembly.
- Set all the system variables as you like them.
  - English and Metric are excellent options.
- Save as "ASMDOT" in the correct directory.

- *Next time you start an assembly, pick the template you need to increase your speed!*

Part Templates

- Start an empty part.

- Set all the system variables as you like them.
  - English and Metric are excellent options.
  - How about a cube part, a cylinder part, or a simple base flange for sheet metal?

- Save as "PRTDOT" in the correct directory.

- *Other CAD systems require the user to create three or more templates for micro, normal, and macro parts which SolidWorks makes unnecessary since the text and arrows are screen sized not part sized!*

Template Thoughts

- Consider putting the all your templates on a server directory so everyone points to the same ones.
  - As you make improvements to the templates, the next new files will always use the latest template.
    - Remember changing a template does nothing to the files that used the template to start since the template was only used as a starting point.