VisualMILL in Small Business

At MecSoft we pride ourselves on making software that is easy to use. Our goal is for our software to not only be affordable enough for small business owners, but also user friendly enough to be learned quickly. For Max Emmer, we’ve achieved this goal. Max is an independent 3D designer and CNC operator located on the Jersey Shore. Max has been a MecSoft user since 2005, and now uses VisualMILL to program a ShopSabre 4896 CNC machine. Max told us that using our software for the first time showed him it was possible to machine the ideas in his head, even before he owned a CNC machine! Now Max Emmer is a pro at what he does. Amazingly he has been completely self-taught through the internet - a true product of our modern era.

VisualMILL has gained the reputation of being extremely easy to learn, while still being powerful, and affordable. Max told us it was his third time around that he discovered the intuitive nature of VisualMILL. Since then, he hasn’t looked back. Being an Independent designer, Max has the opportunity of designing and machining a wide variety of different products and parts. Max produces for his clients anything from surfboard parts to signage, and even sculptures.

“Before purchasing VisualMILL I tried MasterCam but that program is not as intuitive.”

A few finished products by Max Emmer
Max of course uses VisualMILL as his only CAM software. To be more specific, he uses the PRO configuration (3+2 axis) of VisualMILL. Although VisualMILL comes bundled with MecSoft’s easy-to-use CAD program VisualCAD, many users have their own CAD platforms to design their 3D models. Max uses several, ranging from AutoCAD, Rhinoceros, 3D Studio Max, Mudbox, etc.

“VisualMill is the key component in going from a virtual 3D model, to creating commands for the cnc machine, to making it reality.”

Below is an image of a wood sculpture designed in 3D before being machined with VisualMILL.

As stated in Max’s quote to the left, VisualMILL’s accuracy and realistic tool path simulation, give the users the clearest picture possible of what to expect when they actually machine the part using the “g-code” generated by VisualMILL. This saves time, and of course materials too.
Max Emmer uses a ShopSabre 4896 CNC to machine all of his projects. ShopSabre is a CNC partner of MecSoft and VisualMILL has a post processor designed to work specifically with Max’s ShopSabre CNC machine with automatic tool changer. This allows Max to program all kinds of machining strategies with different bits with just one big g-code file.
“What you see in VisualMILL’s simulation is what you get, so you can be confident in the toolpaths you’ve created.”
Bodysurfing Hand Planes

What’s a body surfing hand plane, you ask? Well as the name implies, they’re used for bodysurfing. They help the rider get more speed and lift out of the water, while providing more control when riding the wave. For bodysurfing enthusiasts, hand planes are a must! Max shared some photos with us that show his custom made hand planes. Also, be sure to click the video link at the end to watch Max Emmer’s video on how the hand planes are made.
The display that Max machined to show off the hand planes
Once scanned, Max can manipulate the model using 3D Studio Max. This is done to finalize the design, before programming the toolpaths in VisualMILL.
Next, the 3D model is imported into VisualMILL to program the tool paths. Shown above is the simulation process.
And the milling begins!
Click the video to watch the whole production process of Max Emmer’s bodysurfing hand planes!