

### ARTICLE

#### Keyboard Shortcuts 101

by Joseph Riden

It's clear you are an advanced user when you work double-speed using key commands, without much mousing around. Mice are nice, but slow. They demand an extra effort in precision pointing and clicking to operate nested menus.

Solid Edge comes with standard keyboard shortcuts, pre-assigned. These handle operations more efficiently. Using keyboard shortcuts, you can model and draft much faster, maintaining better mental focus on your 3D model or drawing. There are default Solid Edge keyboard shortcuts listed in the help files under "keyboard," waiting to be discovered and put to use.

Let's check this out. In the *Draft* environment, go to **Tools, Customize**, and click the **Keyboard** tab. The *Customize* dialog window opens. There is a list of *Categories*, along with key assignments to *Commands*. For instance, *Ctrl N* is mapped to *File, New*. Hold down *Ctrl* and press *N*. All righty then-a new file opens while the mouse loafs.

But now select *View* in the *Categories* pane, and *Background Sheet* in the *Commands* pane. Nothing is assigned. A waste? Not really-this is the best part. You get to tell it how to work.

Click in the **Press New Shortcut Key** pane and press either *Ctrl* or *Alt*, along with a key of your choice. Then click the **Assign** button. The key you picked jumps over into the *Current Keys* pane. Voila! You have just assigned a custom shortcut that will flip the drawing to background mode when that key combination is pressed. Try it!

You can assign functions to each usable key twice, because there is a series for *Ctrl whatever*, and another one for *Alt whatever*. If you like, re-assign standard settings to make them more intuitive for you. Assignments can be done in each of the Solid Edge Environments.

How to learn and remember them? Enter your custom key assignments in a text editor and make a skinny cue card to place beside your screen. With practice, before long you will have them down.

Better yet, consider *starting* with that cue card. Print the standard, pre-defined assignments first, and learn a few each day. Then as you go along, add your new assignments using keys that are not already standardized. Most of the keyboard is available, which makes for a large set of shortcuts.

You still will have to use the mouse to select objects and to draw, but your load will be lightened considerably. To get an isometric 3D view you will press *Ctrl I*. Done. While you are looking at the view you want, your work mates go point, click, point, click, click and hold and slide the mouse, right-click. Then you discover you should switch right back to the previous view. You hit *Alt F5*. Done. It's on your screen. They go point, click, point, click, click and hold and slide the mouse . . .

Any questions? Master this keyboard shortcut thing, and you will soon be a CAD god in your department.

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