

Shift Happens!

LAST MARCH WHEN THE PANDEMIC HIT, we had to shift in a lot of different ways, didn't we? The lessons we learned and the actions we took in our personal and business endeavors during the early weeks of the pandemic may become a permanent pattern in the fabric of our lives.

It was jarring, almost immobilizing initially, but as a mom of two elementary school-aged children and also a president of a CAD/CAM software company, the priorities came into eagle-like focus for me pretty quickly—the health and well-being of my immediate family and our Mastercam family of employees, resellers, and customers.

As we checked in with members of our global Mastercam community, something else came into sharp focus. Shops we've worked with for years were looking forward, determined to come away with new ideas and retooled versions of already successful approaches. I've taken this to heart in all aspects of my life, both personal and professional.

Navigating new connective video platforms was both hair-pulling and sanity-saving during those early days of the pandemic—but we got used to doing schoolwork online. We got used to hosting company meetings, training our global resellers, and responding to our industry and education customers' needs, all online.

My guess is that some of these shifts will stick. Perhaps in education, any computer work will continue to be done from home, even when school is back in session. Distance learning at the post-secondary level will likely increase. We may continue to conduct reseller and customer training virtually. We may do less business travel.

The health tragedy and economic havoc of the novel coronavirus can never be minimized or forgotten. Yet, I am hopeful that whatever positives come from it will always be remembered, too. On the personal front, I now enjoy lunch

with my children every day. They are content and I'm content with having less—less to do, less to purchase, less getting in the car and going. Less has led to more—more moments together, enjoying the rhythm of our daily lives at home.

Online Displaces In-Person

Likewise, wearing my company president hat, our team grabbed hold of this unique opportunity. We reviewed the way we get in front of customers, dove deeply into the product we deliver, reconsidered many aspects of our business and shifted course in some areas.

These kinds of exercises are difficult to do when business is normal. We were focused on the next trade show, the next software release, the next reseller conference. A deadline was always looming.

For example, when the pandemic hit in March, we had conducted two on-site training courses in our Connecticut facility. Our team shifted quickly to continue the sessions online by posting content and coordinating the connection platform technology. As a result, we reached more of our resellers at one time. We weren't limited by physical location or size. Everyone was in the comfort of their own homes, able to ask questions and interact with each other. They had the stored content to refer to again at a later time.

We've done some fun things with our employees during the shutdown, too, such as keeping our culture of physical fitness going by logging in our activities. We even finished the Appalachian, Pacific, and Intercontinental Trails virtually!

We see now how vital human connections really are and finding new ways to still support and maintain those connections is key for us. We see the value of our global community not only as partners in the use of our software, but as sources of inspiration for our own improvement. ➔



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