

From: education@scwmetalclub.com
Sent: Saturday, May 2, 2020 4:45 PM
Subject: Email #4: Plasma CAM Rumors Addressed

Hi Plasma Art Cutters,

We hope you are taking advantage of the isolation time at home to learn VCarve Pro. We understand there is a rumor going around that PlasmaCam is going away.

FALSE - PlasmaCam is not going away. Having said that, we do not know how much longer it will be a viable program for use in the metal shop. The program is no longer supported. Consequently, we cannot guarantee that the program will work forever. It may expire soon, or it may continue to work for quite some time.

Additionally, we have a problem in the way PlasmaCam formats a DXF file. As addressed in last week's tutorials, DXF formatting creates a lot of unnecessary nodes. This is hard on the machine when cutting out the pattern. We are asking members to utilize the new VCarve program to clean up those nodes before cutting on the Laguna Machine. Members may continue to use PlasmaCam to design their patterns and export the PCM file as a DXF. Members can then import the DXF file into SheetCam and produce a TAP file for cutting on the Blaze.

We strongly encourage all members to learn how to clean up the DXF files in VCarve Pro and save it as a CRV file. The file can then be converted into a TXT file for cutting on the Laguna. This process eliminates the need to utilize SheetCam. Everything can be done within VCarve Pro and the pattern comes out much cleaner which is easier on the machine.

Please realize that the Blaze is more of a hobby machine than the Laguna. It will probably not last as long (under our large volume of use) as the Laguna will. We cannot get any support from the company that built the Blaze and we believe they have gone out of business. Even though we have backup parts for most breakdowns, and replacements can be done, the day may come that we are not able to repair it. When this occurs, we will likely purchase another industrial machine.

Vectric, the company that makes VCarve Pro has sold us a 'Makerspace License' designed for clubs like ours. It includes free updates and free version upgrades when they come out. We will not end up in the same situation we are now with PlasmaCam.

It would not be right and ethical to teach PlasmaCam to new members. So, PlasmaCam is **NOT** going away. But it will fade out with time. Feel free to continue to use it if you wish, just remember there is no longer going to be much support available for it.

Since we are addressing rumors, let us discuss another one. There is a rumor that drawing is much easier on PlasmaCam than on VCarve Pro. We have even heard that you cannot draw on VCarve Pro. That is only true if a member does not try to learn VCarve Pro. Most of the people we have talked with that have taken the time to forge ahead and learn the program, feel it is much easier to use than PlasmaCam. Some of these members have used Auto-Cad and PlasmaCam and most have been amazed at

how much easier and better VCarve Pro is to use. Joe and I have found that to be true. Trimming lines are unbelievably easy with VCarve Pro. Please have an open mind and give it a try. Again, no one is required to learn VCarve Pro and you may continue to cut on the Blaze.

Some members have suggested that we conduct a class on how to learn this program. We may do that someday. At present, we have possibly 60 to 70 members that may want to learn how to use the program and only 5 computers for use in the shop. A class is just not feasible at this time, not to mention the obvious, that we cannot even get into the club right now. So please bear with us and let us all make the effort to learn this program. We can do it!

One last thing, we hope our emailed updates have been helpful. As previously stated, no one is required to follow them. You may learn at your own pace as fast as you wish. Forge On! It is very learnable on your own. Do not wait for our updates or tutorial suggestions. You cannot mess up the program. YouTube and the Vectric website provide many tutorials. Just remember, a large part of them apply to woodworking, not metal cutting.

Thanks for letting us address these rumors. Please keep an eye out for our next email which will cover how to bring in bitmap files (jpg, bmp, pdf, etc...) and convert them into a CRV file format for editing and drawing.