



PROTOLABS

DIGITAL QUOTING PLATFORM

# WHAT'S CHANGING FOR CNC MACHINING?

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Enhancements to Quoting, Manufacturing Analysis, and Ordering

Our new digital manufacturing platform is an all-new experience that is more intuitive and modern than its predecessor in nearly every way. The goal? To make quoting and buying parts with us as easy as possible while further reducing the time it takes to get those parts, and ultimately, products to market.

And since change isn't always easy, we want to walk through some of the big differences and enhancements that you'll see when uploading your CAD models, requesting quotes and manufacturing analysis, and ordering parts for **CNC machining**. Let's get started.





## SIGN IN / SIGN UP

**My Account** will no longer be available with the launch of our new platform. But don't worry, you'll be able to sign in using your existing email and password. All previously placed orders will be available in **Order History** and quotes placed from 30 days prior to the new platform launching will be visible in **Project 0**. If you have uploaded or ordered previously but hadn't set up a password, you'll be asked to create one at registration. Again, all orders ever placed and all quotes placed from 30 days prior to launch of the new platform will be visible.

When you're signed into Protolabs, you'll find it's a clean and modern interface making it easy to search for parts, organize current and archived projects, and manage material information.

## UPLOAD

As mentioned, in order to upload a CAD file within the new platform it's necessary to have an account at Protolabs, if you don't already have one. But what's really useful here is you can now upload multiple parts in a single step. And you can now manage uploads in groups so you can clearly distinguish various parts and their revisions—effectively giving you project management capabilities. You can even share uploads with colleagues, which is part of the **Forward Quote** functionality.

The platform gives you the opportunity to upload additional documentation in support of parts, plus you can configure parts before analysis—saving you time further down the line. The entire interface looks and feels different. It's more intuitive and will help accelerate the whole process to order.

### ACCEPTED FILE FORMATS

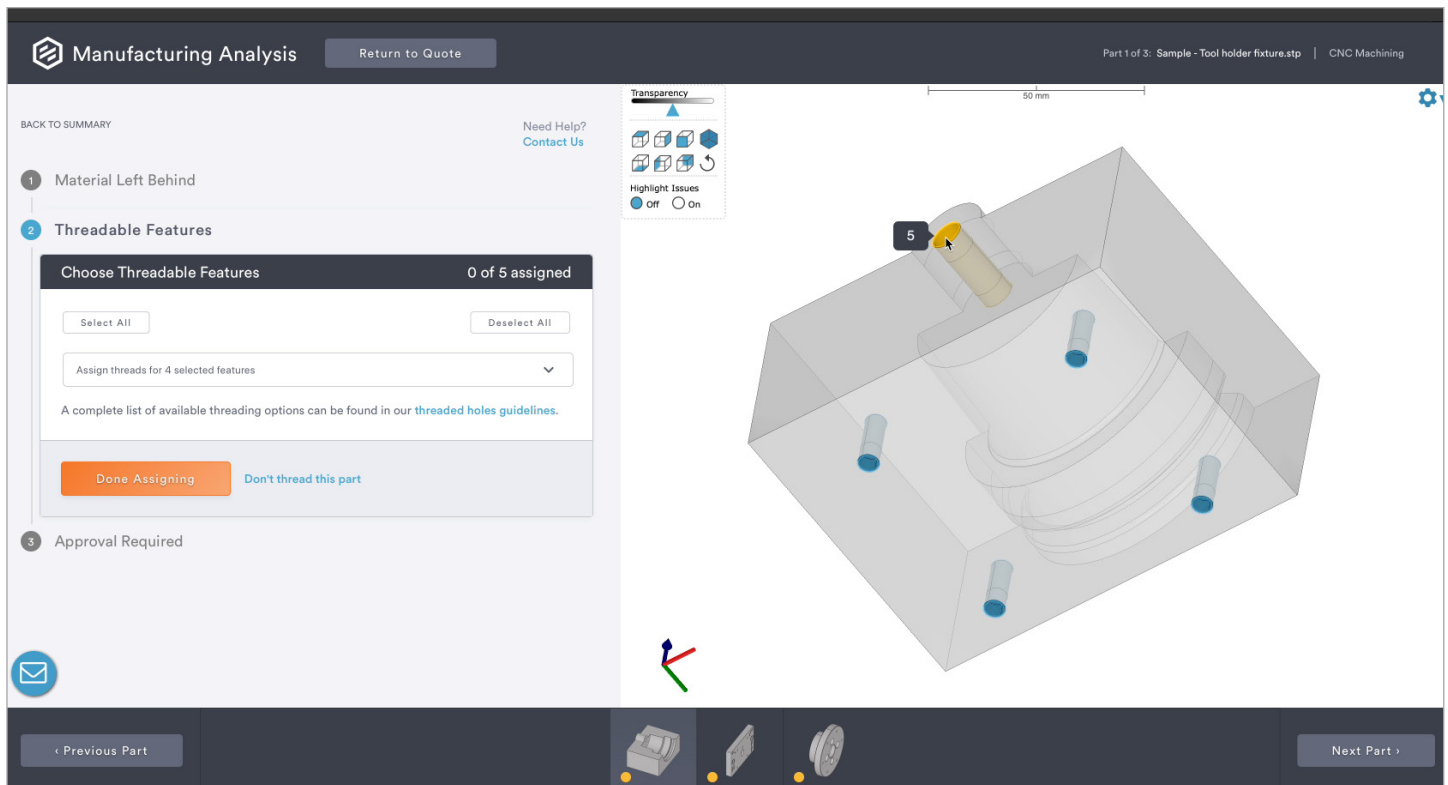
- IGES (.igs)
- STEP (.stp)
- SolidWorks (.sldprt)
- PTC Creo (.prt)
- Parasolid (.x\_t and .x\_b)
- ACIS (.sat)
- AutoCAD (.dwg, 3D only)
- Autodesk Inventor (.ipt)
- CATIA (.CatPart)
- Compressed folders (.ZIP) can contain any combination of the above model file types



## PART CONFIGURATION

A big enhancement with CNC machining is the ability to choose threadable features for your parts. The controls for this are really easy to use, as you can click on and assign threads to holes, and clearly see the pricing implications related to that. It's an altogether more fluid experience as you customize your machine parts.

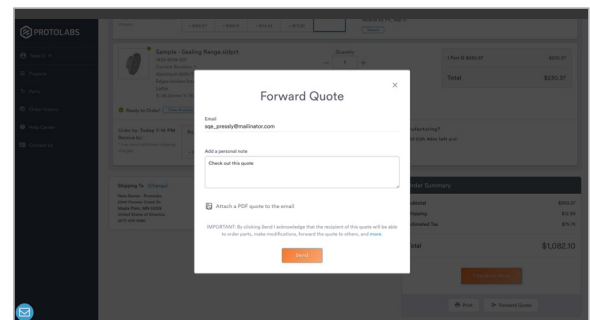
There are also a number of new elements within the quote configuration that speed up and simplify the process. For example, it's now possible to rename parts as you go through revisions to the design. You can also easily duplicate your part order should you need it in various colors. This previously had to be done on request, so this really speeds up the process. Also, if there are several part quotes in a project and one is holding up the order, it's possible to remove that part and create a separate order with it. This helps ensure you get all parts created and shipped as quickly as possible, while making use of the batch-quote functionality.



Revision control is easy as everything is tracked and stored, so earlier design versions are accessible. There's clarity on the design decisions, too, with the Forward Quote functionality allowing visibility for multiple users. Collaborators can adjust turn time, materials, finishing, and other options to see the real-time pricing impact.

What's more, an engineer can do all the technical work then pass it on to their purchasing department to complete the order.

Finally, there is support available to assist you in the technical quote configuration. This is accessible at sign in and consists of a Help Center, Tool Tips, and Live Chat.





## MANUFACTURING ANALYSIS

The manufacturing analysis functionality in the new system is a more comprehensive tool, but it's more modern and easier to use. There's more transparency with your parts, and more communication so you know exactly the status of your parts. It's important to review and respond to all aspects of the manufacturing analysis provided. There are default settings, so it's worth ensuring the configuration is exactly to your requirements.

One of the key changes is color indicators. Your parts can have many statuses as they progress through the configuration, analysis, review, and approval stages. Each of these statuses has a corresponding color code. Ultimately, the goal is to get your parts to the 'Ready to Manufacture' status, which is Green.



**Needs Configuration.** All newly uploaded parts begin with a white status. These parts need to be configured and, if necessary, sent for analysis.



**Manufacturing Analysis in Progress.** Parts with a gray status are currently being analyzed by our team to identify manufacturing limitations, lead times, and pricing. You'll receive an email from us when all the parts on your quote are ready for review.



**Ready for Manufacturing.** Green status parts have completed analysis and quoting, and do not require additional review or approval. You may checkout once all parts on a quote have reached this status.



**Review and Approve.** Parts with a yellow status are almost ready for manufacturing. We just need you to review the manufacturing analysis to approve advisories, accept gate and ejector layouts, and/or choose your threading options. Once approved, your parts will change to green status.

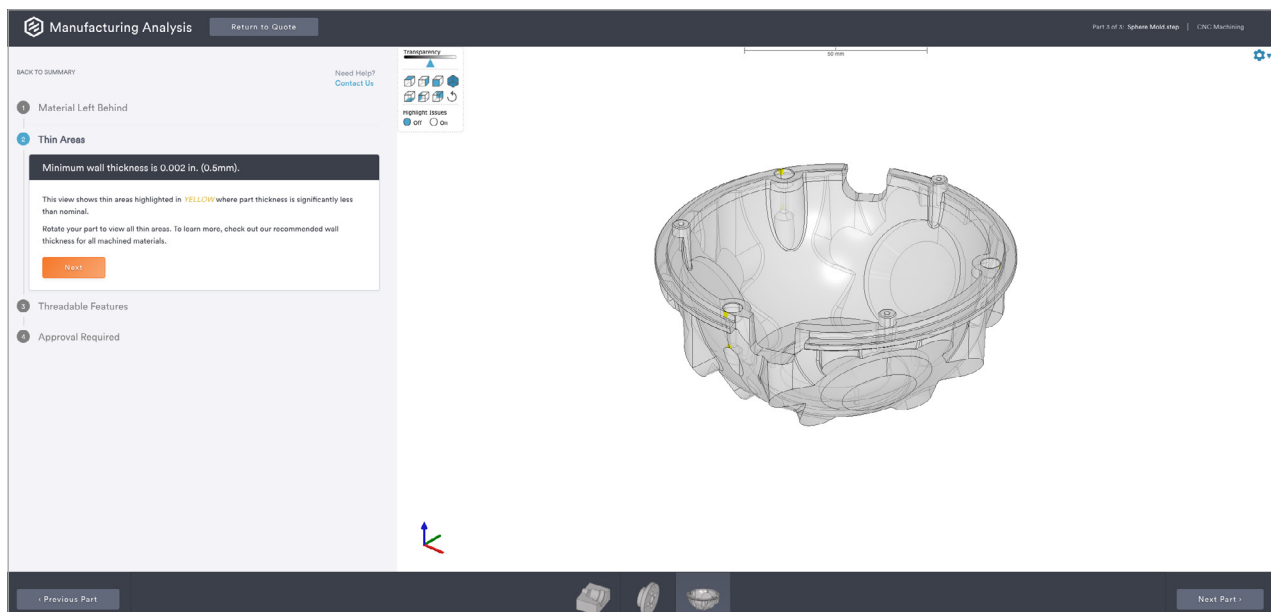


**Revisions Required/Unable to Manufacture.** Unfortunately, we are unable to manufacture parts with a red status. Please review the manufacturing analysis advisories to learn how you may modify your part design to match our manufacturing capabilities. Or contact us to review with our application engineers.



**Expired Quote.** Parts with a black status have expired pricing. Please resend for quoting.

It's really simple to navigate between the parts. There's no clicking in and out of quotes to view different parts, with all advisories and next steps visible and accessible. The whole interface is cleaner and simpler, helping to speed up the analysis process. And if more detailed feedback is required, this can be requested in the Add a Note field.





## ORDER + CHECKOUT

It's now possible to choose a delivery date through the **Receive By** calendar functionality where you see the cost increase or decrease according to when parts are needed. This is a useful time-saving tool for cost management by providing immediate pricing transparency. We'll also break down shipment cost per part order, with no hidden charges at all.

Shipping outside the United States will require the completion of an ITAR questionnaire, but this is a simple task that our customer service team can support you with if needed.

It's really simple. Instead of four pages on the previous platform, now it's just four items on a single page. You can include your own reference number on an order and the page won't time out so you won't lose what you've inputted.

Finally, you'll be able to forward your quotes to colleagues. It means you can get multiple people to edit and confirm just prior to order.

## PARTS RECEIVED

The format of all identifications have changed in the new platform—they'll appear differently on the label, specifically the part ID, quotation ID, sales order ID, production ID, shipment ID, and purchase order number. Also, if you've ordered a certified vendor material, it will be clearly labelled on the bag which certifications go with which parts.

Those are the CNC machining highlights and enhancements inside our new digital manufacturing platform. We hope you find it much easier and intuitive to quote and order parts with us.