

Expedition™ User Wins Top Gun Competition

David Graves of UltraCAD Design, Bellevue, WA was inducted into the PCB Top Gun Hall of Fame at the March 18-20, 2001 PCB Design Conference West at the Santa Clara Convention Center in Santa Clara, CA. Graves entered the Top Gun competition using Mentor Graphics® Expedition™ to complete his design.

A total of seven designers entered the stringent competition and were judged in three areas: board design (50% of the score), a written test (35% of the score) and a personal interview (15% of the score). Graves' reason for entering was primarily to evaluate his skills against the others, including PADS Software, Inc. PowerPCB and Cadence® Design System's Allegro® and Orcad® users.

One of the biggest challenges Graves faced while completing his design was delivering data output into a limited amount of storage space (i.e. onto floppy disk). An important factor he considered in his design was its intent, placing less emphasis on engineering and more emphasis on manufacturing. To ultimately reduce manufacturing costs and improve design routability, Graves placed parts on both sides of the board.



David Graves (left), 2001 Top Gun Competition winner, and Terry Lovell (right), Mentor Graphics user and 1999 Hall of Fame inductee.

The decision to use Expedition in his design was a natural one for Graves. At UltraCAD, he uses Expedition to solve the gamut of design challenges that face him daily in the service bureau industry. The key to meeting a variety of

unique customer requirements is the flexibility to easily set up a number of different libraries. According to Graves, "Expedition responds to the ever-evolving set of design challenges, and translates very well to the requirements of different companies. There's always a way to get it done with Expedition."

Glenn Wells, competition judge and 1999 PCB Top Gun Hall of Fame inductee, has only good things to say about Graves and his winning design,

It was a pleasure watching David perform during the Top Gun competition. Unlike many of the other contestants, who had to struggle and fight to get their designs to completion, David effortlessly completed his design and turned it in well ahead of the deadline. I wish every designer had the chance to witness the frustration and anguish of the Top Gun contestants who lost, not because they were poor designers, but because they lost the fight they had with their CAD tool. Using Mentor Expedition, David showed what a great designer is capable of doing when given a CAD tool that allows the designer to focus on design issues and not be distracted by tool quirks, problems and limitations.

Not to mention, Graves' extensive knowledge of PCB design practices and requirements, signal integrity issues and superior design capabilities set him above the rest.

Thirteen designers have been inducted into the PCB Top Gun Hall of Fame since the beginning of the competition in 1998. Graves is the seventh individual who has used Expedition on a winning design. In addition to his induction into the PCB Top Gun Hall of Fame, Graves has been awarded with a plaque and a leather bomber jacket.

