

Dear ANSYS Customer,

In a few weeks, you will be receiving the next release of ANSYS, version 7.0. This release contains many new features and the option to use a new environment for interacting with the ANSYS solver. This new environment, called the ANSYS Workbench Environment (AWE), is an important step in addressing many of the enhancement requests you have given us over the last few years. You told us that you needed parametric geometry access with all major CAD systems, and when we investigated adding this to PREP7, we found that it would be impractical. So we began the development of the new pre- and post-processor for ANSYS. The complete replication of PREP/POST capability will take a few more years, but since so many of you asked for this capability, we decided to release this capability with ANSYS Version 7.0 before it has the complete set of capabilities that all of our customers will require. These enhancements are part of your maintenance upgrade, so you will be provided this environment at no additional cost.

You might ask, "Why release a feature before it is 100% completed?" The answer is that we have established a connection to PREP/POST such that many users can benefit immediately from the new capabilities, and we wanted to get your feedback on what our priorities should be and what changes should be made. This new environment is an addition to PREP/POST, not a replacement. We are continuing to add functionality to PREP/POST, and we will be supporting it for many years into the future. You can decide when AWE is ready for you, and you can help define what it looks like. The AWE is a more productive, easier to use interface, but today it does not contain full functionality.

ANSYS began the development of the AWE with the objective of greatly enhancing the productivity of you, the user. Your needs have changed significantly over the last ten years, and we wanted to provide you an updated environment for interacting with the powerful ANSYS solvers. We introduced this new environment to our DesignSpace user community with the 6.0 release last year. The response from the user community was overwhelmingly favorable, so we decided to make this capability available to all ANSYS users now. We will continue to aggressively expand the capabilities of AWE, and we expect that users will migrate to this new environment when it is capable enough for their simulation needs. We encourage you to try the AWE and let us know what you think and how we can improve it. We have designed the AWE to use the same Connection product license as ANSYS, so you can use your existing CAD interface license with AWE. With the use of a capability we call the ANSYS Command Window, you can even use your existing APDL commands. The AWE is available on Windows and Sun and HP systems. You will be able to enable it as an option during installation, and you only need an additional, no cost license key if you are using supported Unix systems.

Now that the foundation for the ANSYS product line has been established, we will be modifying our six-month release strategy. We will continue to release all products every six months, but the ANSYS Classic Environment (our current ANSYS product line) will only introduce new features every October release. At that time, we will upgrade the ANSYS Classic Environment, our solvers and DesignSpace to include new features as well as error corrections. In the April release, we will only add error corrections and minor new features. We will continue to aggressively enhance the AWE and related modules every six months to make sure that all products keep current with the latest CAD releases. This way, we can quickly respond to user feedback and more rapidly complete the development of the AWE.

Our goal is to provide you with high quality products having rich functionality. We hope that this new release procedure and product vision will meet your needs. The introduction of the new AWE user environment is an exciting step forward for ANSYS and you, our users.