

Moving from OrCAD® or PADS® to Altium Designer

In a world where design processes are converging and new low-cost reprogrammable devices are having a major impact on the future of PCB design systems, Altium Designer transcends the barriers imposed by point-tool solutions such as OrCAD® and PADS®.



The future is unified

Traditionally, board-level design, FPGA design and software development have been treated as independent processes each carried out in separate design environments. Moving into the future, this point tool approach will increasingly present a barrier to efficient electronic product development.

Unlike other design tool vendors that offer loosely-connected point tool solutions, Altium removes the barriers between different design disciplines by effectively unifying what have traditionally been seen as separate design flows. Altium Designer brings together hardware design, software development and process programmable device design within a single product environment.

By unifying design, engineering teams can collaborate more effectively with each other, as well as others within and outside the organization, speeding up the overall design cycle. A unified design environment gives your designers the freedom to innovate and to approach electronics design in new ways. This opens up new avenues with which to capitalize on the latest technology developments and devices, both today and in the future.

The electronics design landscape is changing

The way electronic products are developed is fundamentally changing. The availability of highcapacity, low-cost programmable devices is opening up new ways of thinking about design, allowing more intelligent, lower-cost products to be designed within shorter development cycles.

Moving functionality into the 'soft' realm brings innumerable benefits to the design process. Critical design decisions can be made later, products can be brought to market earlier and upgraded in the field and functionality can be added to the product in software without adding to the overall product cost.

To maintain a competitive advantage in today's fast evolving market, it's crucial to embrace changes in design methodologies and adopt product development tools that allow you to harness the opportunities created by this change. Altium Designer supports these developments at a fundamental level by offering a new approach to electronic product development that exploits the latest technology and methodologies in an intuitive, efficient design environment.

With Altium Designer you'll never be in danger of being left behind as technology moves forward.

Future proof your organization

At Altium we believe that the future should be available to every engineer, designer and developer. With Altium Designer you get a complete and cost-effective design system that can be deployed throughout your organization with the confidence that your engineers will always have access to the latest design technology.

We are committed to the ongoing product development and improvement of Altium Designer. The latest technology is included in the product as soon as it's developed, and made available to all Altium Designer customers. We don't have any artificial 'premium/entry-level' product distinctions to protect, so with every Altium Designer license you'll always get access to all the features and capabilities you need.

- Unifies hardware, software and programmable hardware design within a single application
- Is equipped for using the latest design technology
- Has hardware/software co-design and highly developed transitioning tools built in
- Has sophisticated document and design data sharing capabilities and centralized project management
- Is continuously developed and updated with Altium's latest technology
- Has full database library capabilities and is version control ready
- Provides ONE solution to take a design from concept to completion.

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Smooth transition from OrCAD® or PADS®

Migrating from OrCAD® or PADS® to Altium technology is a straightforward process with Altium Designer's unified data and file translation features. Altium has created extensive systems and features within Altium Designer to make the task of successfully transitioning from other systems as easy as possible, with a minimum of disruption to productivity. The result is our highly-developed Wizard-based design file translators that guide you through the import process for all design documents – including libraries – while managing the relationship between them.

Altium Designer's translators import all documents in one operation and include specific support for both OrCAD® and PADS® design and library files. With a series of simple, interactive steps the Import Wizard processes all file types to automatically create ready-to-use Altium Designer projects and integrated library files, while accurately processing essential design elements such as polygon pours, text positioning, simulation data, design rules, layer mapping, project structure, and schematic/PCB synchronization.

The translation features include:

- Import wizard to smoothly guide you through the import process
- Batch import of multiple projects for rapid migration of large sets of design data
- Import engines intelligently handle translation and object mapping
- Single pass import of combined OrCAD® Capture / PADS® PCB projects
- Compatibility with PSpice® simulation models.

Altium supports you all the way

As part of Altium's commitment to making electronics design easier our website provides a wide range of support and community-based information to help you become – and remain – productive with Altium Designer. This extends to resources that assist you to make the smoothest transition from OrCAD® or PADS® to Altium Designer.

The Altium resources can be accessed free of charge and include:

- Extensive Knowledge Base giving you instant access to an ever expanding database of articles about current technical issues, tips and other up-to-date information
- Forums linking you directly to other Altium customers, developers and engineers who are able to monitor and respond to your requests
- Learning Guides giving you step-by-step explanations on how to get the most out of your design environment
- DEMOcenter that hosts a wide selection of short Altium Designer demonstration videos that walk you through its extensive capabilities
- TRAININGcenter that includes training videos, training manuals and Altium's online training courses.



Altium also provides a wide range of flexible customer support options that deliver on our commitment to provide the backup you need. Altium's renowned Global Customer Care Network (including localized support in most major centers) and cost-effective training options are ready to help you become successful with Altium Designer.

With Altium, the level of paid maintenance and support is entirely your choice, giving you the freedom to tailor the degree of support to suit your needs and budget. You have independent choices of Maintenance, Software Assurance, or if you prefer you can simply purchase new software releases as they become available.

- Low capital cost – our solution is affordable to all companies because we amortize development costs over a large customer base
- Flexible support and upgrade options – choose the way you want to upgrade, maintain and support your system
- Training to suit all – from full on-site training to self-paced web-based training, we will help you get up-to-speed quickly and cost-effectively
- A complete solution 'out-of-the-box' – we give you all the technology you need right out-of-the-box, with no hidden high-cost extras to purchase
- High return on investment – we continually develop new technology to keep you productive and allow you to get the most from your design tool and