PanelSpec 3.0

General Usage Manual

In-Depth Instructions for Expert Level Use
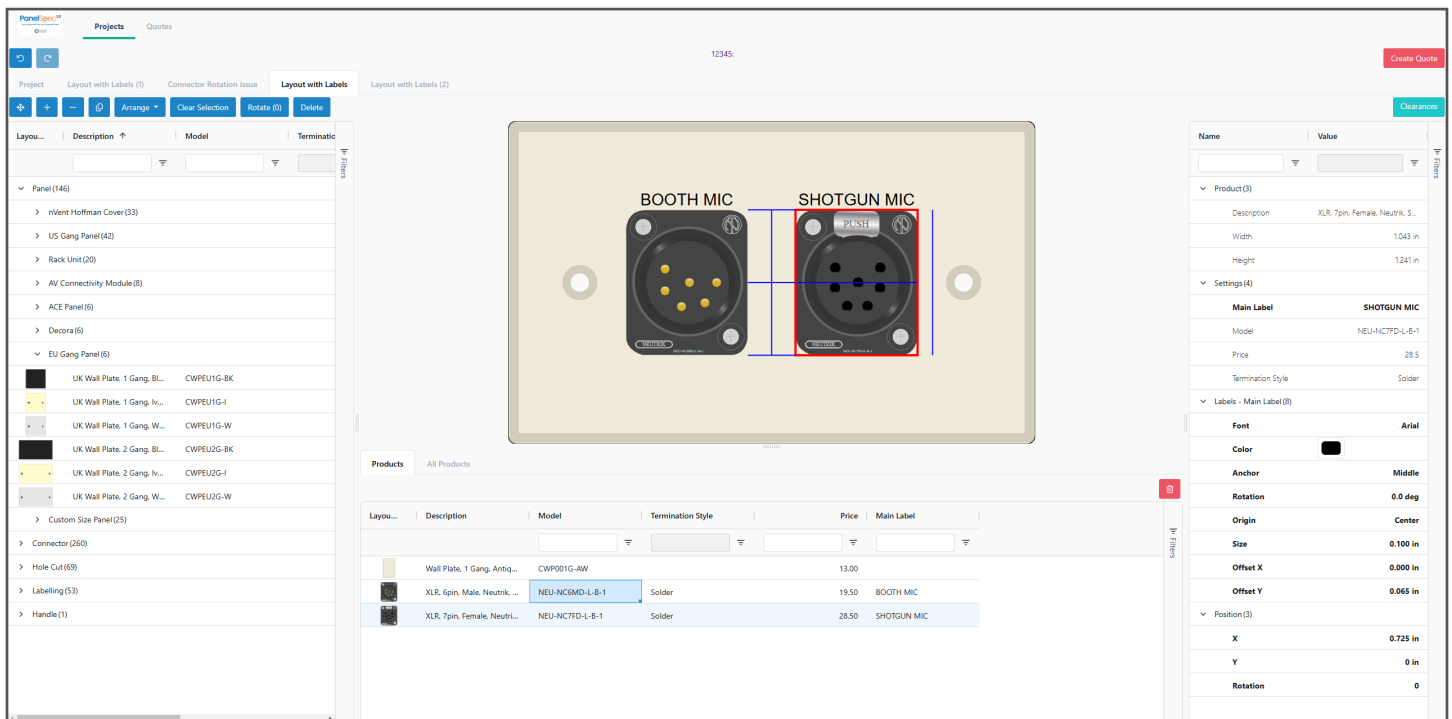
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v1.5

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Introduction

Welcome to Covid's Panel Spec 3.0 Software! Panel Spec is a free online tool designed to make creating custom wall plates and rack panels straightforward and accessible without the need for expensive or complicated software. In version 3.0 we're introducing new features with advanced functionality and an improved user interface for a much smoother experience.

This manual provides detailed instructions on how to use the software, covering its features and options. Whether your project is simple or complex, this guide will help you navigate the process of designing and quoting your panels.

In Panel Spec 3.0, you will have access to a large variety of connector types including feed-through, keystone, solder and pigtail. Name brands include such options as Neutrik™, Switchcraft™, Leviton™ and Covid's own extensive line of connectors. Panels are manufactured in either aluminum or stainless materials and are available in standard sizes as well as custom configurations. Finishes include anodized or powder coat and are available in a variety of standard and custom color options.

Important Note: To avoid confusion, going forward in this manual **Panel Spec 2.0** and **Panel Spec 3.0** will be referred to **PS2** and **PS3** respectively for simplicity.

If you have any questions not covered in this manual, please reach out to our sales team at:
sales@covid.com

Making an Account

In order to begin using Panel Spec 3.0, you need to create a Panel Spec 3.0 account. This account is separate from your Covid.com login and your Panel Spec 2.0 login.

Beginning with Panel Spec 3.0's launch, all Panel Spec 2.0 accounts will be ported to 3.0, and if you already have a PS2 account you will be able to login to PS3 with the same credentials. Post launch, if you make an account on PS2, you will need to manually make a new PS3 account.

Important Note: Projects and designs do not carry over from PS2. PS3 is an entirely new program with a different, but greatly improved approach to plate design. As a result, however, old designs will not be compatible. PS2 is not going away though, so you'll always have access to your old designs.

After creating an account, if you want to change your account details simply click on your username in the upper right corner of the screen. A drop down menu will appear, click on the **Account Details** option to access your account info and make any changes.

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The Main Interface

With PS3 comes an all new interface, designed for maximum functionality while remaining simple to use. When you first login to PS3, you will be brought to your **Projects Tab** (Fig. 1). In this tab you will find every single one of your projects of which you can sort and organize based on various categories. If you're looking for a particular project, each of the category columns can be searched within via their search bars.
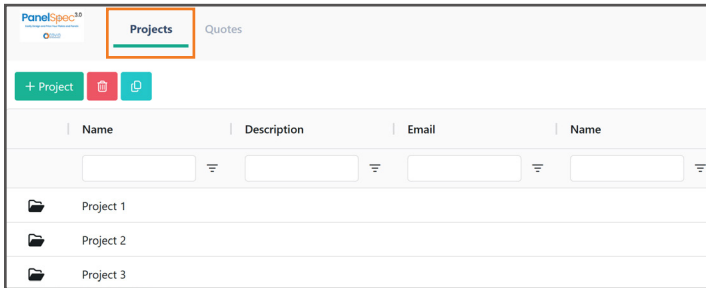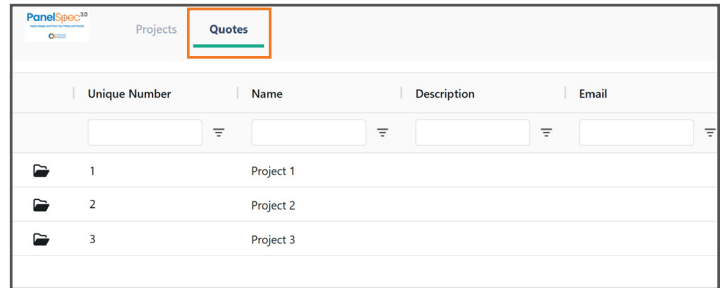

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Just to the right of the **Projects Tab** is the **Quotes Tab** (Fig. 2). In this tab you will find every quote you've ever generated using PS3. Like the **Projects Tab**, this section can be sorted and searched in the exact same way. To access an item from either of these tabs, simply click the **Folder Icon**.

Staring a New Project

To create a new project and get started designing, click on the green **+ Project** button near the top of the **Projects Tab** (Fig. 3).
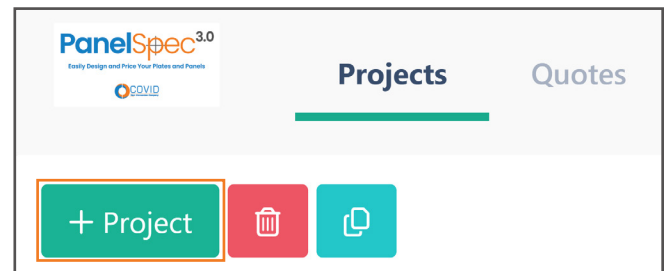

Fig. 3

A new window will appear allowing you input all of your project details (Fig. 4). Fill these out, and they will all appear on your final quote.

Important Note: Within the **Settings Tab** of this window you will find the option to choose whether you want the labels on your plate to be **Engraved** or **Printed**. Choose whichever your project requires. If left blank, the project will default to being printed.
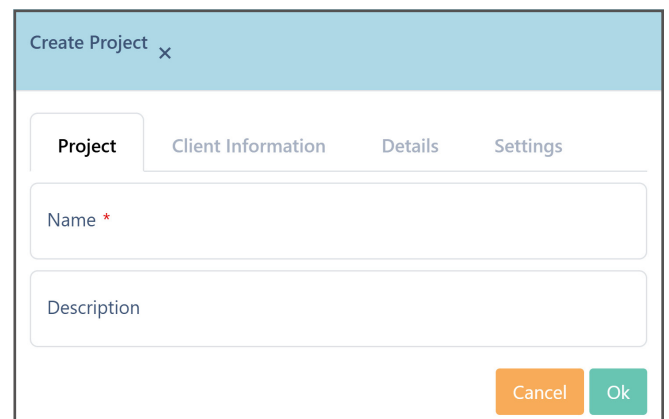

Fig. 4

The Main Interface

Once you create a new project, you will be brought to the project interface. Here you can make changes to your project's information, access your projects drawings, view a preview of your quote, and view the users who currently have access to this project (Fig. 5).
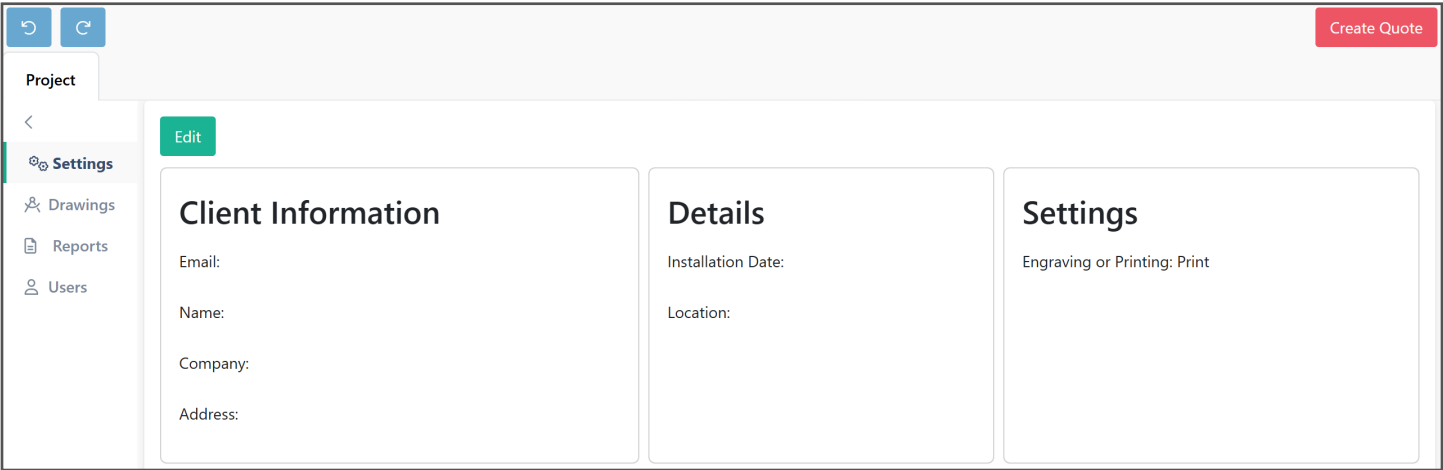

Fig. 5

Starting a New Design

When you are ready to begin designing your plate or panel, click on the **Drawings Tab** on the left side of the screen. This section displays all of the drawings you've made in this project. Once you're within this tab, click on the green **+ Layout with Labels** button, and then name the design (Fig. 6).
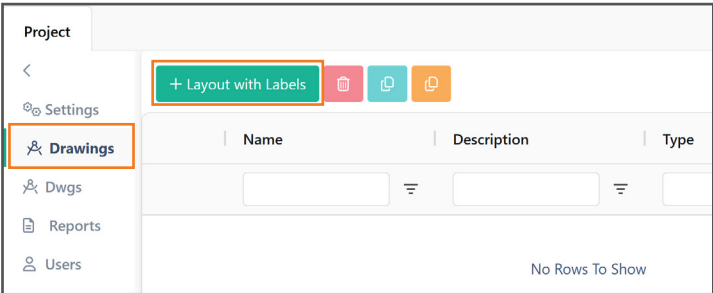

Fig. 6

The Design Interface

Once you've added a **Layout with Labels**, you will be automatically directed to the design space where you can begin designing you plate or panel. In this space, there are three important sections that you need to familiarize yourself with. The **Product Selection Panel**, the **Project Products Panel**, and the **Product Properties Panel**. You can find all of these highlighted below (Fig. 7).
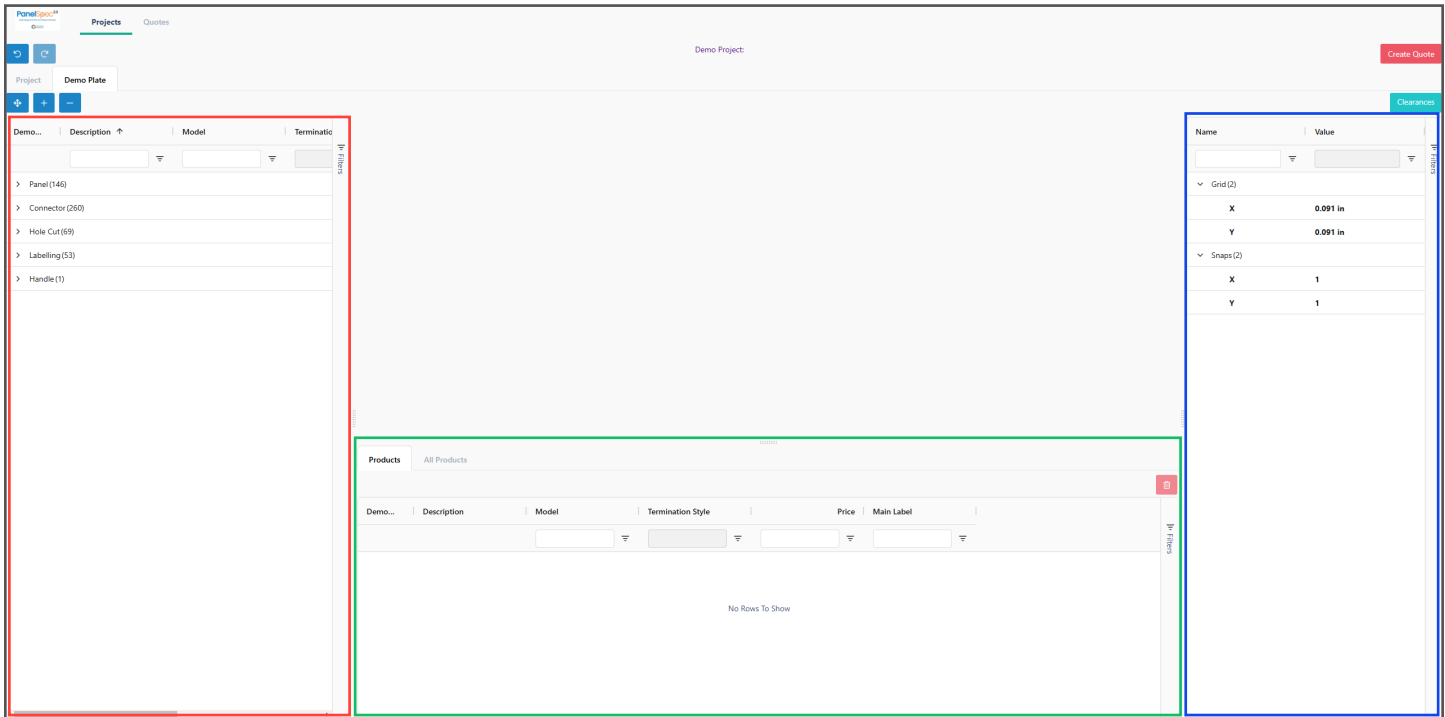

Fig. 7

The Design Space Panels

Product Selection Panel
Located on the left side of the design space, this panel lets you choose plates, panels, and connectors for your design. Browse through the hierarchical categories or search directly for products (e.g., "USB," "HDMI," "Hole Cut"). Once you've found the desired product, **Click and Drag its Picture** onto the blank design space in the center of the screen.

Project Products Panel
Found at the bottom center of the design space, this panel lists all the products in your current layout. It's especially useful for managing large numbers of connectors. To locate or delete specific items, scroll through the list, click on a connector to highlight it in the design space, and use the red **Trash Can** icon to remove it from the layout.

Product Properties Panel
This panel is on the right side of the design space. It provides options to configure parts in your layout. Highlighting a connector, for example, reveals options for label text, color, font, size, position, and rotation, as well as the connector's coordinate position and rotation. Additionally, this panel displays the part's exact size, model number, and price.

The Design Interface

While designing a plate or panel in PS3, a plethora of new options are available in comparison to PS2. Clicking and selecting a plate or connector will reveal a cluster of new options at the upper left side of the screen, as well as a full list of customizable options in the **Product Properties Panel**.

View and Arrangement Tool Cluster

From left to right are the following tools (Fig. 8)**:**
• Reset Zoom / Center View
• Zoom In (Zoom with the mouse wheel as well)
• Zoom Out (Zoom with the mouse wheel as well)
• Duplicate selected part
• Arrange (Move to Front, Back, Forward, Backward)
• Clear Selection / Deselect All
• Quick Rotate (90° intervals)
• Align (Lefts, Rights, Centers, Tops, Middles, Bottoms)
• Distribute (Horizontally, Vertically)
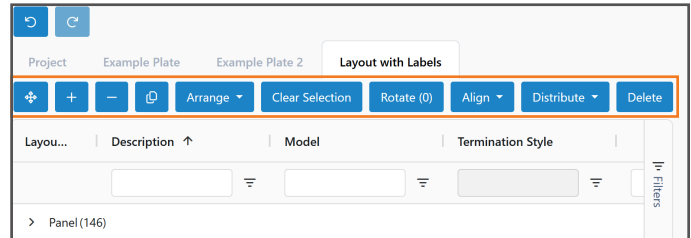• Delete selected part(s)

Fig. 8

Product Properties Panel

From top to bottom are the following options (Fig. 9)**:**
• Product description
• Product width (inches)
• Product height (inches)
• Label text
• Model number
• Product price
• Termination style (If applicable)
• Label font
• Label color picker
• Label anchor (Start, Middle, End)
• Label rotation (0°-360°)
• Label origin (Center, Top, Bottom, Left, Right, etc.)
• Label size (inches)
• Label horizontal offset (X) (inches)
• Label vertical offset (Y) (inches)
• Product horizontal position (X) (inches)
• Product vertical position (Y) (inches)
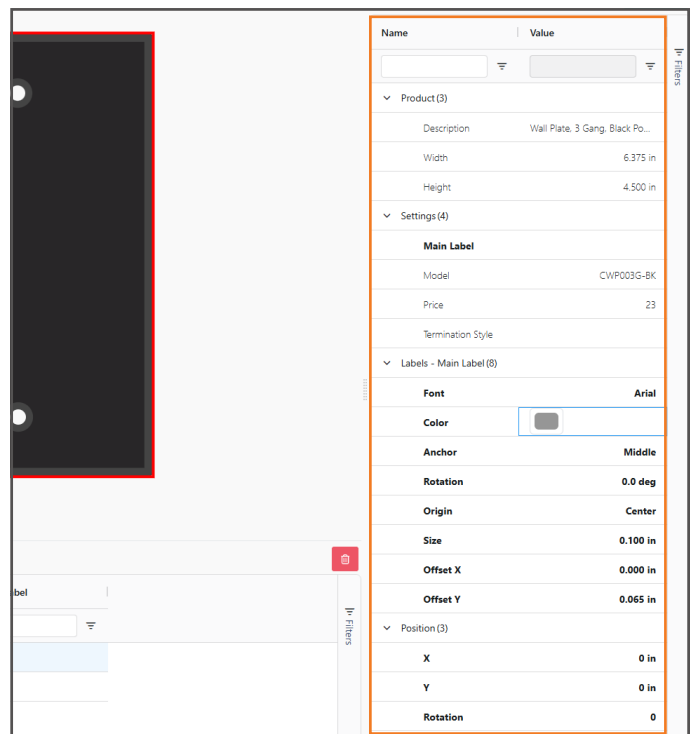• Product fine rotation (0°-360°)

Fig. 9

Important Note: The editable options within the **Product Properties Panel** will be marked in **BOLD** text.

Creating Your Design

In this section, we will take you through the process of creating a basic wall plate to help you familiarize yourself with the workflow of PS3. In the next section we will go over more advanced design tools and techniques, but for now let's just focus on the basics.

Pick Your Plate

To start, let's pick a wall plate that will be the base for our design. We can either search for it directly, or we can click through the drop downs to see all of our options. For this design, we're going to be using a clear anodized 1 Gang wall plate. Click and drag it onto the design space. It's good practice to zero out the X and Y coordinates of the plate as well (Fig. 10).

Important Note: To add a product to your design, click and drag the **image of the product** onto the design space in the center of the page.
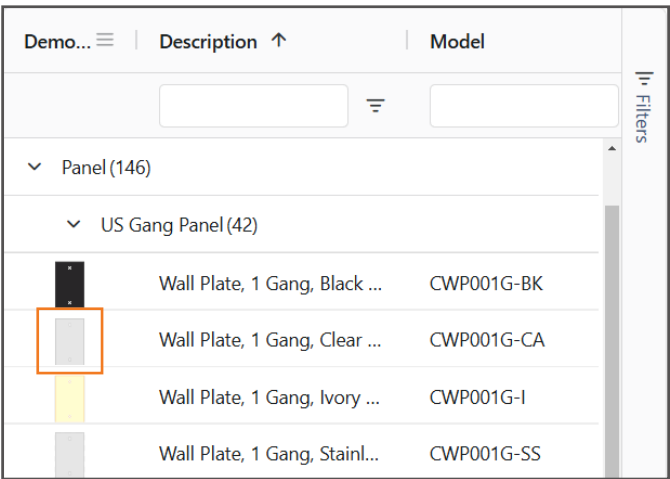

Fig. 10

Pick Your Connectors

Next, let's add connectors to the plate. For this design, we'll add an HDMI and a DisplayPort connector. Simply drag them to your desired positions on the plate (Fig. 11).

If you'd like to reposition a connector you can do so at any time by simply click and dragging it to the position of your choice. To aid in the alignment of connectors to ensure an even layout, PS3 features blue alignment guides that appear when you're positioning a connector by hand. You can also manually punch in the coordinates in the connector's positioning to place it in the exact position you need.

Important Note: To add a product to your design, click and drag the **image of the product** onto the design space in the center of the page.
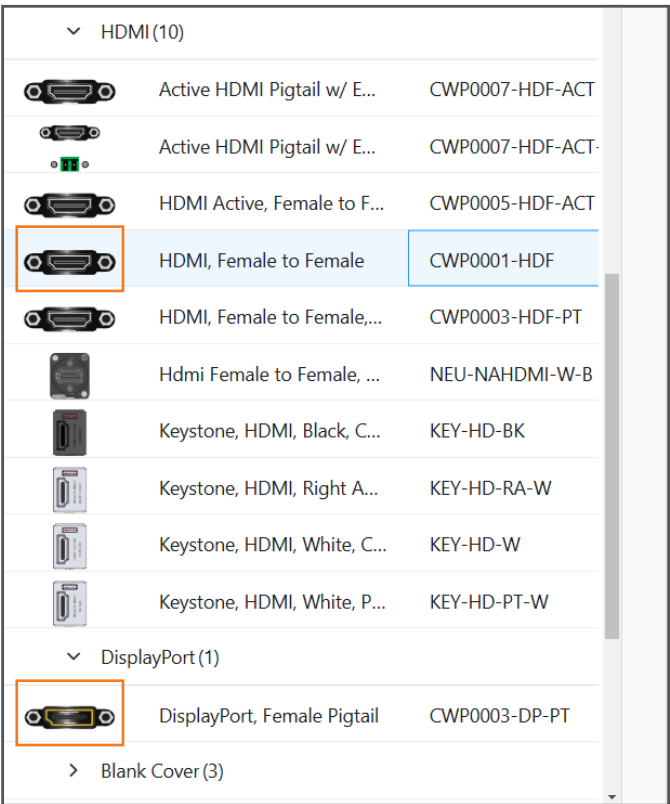

Fig. 11

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Creating Your Design

Adjust Your Labels

By default, all connectors will have "TEXT" as their label. Setting your own custom label is easy. To do so, select a connector on your plate and double click on the **Main Label** section in the **Product Properties Panel**. Then type in the label text you want and hit the **Enter Key** to apply it. Along with this, you can also customize the color of you labels as well. To do this, click on the **Color Picker** and either type in your preferred RGB value or click on the gamut chart and hit the **Enter Key** to apply it (Fig. 12).

Important Note: You can change the labels and colors of multiple connectors by **Shift + Clicking** them.
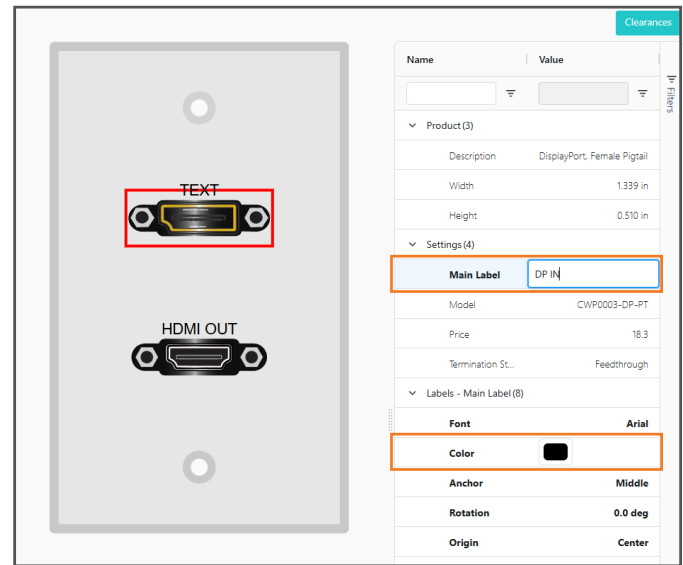

Fig. 12

Check Your Price Breakdown

You've now created a wall plate design in PS3! To check the pricing breakdown of this plate and any other plates or panels in your project, you can find the info in the **Reports** tab. To do this, click on the Project tab at the upper left side of the screen to return to your project's hub. Then click on the **Reports** tab on the list of tabs on the left side of the screen and then click on the **Quotation - With Pricing** option. Here you can find a detailed price breakdown of everything within this project before finalizing the project and generating a quote (Fig. 13).

Important Note: This report is only a preview of your final quote. To generate your final quote click on the red **Create Quote** button at anytime while within your project.
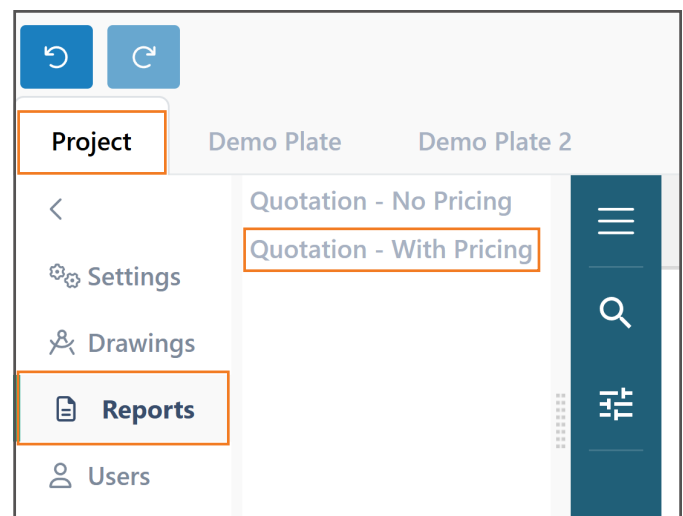

Fig. 13

Creating a Quote

Once you have finalized your designs within a project, you can generate your official quote. To do this, you simply need to click on the red **Create Quote** button at the upper right side of the screen at anytime (Fig. 14).
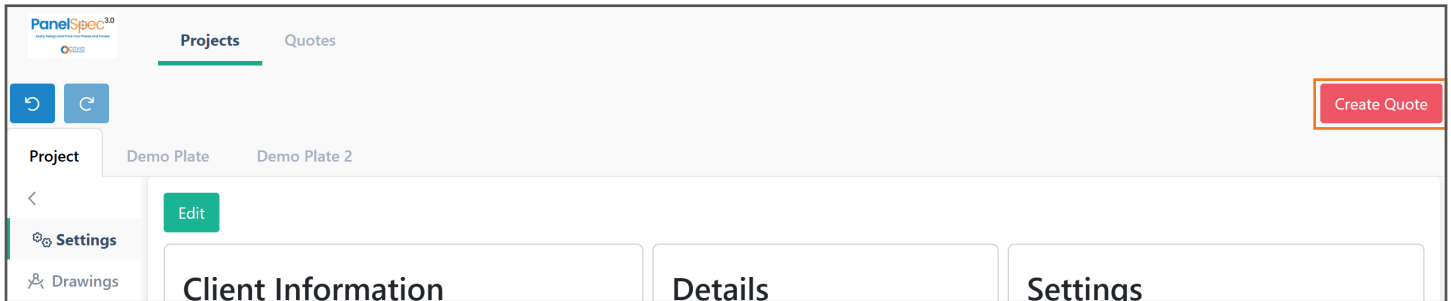

Fig. 14

After creating your quote and giving it a name, you will be brought to the **Quotes** section of PS3. This section will look similar to the Projects section of PS3 except in this space the project will no longer be editable and is for viewing purposes only. You can always go back to your original project and make more changes if you need to. You will need to create a new quote, however, if you want to include the new changes you made to the project. In the **Reports** tab on the left side of the screen, you will find that your quote reports now have a finalized **QT-A Quote Number** (Fig. 15). You can print or download this quote report as a PDF and use this number as a reference when discussing your order with sales and your team.

Important Note: Generating a quote will also send an email with a link to the quote to the address associated with your account as well as Covid's sales team. The Covid sales team will reach out to you shortly after this, but if you need your order fast please reach out to us at **sales@covid.com** and we will prioritize your rush order.
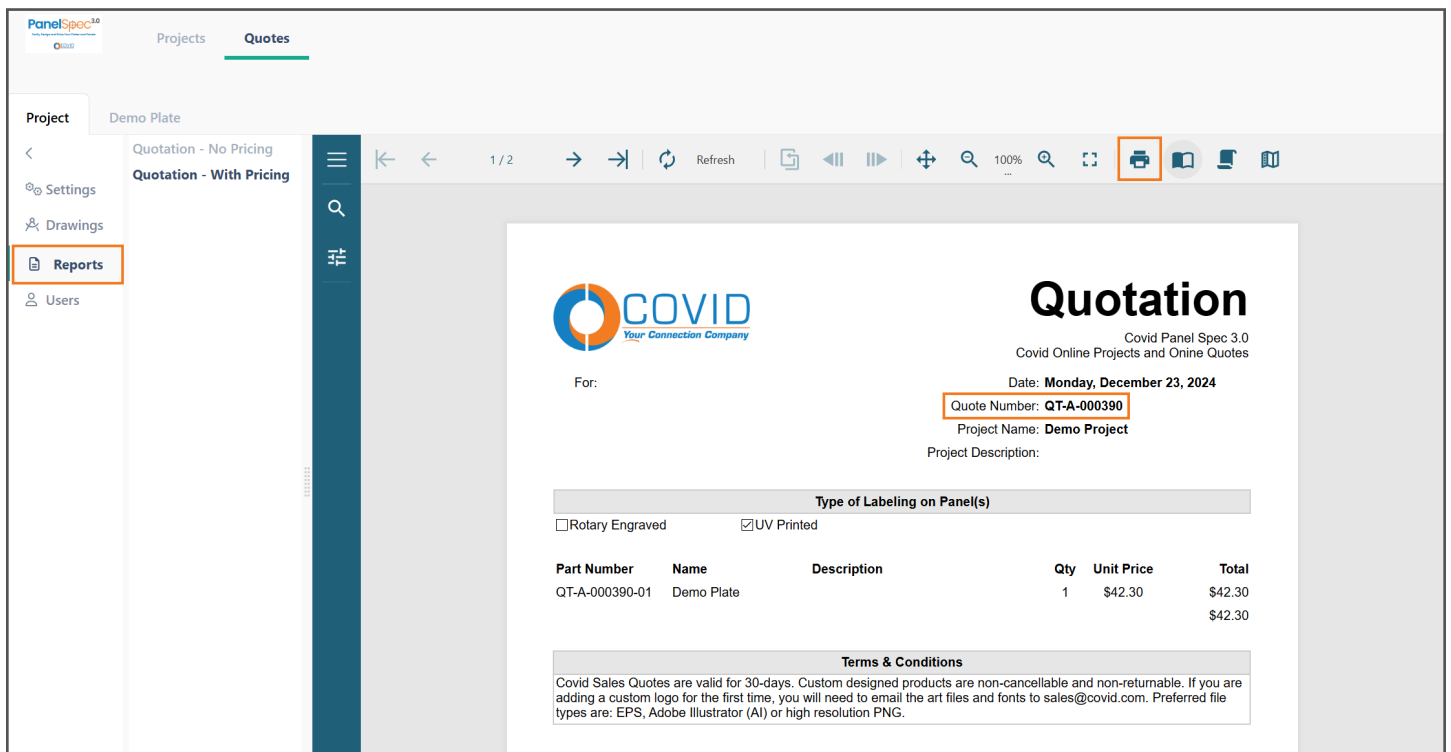

Fig. 15

Advanced Features

Aligning and Distributing Connectors

To align and distribute connectors, hold **Shift**, select the desired connectors, then click the blue **Align** and **Distribute** drop downs to choose an arrangement. (Fig. 16)
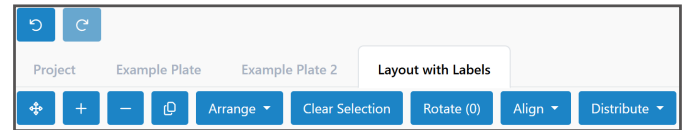

Fig. 16

Important Note: The Align and Distribute buttons appear only after selecting multiple connectors.

Checking Part Clearances

To check what the clearances for different products are within PS3's design space, you can click on the blue **Clearances** button in the upper right corner of the design space. Doing so will enable a green dotted overlay indicating clearances for all products within the design. You can turn these off by simply clicking the button once more (Fig. 17).
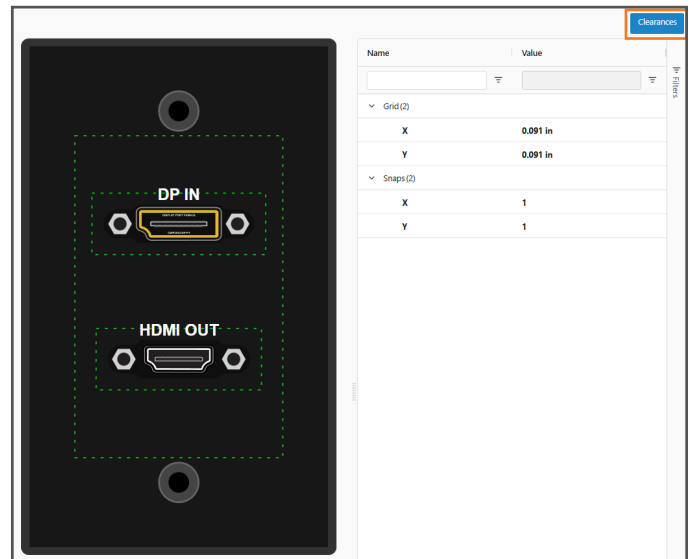

Fig. 17

Automatic Label Numbering

You can duplicate numbered connectors multiple times without having to retype every label by using the **Setting to Increment - Main Label** option within the **Duplicate** window. This works best if you have numbered connectors which will automatically count upwards for you when duplicating (Fig. 18).
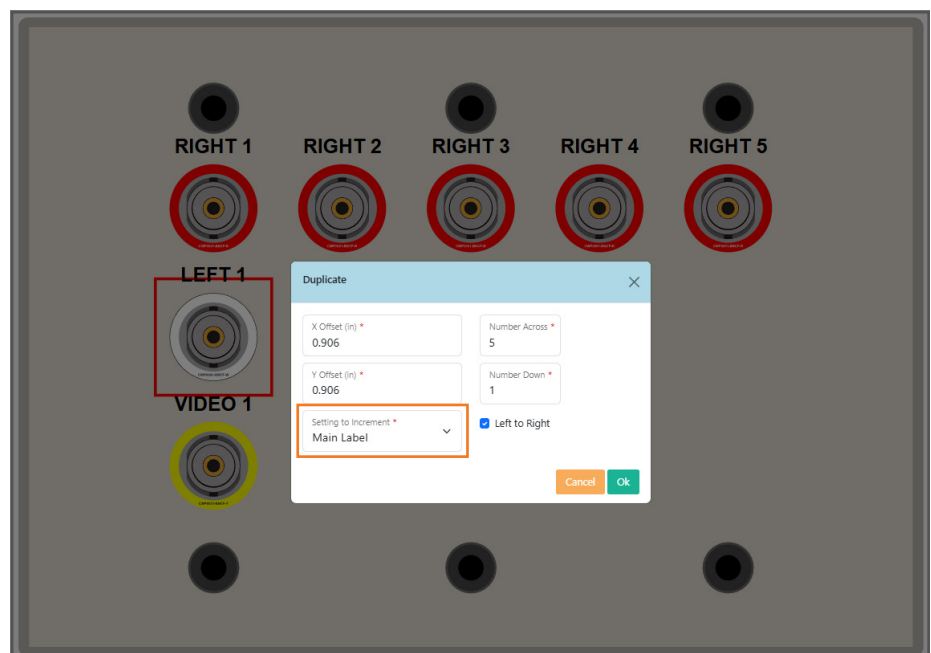

Fig. 18

Advanced Features

Design Multitasking

In PS3, you can seamlessly switch between multiple designs within a project without load times, boosting efficiency and speed for large projects. Simply click the tab of the design you want to work on to switch instantly (Fig. 19).
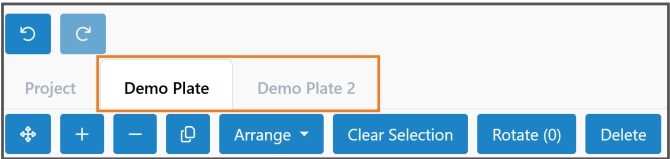

Fig. 19

Adding Users to a Project

In PS3, adding users to either view or edit your projects is quick and easy. Go to the users tab on the right side of the screen while within a project, and click the green **+ User** button. Then type in their name, and the exact email address associated with their PS3 account (Fig. 20). If they do not have a PS3 account, they will not be able to be added until they do so. To give project control to added users, check the **Admin** box on their row.
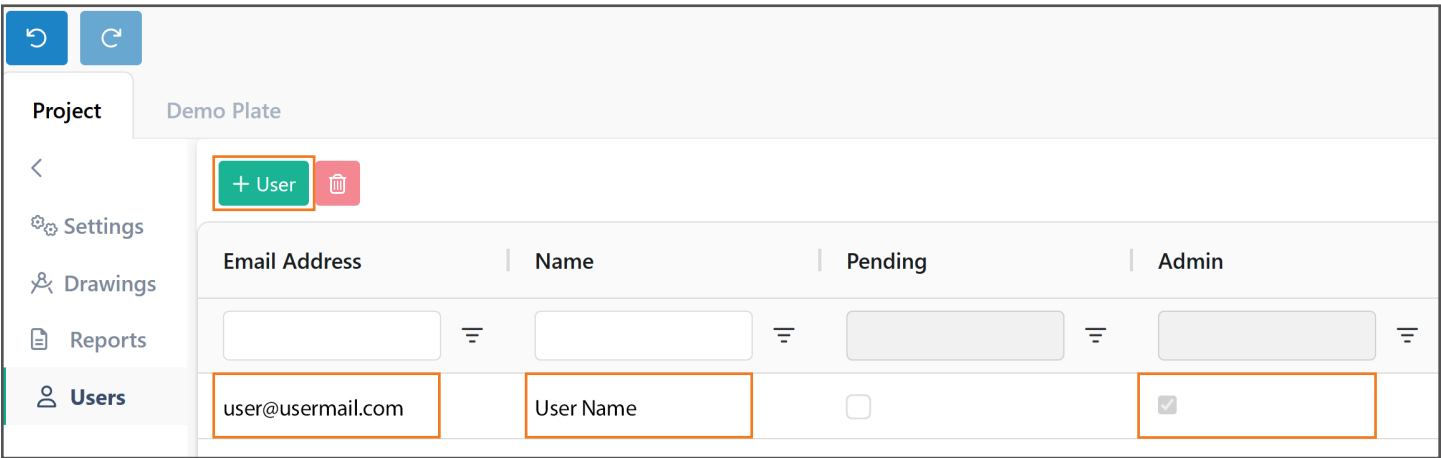

Fig. 20

Changing Product Quantities

To adjust the quantity of plates and panels within a project, click on the **Drawings** tab on the left side of the **Project** screen while within a project. Next, double click the number under the **Qty** column for whichever design you wish to change the quantity of and type the number that you want, pressing the enter key to confirm it. This quantity adjustment will be reflected instantly in your quote report (Fig. 21).
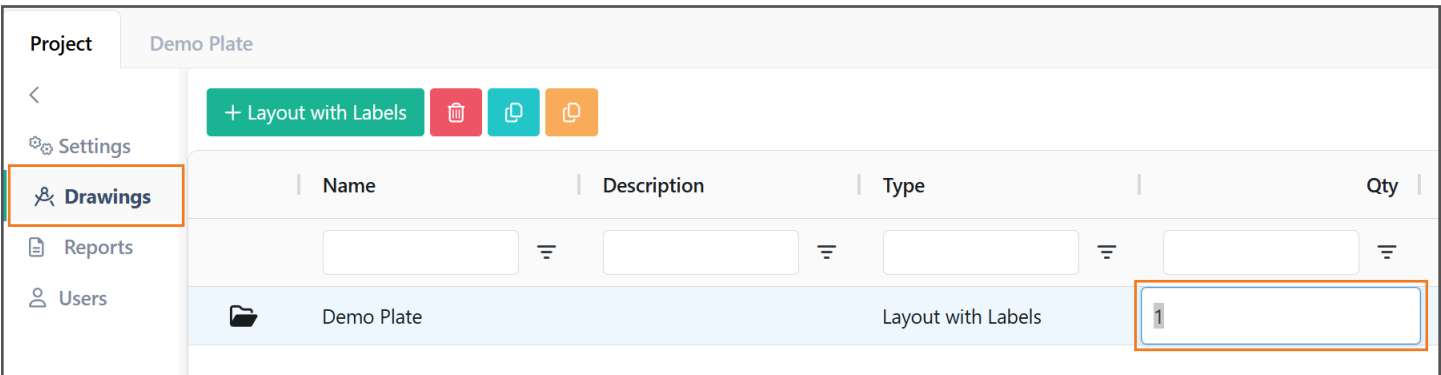

Fig. 21

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Advanced Features

Downloading CAD .DWG Files

Once you've created your designs within PS3, you will have to option to download CAD files for them. To do this, simply click on the DWGs tab on the left side of the page, and then check the box on which drawings you want to download and then click the green **Download DWGs** button to receive your files (Fig. 22).
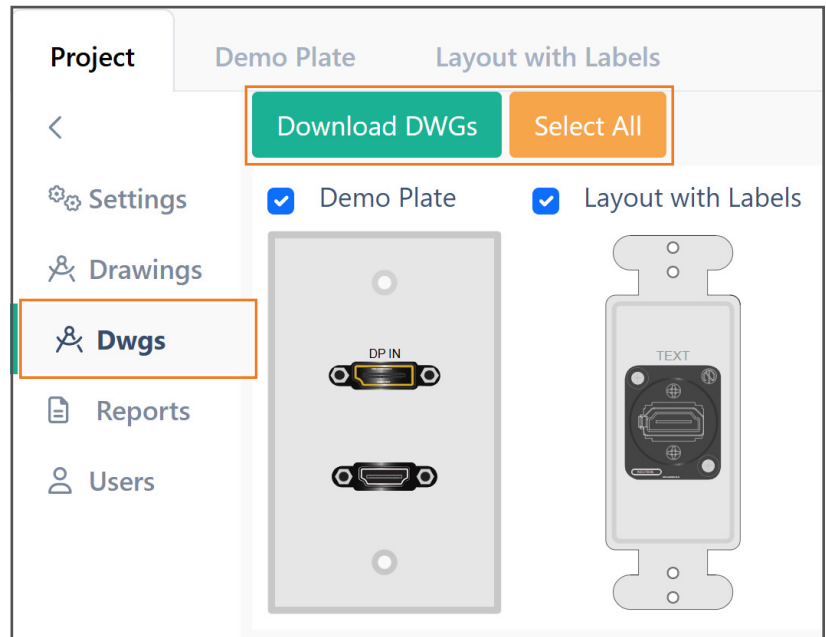

Fig. 22