Portschy moved from Vellum 2D on to Vellum Solids which then became Cobalt in 2001. Fast-forward 20-some years and a customer of that machine shop hired him as their designer-fabricator-chief supervisor. Portschy tells us, “Cobalt was one of the attractions for me to work for them because I could send his client renderings of the parts or structures before they did anything and that really attracted his clients.”

Today Portschy is self-employed as a certified structural steel contractor, working mostly out of his own residential garage, doing architectural metal work, ranging from staircases to skylights, soap dishes to concrete-embedded fasteners.

Portschy does all of his drawings in Cobalt. He finds a rough 3D photo-rendering invaluable, not only for selling customers but also for faster fabrication. Trying to marry a complicated set of 2D elevation and plan drawings for multiple parts overwhelms not only customers, but many fabricators as well. A 3D picture is worth thousands of dollars…not to mention words.

Other features that he values in Cobalt include the Show/Hide command keys allowing him to isolate just a few parts out of many so he can work them together. The multiple-part balance-point for the Center of Gravity function is crucial when they’re using a crane to get odd-shaped fabricated structures into place. He also likes the way Cobalt translates into SolidWorks using the SAT export. Because it strips all of the history, Portschy easily retains control of the drawing and makes any changes himself rather than blaming someone else for a miscommunication.

Portschy is often asked what he uses to create his drawings. He sees his colleagues working with AutoCAD and keeps encouraging them to buy Cobalt, if for no other reason than they’d be more productive. Through him, Cobalt is gaining recognition among architects and structural engineers in the San Francisco Bay Area.