

PanelSpec^{3.0}

General Usage Manual

In-Depth Instructions for Expert Level Use



v1.1

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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.



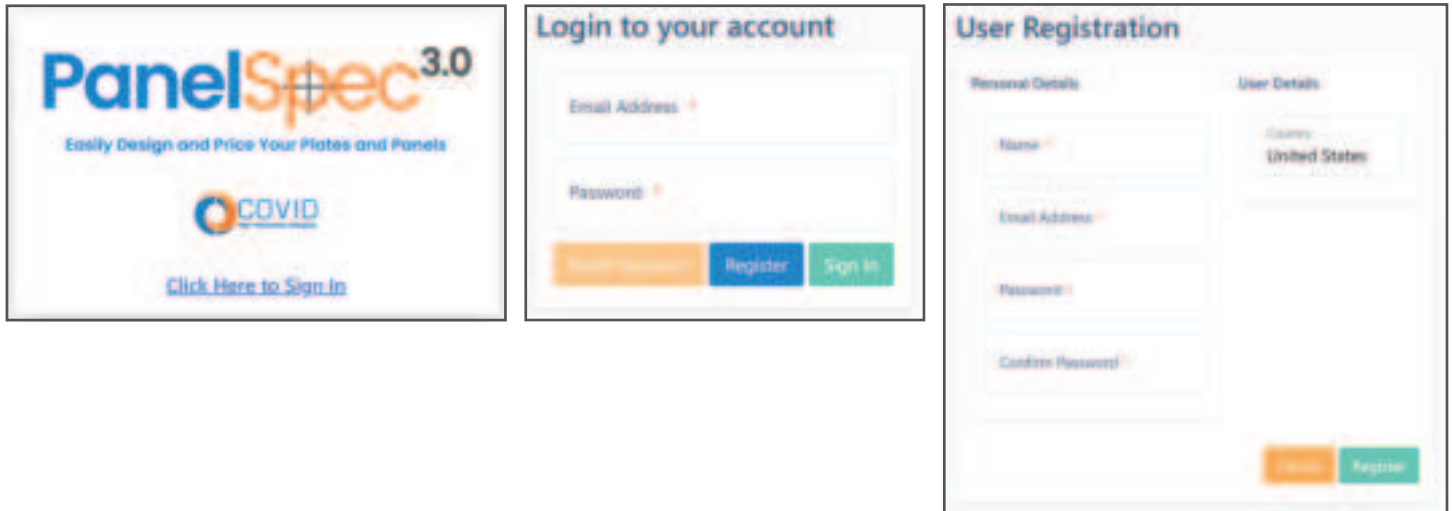
In Panel Spec 3.0, you will have access to a large variety of connector types including feed-through, keystone, solder and pigtail. Name brands include such options as Neutrik™, Switchcraft™, Leviton™ and Covid's own extensive line of connectors. Panels are manufactured in either aluminum or stainless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

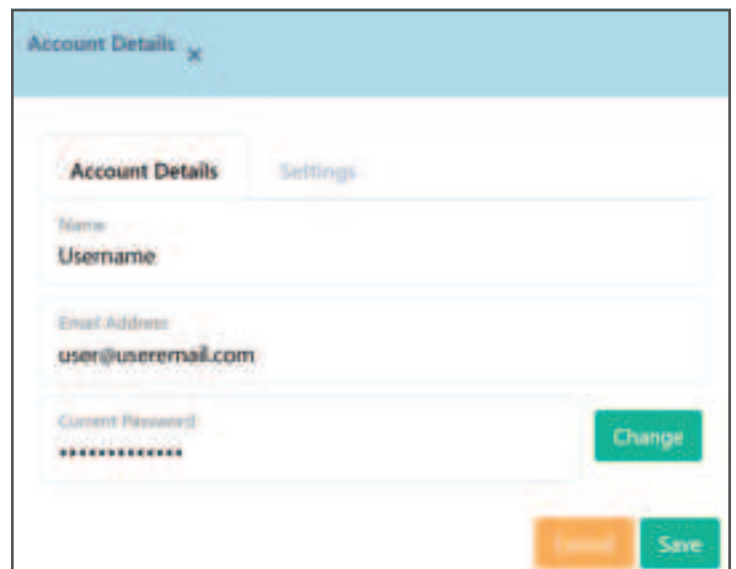


The first screenshot shows the Panel Spec 3.0 landing page with the tagline 'Easily Design and Price Your Plates and Panels' and a 'Click Here to Sign In' link. The second screenshot shows the 'Login to your account' page with fields for Email Address and Password, and buttons for 'Forgot Password', 'Register', and 'Sign In'. The third screenshot shows the 'User Registration' form with sections for Personal Details (Name, Email Address, Password, Confirm Password) and User Details (Country, set to 'United States'), and buttons for 'Cancel' and 'Register'.

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.



The screenshot shows the 'Account Details' form with a tabbed interface. The 'Account Details' tab is active, showing fields for Name, Username, Email Address (pre-filled with 'user@useremail.com'), and Current Password (masked with asterisks). There is a 'Change' button next to the password field. At the bottom right, there are 'Cancel' and 'Save' buttons.

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**.

Starting 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.

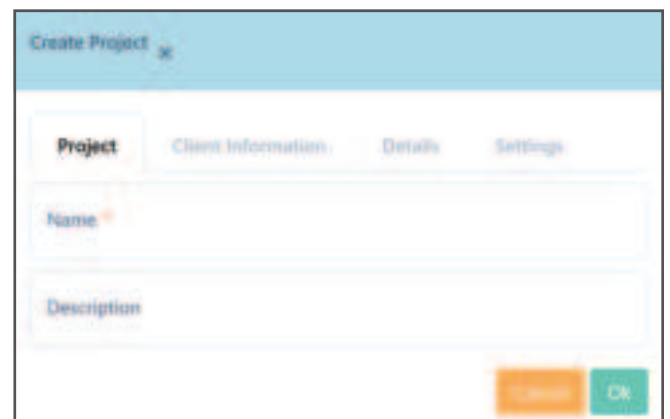


Fig. 4

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).

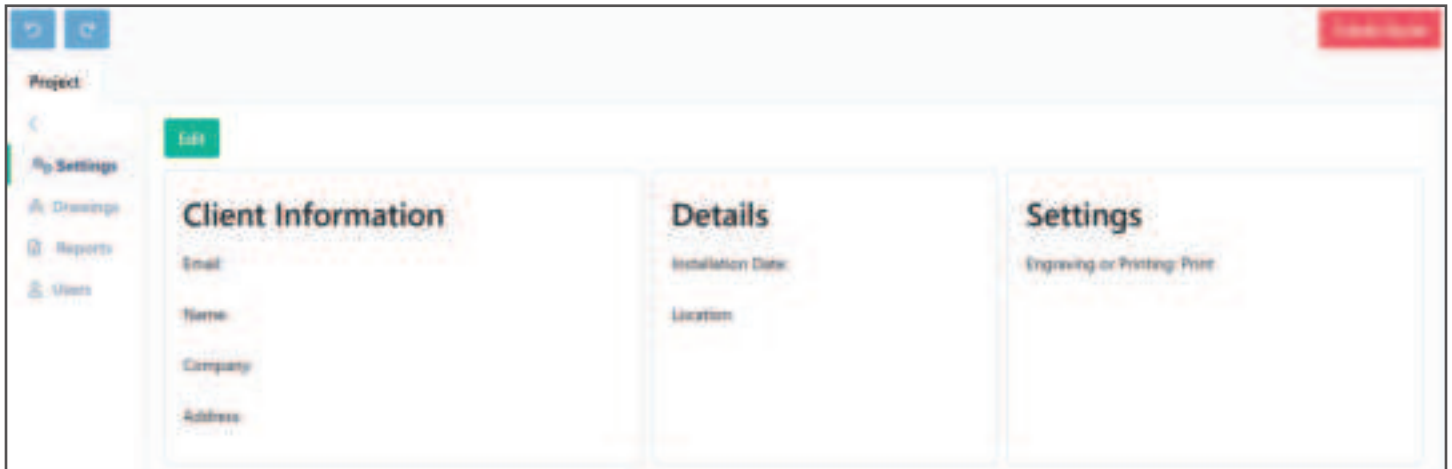


Fig. 5

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).

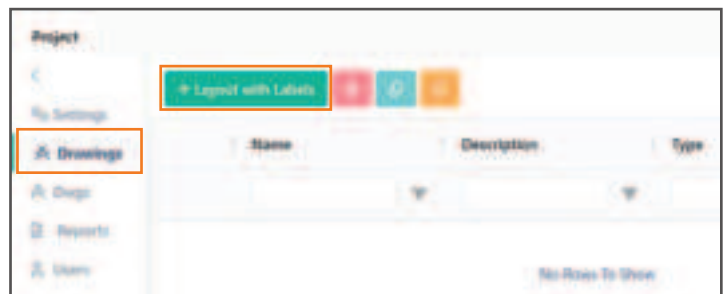


Fig. 6

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 your 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).

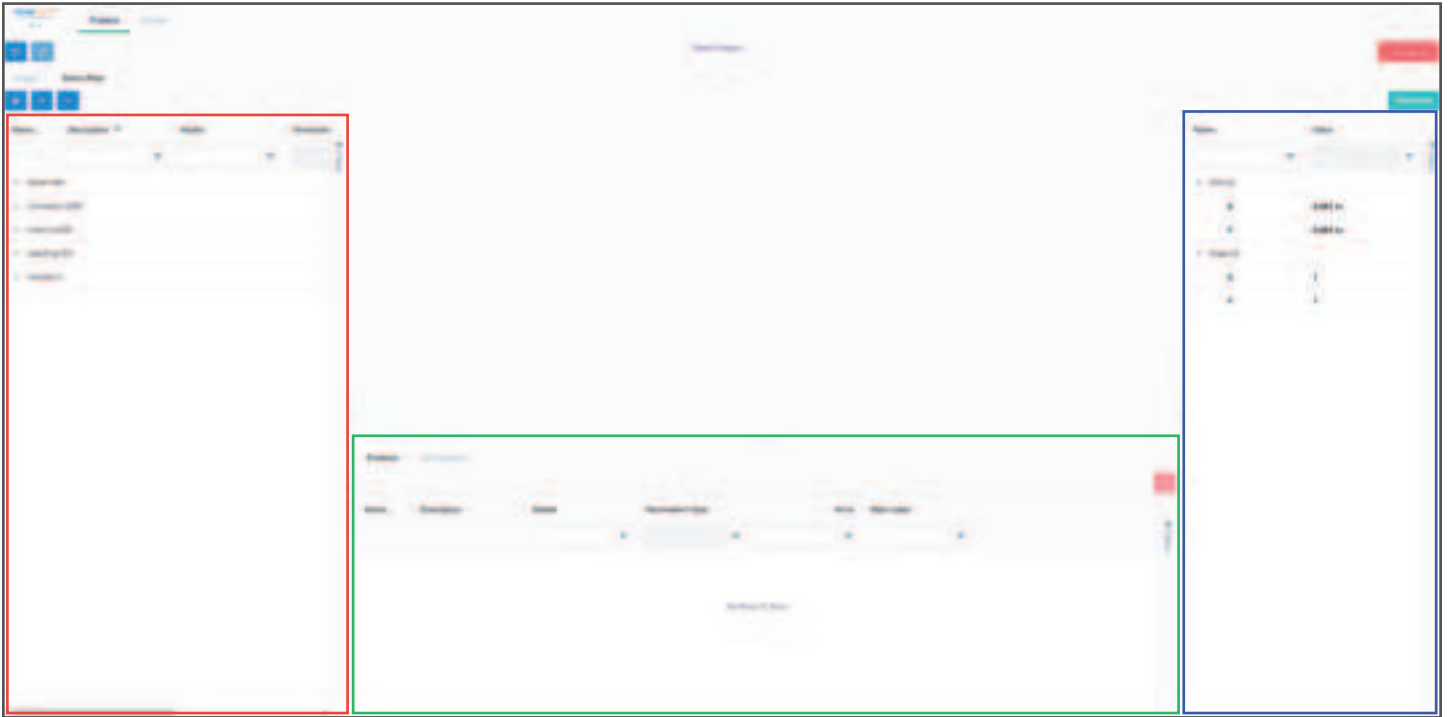


Fig. 7

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.

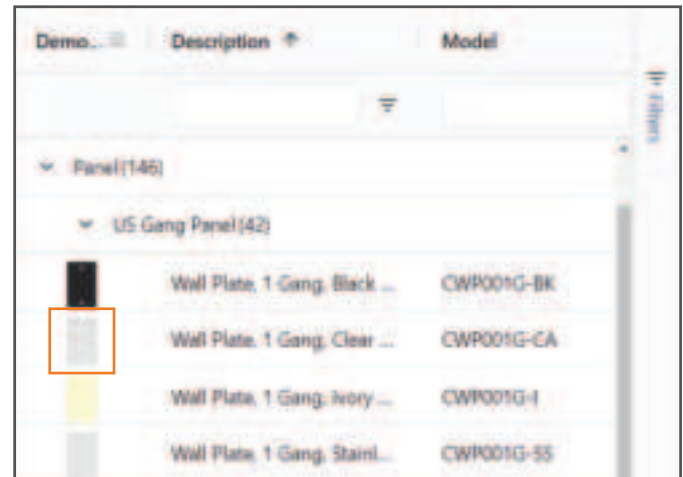


Fig. 10

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

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 (Fig. 12).

Important Note: When adjusting any values within PS3, make sure to hit the **ENTER KEY** to save the new value. Clicking off of it will revert the value.



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.

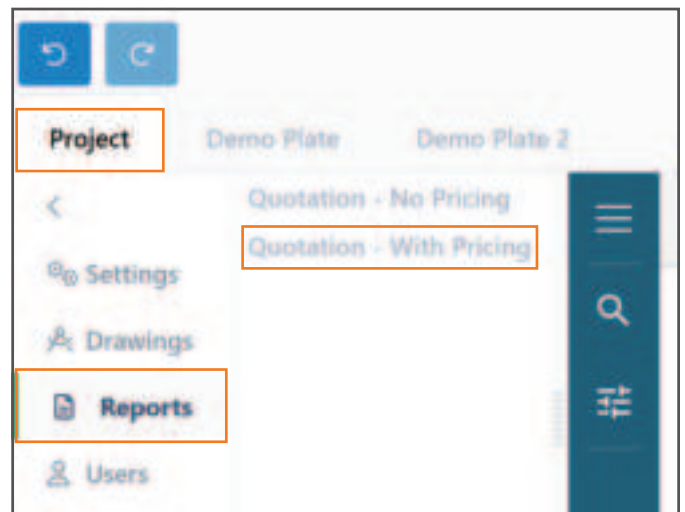


Fig. 13

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).

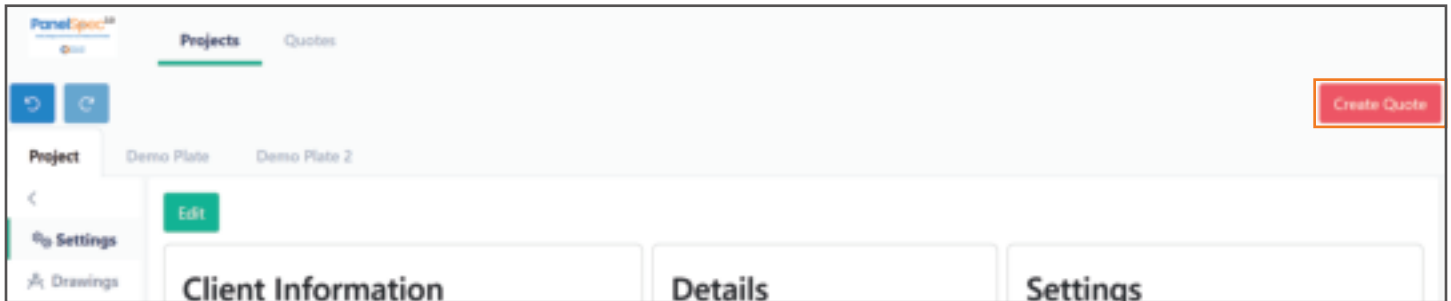


Fig. 14

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.

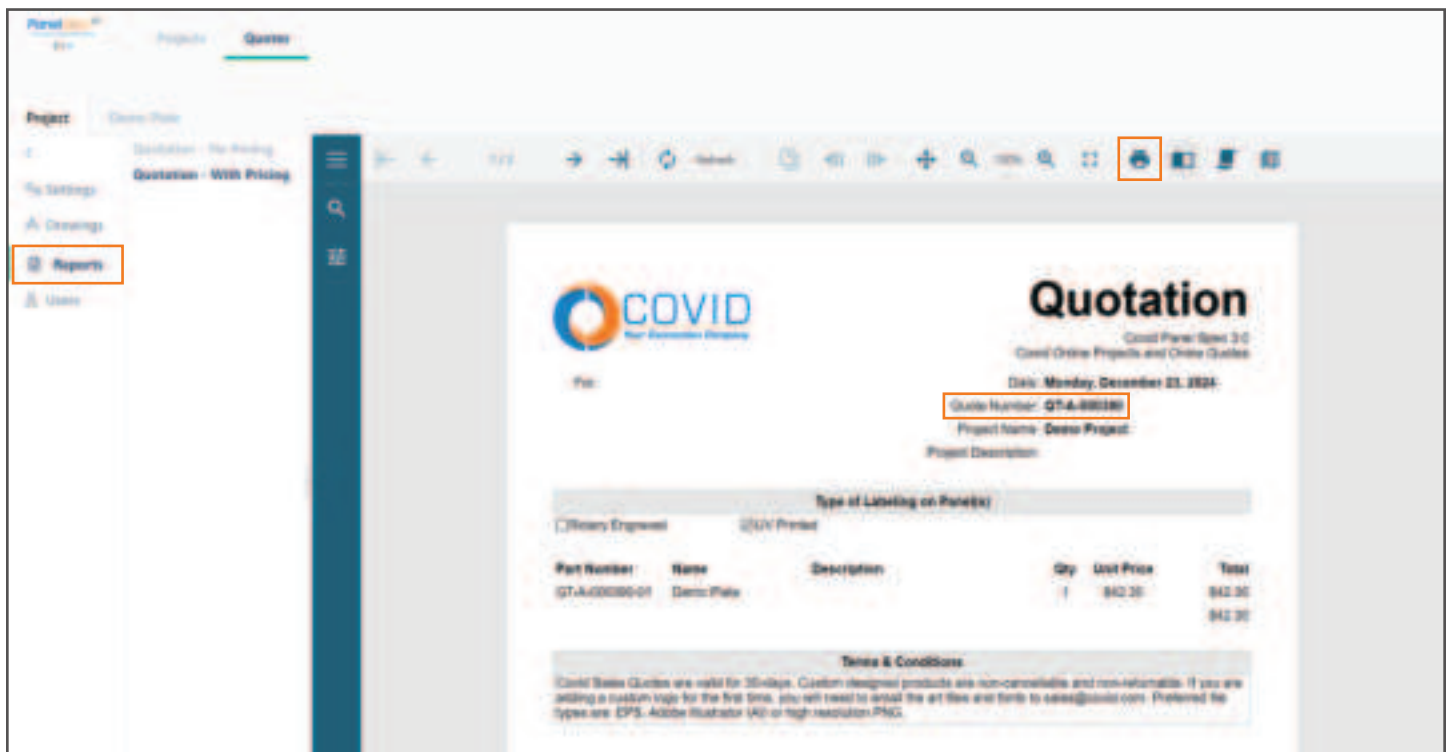


Fig. 15

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).

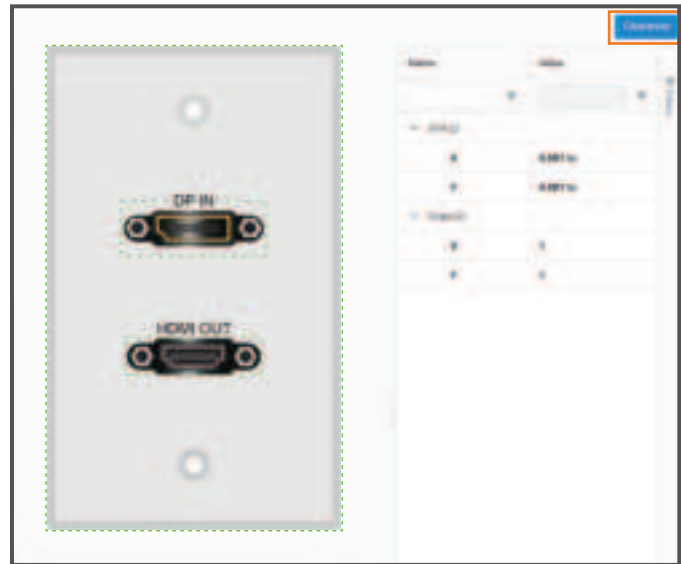


Fig. 17

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. 18). 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.

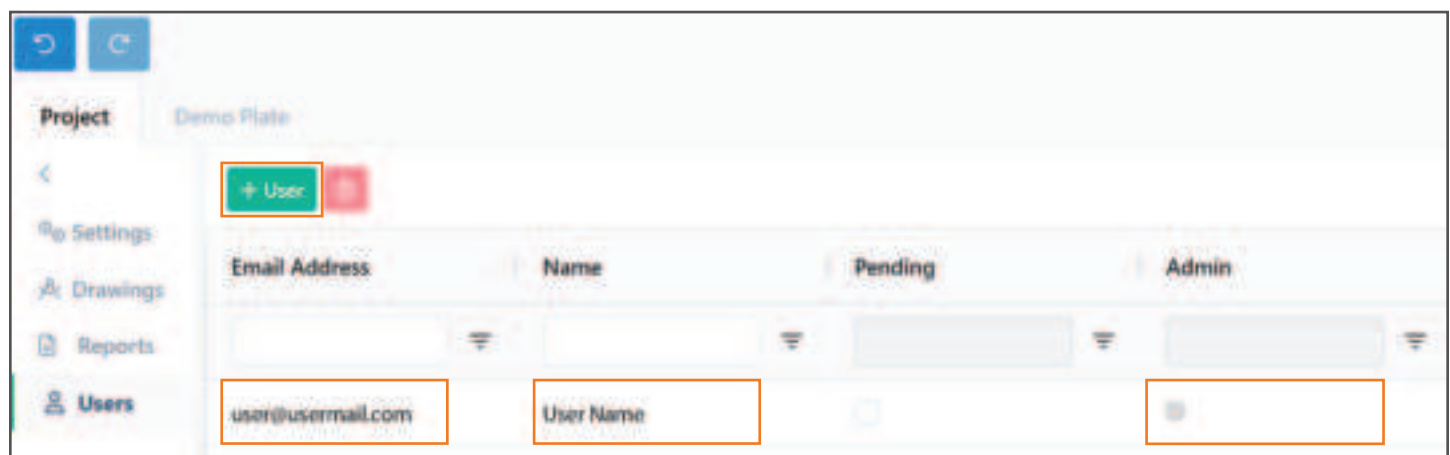


Fig. 18

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

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. 20).



Fig. 20

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. 21).

Important Note: Downloading DWG files is not enabled by default on all accounts. If you need access to this feature on your account, contact our Covid sales team at sales@covid.com to request access.

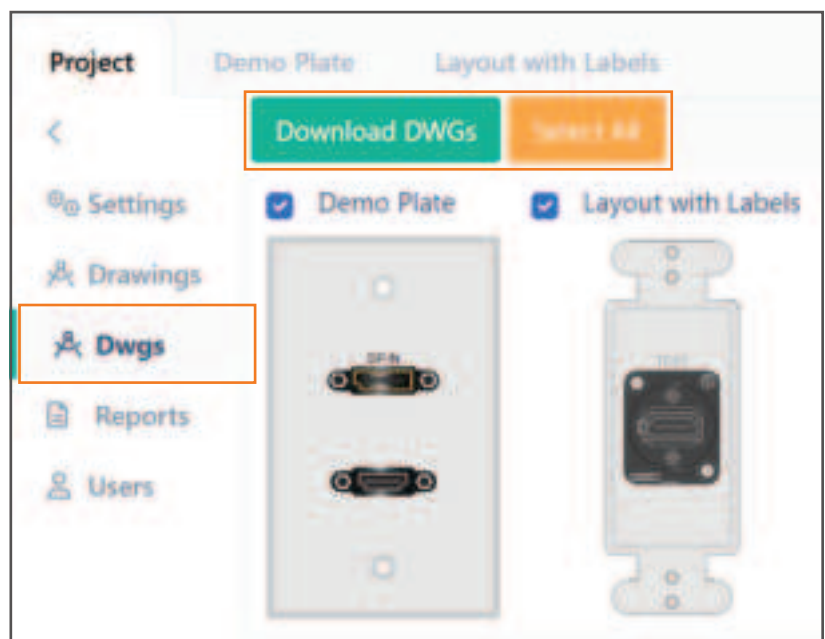


Fig. 21

FAQs

Quick Solutions and Trouble Shooting Tips for Panel Spec 3.0

Q: Why am I getting a red error window popping up in the upper right corner of the screen?

A: This very rare error can be caused by a number browser based issues, especially in Chrome. To resolve this error, clear your browser's cache and restart the browser. Or a much faster solution is to press the F12 key on your keyboard, then right click the refresh button on your browser's top bar, and then click on the option to **Empty Cache and Hard Reload**.

Q: Why does clicking on the Undo and Redo buttons when designing with very large amounts of connectors cause them to disappear or get jumbled?

A: This occurs when duplicating large amounts of connectors. Let's say you duplicate a connector 20 times, clicking the undo button will remove all of them as the duplication was done in a single step. Clicking undo and then redo again and again will eventually mix up the step instructions which will cause connector positions to become jumbled or disappear. There is a limit to the amount of data that PS3 can process in one step. If you're encountering this issue and require a large amount of connectors, try slightly cutting down the amount of connectors you're duplicating in one go.

Q: If I make a PS2 or Covid.com account, will it also work on PS3?

A: No, all three are separate websites and do not share login details. However, if you've made a PS2 account prior to the launch of PS3 (January 14, 2025) your PS2 account will automatically be mirrored over to PS3 and you should be able to login without issue. If you make a PS2 account after PS3 launches, you can still make a new PS3 account yourself with the same information that you used for PS2 and they won't conflict with each other.

Q: Will my PS2 plate and panel drawings carry over to PS3?

A: No, PS2 and PS3 use entirely different systems when it comes to design and previous drawings will not carry over. This does not mean your old drawings will be deleted however. PS2 will continue to be supported into the foreseeable future and will be active alongside PS3. It is greatly encouraged to make the jump to PS3 going forward, however, as it improves in many areas that PS2 was lacking in.

Q: What does the red dot by my username mean?

A: PS3 updates will be applied automatically every time you re-enter the site or refresh it. However, on very rare occasions you might notice a red dot by your username drop down at the upper right corner of the screen. This means that a new major update or bug fix has been implemented in the software and is ready to install. Clicking on it will reveal a new option named **New Update Available**. Click it to restart the website and install the update. PS3 does this automatically, however, and this will generally only happen if the program receives an update while you're using it.

Q: Are there discounts for buying custom plates in large quantities?

A: Yes, there are discounts when you reach certain quantities and they will be applied to the specific plate that reaches those certain quantities. The discounts occur at the following tiers: **10-24**, **25-49**, and **50-100**.

FAQs

Quick Solutions and Trouble Shooting Tips for Panel Spec 3.0

Q: Is there a price difference between engraving and printing?

A: Yes, there is a very small price increase when switching to engraving due to production time costs.

Q: What is the purpose of the Quotation - No Pricing report?

A: This report is a cut down and simplified report that can be used for design approval and proofing within your organization.

Q: Why are connectors cloning themselves when I adjust their position on a plate?

A: This is caused when highlighting the text of a connector and then dragging said connector with the mouse to reposition it. This behavior is similar to other web-based applications where highlighting something and dragging it can duplicate it. To avoid this, ensure there are no connector labels highlighted before you begin repositioning a connector.

Q: Why can't the user I added to my project edit any of the designs or settings?

A: In order to allow the added user to make edits to the project, you need to check the **Admin** box on their row within the users list. Without this enabled, they will only have viewing privileges.

Q: How do I change the size, location and color of connector labels by selecting multiple connectors at once?

A: To select multiple connectors at once, simply hold the **Shift** key while clicking every connector you want to edit the label of. Next, edit their label settings in the **Product Properties Panel** making sure to hit the **Enter** key to confirm all adjustments.

Q: How can I duplicate, align, and distribute connectors?

A: To duplicate connectors, click on the connector you wish to duplicate and then click the blue **Duplicate** button in the **View and Arrangement Tool Cluster**. To align and distribute connectors, first hold the **Shift** key and select all of the connectors that you'd like to align and distribute evenly. Then click the blue **Align** and **Distribute** drop down buttons and select the arrangement that you'd like. Please note, align and distribute will not be visible until you've selected multiple connectors.

Q: Why are my drawings not loading when I look at my quote report?

A: This is a very rare issue in the Google Chrome web browser which occurs due to how the browser loads images. This can be resolved easily by simply refreshing the page.

Q: Who should I contact if I have further questions regarding Panel Spec 3.0?

A: If you have any questions regarding any version of Panel Spec, please direct them to our sales team using the email address **sales@covid.com** or by calling them at **480-966-2221 x1**.