



SHOT Show 2025: GunCAD goes to Vegas

01.30.2024

[Jacob Kilian](#)

Vanguard Arms LLC

225 Savannah Round

Summerville, SC 29485

Overview

SHOT Show 2024 was a big success for the GunCAD movement as a whole. Not only were GunCAD centric media in attendance, but both prominent designers and companies were in attendance and a booth centered around GunCAD was allowed on the show floor (and was invited back by NSSF).

The 3D Printing community is filled with some of the brightest minds in engineering. I genuinely believe that the next Samuel Colt, the next John Browning, the next Kalashnikov, and the next Stoner will likely come from within our community. The GunCAD community as a whole represents a wide spectrum of backgrounds and experiences that the conventional firearms community is generally missing as a whole, and brings with it a whole host of new ideas, new concepts, and new technologies.

As the owner of VA LLC, I want to see the GunCAD community grow and prosper, and believe we can help. We stand at a unique crossroads of both being hobbyists and a consumer market business, bringing with us the experience to take ideas and drawings through to full scale production and marketing through our in house team and our partners.

SHOT Show 2025 has the potential to be a resounding success and a breakthrough opportunity for the GunCAD world. VA LLC would like to sponsor 6-10 designers to bring one or a small series of their ideas to market, and have the very designers who put it together be the ones to represent the GunCAD community at a large and well established SHOT Show booth. The following is our proposal to make it happen, and how VA LLC can play a role in the next steps for the GunCAD world.

Goals

1. VA LLC will sponsor designers through an IP License to advance designs to being ready as a mass manufacturable product. The best designs will be brought to SHOT 2025!
2. VA LLC will act as an A2B service, bringing the basic designs and concepts to full production through our engineering, marketing, and sales teams.
3. Designers will return to working with VA LLC on future designs, as the idea of community givebacks returns more and more money to the GunCAD community.

What is the Role of Vanguard Arms LLC?

Vanguard Arms will play the role of "product life cycle development". This would be the equivalent of a record producer for the music industry, or an invention think tank. We connect the "song writers" to the "singers" to the "producers" to the "customers".

Designers will come through an on-boarding process, sign an IP License agreement with us for their design and/or the use of their branding, and we will coordinate the re-engineering for mass production through our engineering team, create marketing materials, front production costs, and cover end user support. We connect "concept CAD" to "guns in customers' hands"

What is the Role of the Designer?

The designer can play as much or as little a role in the future of their design as they desire. An active designer will be able to provide support for the initial prototypes, offer feedback as the team begins marketing, will have the ability to provide input for marketing materials utilizing their own brand, and will be welcome to participate at the SHOT 2025 booth. The more active a role a designer is willing to take, the more they will be compensated in royalties and the more VA LLC is able to give back to the community as a whole.


What Projects will Vanguard Arms consider? Is my design eligible?

I. Projects We will Consider

VA LLC will consider all designs presented within the following categories:

- Firearms
- Launchers
- Firearms Accessories
- 2A Type Apparel and Swag
- 3D Printing Gear and Equipment
- CNC Equipment
- Standard Type Ammunition
- Gunsmithing Services

Designs need to pass a market check to ensure they are not overly niche (think oddball wildcat calibers or gun-knuckle-knives) and will be reviewed to determine the level of



engineering required to make them into a mass producible item. The more designs that are submitted, the more important things like documentation, marketability, and manufacturability will become. As we are limited to the 6-10 designer mark for the booth, the best 6-10 designs/concepts will be chosen for SHOT. Other designs are more than welcome to be a part of the VA LLC team but may not necessarily be subject to the same SHOT Show deadlines due to space constraints. If in doubt as to whether you are eligible, ASK! We will gladly review your design and see how to best fit you into our team.

II. Projects We will generally NOT Consider

VA LLC is NOT an in-house mass production facility and as such will need to review designs to determine whether they are realistically producible using additive or subtractive manufacturing. VA LLC will not sign on to designs that:

1. Have inherent safety or liability issues as determined by our engineering team.
2. Fall too far outside of our markets (firearms, launchers, accessories, apparel, 3DP and CNC equipment, and standard type ammunition). All other areas fall outside our current expertise and will be evaluated on a case by case basis. If in doubt, ASK!
3. Extremely niche or small marketable audience designs (think oddball wildcat calibers, knife-guns, 50 BMG derringers, etc.)

I'm ready! I want to come on board as a designer! What are my next steps?

The first step to working with us on the SHOT 2025: GunCAD Goes to Vegas project is to reach out to us directly at VanguardArmsLLC@ProtonMail.com. This is a direct line to VA LLC and I will reach out to you regarding your proposal. I will send over a mutual NDA to protect your rights as the designer, and once the files are sent over I will coordinate with my engineering team members for a quick review. If we determine the design has promise and is marketable, we will draft an IP License and Compensation structure for you to review. Once terms are agreed upon and signed, we will begin work converting the design to mass production and coordinate the product path from that point on. Once the design goes to market in the form of a kit or completed product, you will begin receiving royalties as agreed upon.

Milestones and Roadmaps

I. Overall Concept

- 15th February - Final Draft of the SHOT 2025 Proposal Presented
- 29th February - Core Team Commitments Received
- 1st March - Public Launch Announcement and designer recruiting begins
- 15th March - Initial additional designer commitments drafted
- 31st March - Designer Commitments Signed, Booth Size increase requested.

In order for a Project to meet viability for SHOT Show 2025 certain deadlines will need to be met for products to make it to the show.

II. Firearms and Launchers:

- 1 April - Design needs to have been translated fully to CAD
- 1 May - Design needs to be ready for prototype prints
- 1 June - Functional Model needs to have rounds down range
- 1 July - Revised Draft Printed, Prepared for Pre-Production Manufacturing
- 1 August - Pre-Production Model ordered
- 1 Sept - Rounds down Range on pre-production edition, Manufacturers contacted for quotes
- 1 Oct - Distributors contacted for demonstrations, initial price estimates available
- 1 Dec - Booth Display and Marketing Material design finished
- 15 Dec - All SHOT 2025 Materials ordered, MSRP and distributor pricing finalized.
- 31 Dec - Design ready for Production

III. Accessories and Apparel

- 1 April - Designer Commitments Signed
- 1 May - Initial drafts sent to VA LLC
- 1 July - Pre-Production Prototypes Produced/Ordered
- 1 August - Manufacturers contacted for pricing
- 1 Oct - Distributor Displays built and sent with pricing
- 1 Dec - Distributor feedback received, production scheduled for 2025

Frequently Asked Questions

How Does Vanguard Arms Help?

Vanguard Arms will play the role of "product life cycle development". This would be the equivalent of a record producer for the music industry, or an invention think tank. We connect the "song writers" to the "singers" to the "producers" to the "customers". Devs can come on board, sign an agreement with us, and we coordinate the re-engineering for mass production through our in house team, create marketing materials, front production costs, and cover end user support. We connect "concept CAD" to "guns in customers' hands".

How should designers be compensated?

Designs should generally be compensated through IP license royalties. Each agreement will vary some depending on factors such as current market, how complete the design is being brought to us, the anticipated demand, and our existing relationship with the designer. Compensation agreements should generally follow the basic format: "in exchange for licensing IP in perpetuity, VA LLC agrees to pay designer *__% of gross profits from sale of __* product or *__* yearly. Where profit is defined as the direct difference in manufacturing costs and sales, not including VA LLC administration expenses such as marketing, salaries, R&D, etc."

Is this SHOT approved?

As part of the license agreements, brands will be licensed under Vanguard Arms LLC and designs will effectively be contractors. This is to ensure no issues with SHOT allowing the booth. This "collab" brands booth was common across SHOT, for example the Italian Firearms Group

I am behind the curve and missed deadlines for my roadmap. How will this be handled?

Each roadmap will feature clearly defined milestones in order to make appearances at SHOT in 2025 or other events during the year. If milestones are not met, VA LLC will do everything in its power to return projects to being on track. If projects fall too far behind, they will be bumped back to a future event. If projects are determined to be out of alignment with VA LLC goals, IP licensing will be returned to the designer and we will connect them to resources to pursue the product independently in alignment with their needs.

What should a designer expect to get paid? What is the advantage of using VA LLC instead of doing it themselves?

Because we believe in the mission of the GunCAD community, VA LLC wants to offer fair compensation to designers who work for us. The firearms industry has a significant swing in ranges for what they pay designers, but a typical example is the business dealings of Action Arms and Uzi Galil. Uzi Galil was paid at various times between 5% and 15% of gross profits for his work with the Uzi in the U.S., and we aim to exceed these industry norms. Designers could be using many resources to get into production but are currently not utilizing those resources, and VA LLC believes this is due to a knowledge requirement, effort requirement, or needs gap which we can fill. The remainder of gross profits go to cover the costs of VA LLC to support the costs that are beyond direct manufacturing costs. This includes community givebacks to sponsor unaffiliated designers, community outreach, management of sales contracts, R&D and engineering costs, licensing, product insurance, sales, and marketing (amongst others).

My design is already complete and ready to go, and doesn't even need an FFL. Can you offer me a higher profit rate?

Each project/contract will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The more complete the design, the lower the R&D and manufacturing requirements, and the more active a designer wishes to be in the process, the higher we can increase compensation..

What conduct is expected of members at SHOT 2025? I heard someone got kicked out of SHOT Show 2023!


VA LLC does not aim to become the conduct police of members and designers, and will defend members against any sort of "cancel culture" attempts. VA LLC does have a company values statement and expects members to follow the rules of events they may be participating in. Members will sign an event rules agreement as part of receiving their badges/passes to events and are expected to represent VA LLC and the 3DP community at large in a way that reflects well on the community. Members representing the 3DP community through VA LLC are expected to refrain from the following (not exhaustive) list: overtly illegal activity, terrorism, breaking event rules, public speech against VA LLC, anti semitism, racism, harassment, hateful speech against others, drug or excessive alcohol consumption on the showroom floor, and general hooliganism (even if it's fun).

I love the idea! But, I'm not quite ready to sign an IP contract or buy my own booth at SHOT 2025. Can I get a table with you?

Priority for VA LLC booths will go to members of the VA LLC community who have signed an agreement to license IP for production. Businesses and individuals who do not fall under this are welcome to purchase table space from VA LLC under the condition that they agree to follow event rules, represent VA LLC values in the space, and uphold the highest conduct and representation of the community. In doing so we can help lower the barrier of entry to GunCAD booths. Requests are due ASAP to ensure we appropriately plan booth size, as SHOT Show sells out nearly every year and getting booths in one place is difficult the closer we get to the show.

Who is paying for SHOT 2025: GunCAD Goes to Vegas?

VA LLC will pay for the cost of the badges, booth, and marketing materials, as well as our own expenses for the R&D and sales work. We will also be paying the royalties for the designers, and will be as transparent as possible in our manufacturing costs and sales prices. Designers will be able to audit our process and request written documentation.



VA LLC will offer to cover lodging for designers who come to support the booth. As the show gets closer and show attendance commitments are close to being signed, VA LLC will look into providing airfare and a per diem as well.