

Time for a long overdue update!

Updates about the progression to bring back CaseLabs have been very sparse in the past. That's because I haven't really had anything to update you all with. Things have always progressed, but progressed very slowly and I have always felt that I don't have enough to talk about to merit an update. But the pace of progress is about to change and in just the last week and a half or so a lot of positive things have happened that I feel merits an update. I also want to take time and talk about my absence the last couple of months.

The elephant in the room

I'm guessing my absence on this server hasn't gone unnoticed. It is not because I have given up hope on bringing CaseLabs back into business. On the contrary I am still *highly* dedicated to see the rebirth of CaseLabs and been working on the comeback even if I haven't communicated with you.

In September a personal/private thing happened to me. This commanded much of my time and focus and wasn't really resolved until recently. Dealing with this personal matter, working, renovating, working on the CaseLabs revival and other commitments I have exhausted me and drained me of both physical and mental energy.

In the beginning I tried to check in and communicate as usual but about a month into this ordeal my energy was just *gone*. When I got home I just lay on the sofa and wanted to go to sleep. If someone had written on Discord I thought to myself "I'll check Discord and respond first thing tomorrow" but the next day I had to focus on this personal matter from the moment I opened my eyes and when I got home I just wanted to sleep and thought "I'll check on Discord tomorrow". And it just went on this loop from there on out. As more and more days passed with me not having enough energy to check on Discord the more my anxiety over it grew and made it even harder to check on Discord and respond to any questions etc.

In hindsight I should have communicated this better with you all, but it is hard to think rationally when you are in the middle of it all and you have this sinking feeling that you've forsaken something that is important and people are disappointed in you. I'm not making any excuses for what happened but offering an explanation for my behavior. You all deserve at least that. I also want to give you all my sincerest apology for just disappearing like this. I'll try to do better in the future.

Mid December everything with the personal matter started to resolve and this week I feel like everything with that matter is finished. I had to focus on finishing all my assignments at work for this Friday so I could have a two week leave over Christmas and into January.

This is the first day in months when I've woken up and haven't felt exhausted because I've dealt with a lot of stuff the day before. The first thing I did was to sit down at my computer and start writing this announcement. I'll be preparing for Christmas and celebrating it with my family. After that I'll start responding to all the communication I've missed while I've been gone.

So where are we at?

Despite me having a rough couple of months, my work bringing CaseLabs back has continued. In the past, progress has been slow, but we've always made *some* progress. Now we've kicked it into a higher gear! December 10th I met with the engineering firm that is helping me convert the drawings. Everything looks great so far and I can't wait to share some of the 3D models with you!

The engineering firm is incredible and has done a tremendous work so far, but there are some minor bumps in the road that we are working to solve. Since we're changing the production method from sheet metal punching to laser or water cutting we have to make some design choices. It won't be noticeable in the finished product but it is crucial for the manufacturing. We are trying to optimize the manufacturing as much as we can so we can keep this as cost-effective as possible. We are also cross-referencing every part with pictures and production drawings to guarantee that we get every fold and detail right. This is what I will focus on until the second week in January when we're back from our respective vacations. Then we'll have a follow-up meeting.

The engineering firm that we're working with also has connections with the manufacturer we've chosen so they know what they need to provide for the manufacturer regarding the blueprints/drawings/3D models. This will hopefully speed up moving to manufacturing once all the conversions are done.

All-in-all there are about 150 or so parts that we will be converting in the first step. The parts are from models in the Bullet, Magnum, Mercury and Merlin line, Flex-bay mounts (radiator and fans) and covers, radiator mounts, accessory mounts and misc. parts. Once everything is finalized I'll post a complete list of every part.

I've also come to the realization that if I'm gonna bring back CaseLabs on my own it will take way too long (it already has taken way too long...). I have too much commitment elsewhere (working, renovating, I'm on the board of my housing association etc). So I've decided to bring on 1-3 partners, offering a share of CaseLabs in exchange for helping to bring CaseLabs back. I've talked to a couple of interested people and at the moment there is one person where I feel that we have the same opinion on what needs to be done right now to bring CaseLabs back and where we also share a vision of what we want CaseLabs to be in the future. Nothing is finalized yet, my lawyers are still drafting the contract, but when it's done and if the contract is signed I'll introduce the new partner and what responsibilities they will have.

There's still an opening for one or two more partners. The requirement is that you are a Swedish citizen and have something to offer (putting in work or offering capital) in bringing CaseLabs back. If you feel like this is you, please send me a DM and we'll talk!

Where are we going?

In the best of worlds the revival of CaseLabs would have just been "boom, here are all the cases again ready for you to purchase!" but in reality it will have to happen in stages with the first stage being to sell spare parts to fund the rest of the work needed to start selling complete cases again. The parts we've selected to bring back first are the most in-demand

parts from the survey we conducted. After that we will focus on bringing back complete cases.

It might seem foolish dedicating both time and money converting 2D drawings to 3D models but it serves a purpose both in the short and long term. It will be easier for our manufacturers to see how every fold in a part should be done, the trial and error is done during development and not during manufacturing which saves us money. Secondly right now every part is a separate file and there are about 1250 or so parts in total. It is difficult, if not impossible, to get a complete picture of a case by viewing each part separate from the others and in a flat/unfolded state. By converting every part into a 3D model we can put together a case in our CAD software of choice. This will not only let us see how every part fits together to create a complete case but also make it much easier to make changes to the existing design once we start doing revisions to existing models.

Going from 2D drawings to 3D models also has the added benefit that we can implement a “constructor” in an upcoming webshop. Once we begin selling spare parts we are launching an updated website with an added webshop. Once we start selling cases again some other functionalities will be added to the webshop. When I bought my SMA8 back in 2017 I had a hard time to understand how my choices of different tops, the Flex-bay covers, midplate etc would affect the finished case. I don’t want our future customers to feel the same way I did. My vision for a future webshop is that you pick what model you want to configure and in the constructor that case either loads as just the structure without the parts that you can change and as you make your choices you see how different parts are added or that the case loads with a standard configuration and then you see how different parts are changed as you make your choices. The exact implementation of a “constructor” is yet to be determined, but it is something that I want to implement.

We will of course also update existing models like how the SMA8 became the SMA8-A. We know that the option of tempered glass and I/O with at least USB-C is frequently requested, new colors, radiator drop-in mounts and added storage space is something that many have asked for and something that would be easy to provide. I also want to look into the possibility of standardizing some things. As an example, some tops are 31 mm tall and others are 39 mm, some doors have an XL window but no XXL window etc. I want to do a complete review of each case and see what updates and improvements we can do for each case. When the time comes to start updating cases I’ll start a dialogue with the community so we don’t make unnecessary or unwanted changes to cases you love.

With updated cases there is also room to introduce new cases. I think CaseLabs is missing a truly small form factor case. The Bullet BH2 is small, but I believe we could go smaller. I’d love to introduce something in the same size as Fractal Design Terra, Lian Li Q58, Louqe Ghost, NCASE M1 etc. But that won’t happen until we’ve fulfilled our promise to bring back CaseLabs, selling cases again and updated existing models.

My long-term vision for CaseLabs is to offer everything you could need for watercooling your PC and more. But that is better discussed when we actually have a stable business again.

Closing thoughts

I am very optimistic and enthusiastic for the future of CaseLabs. There is no denying that the revival has taken much longer than anticipated. But we've always made progress towards relaunching CaseLabs. All the progress we've made is about to pay off. We're aiming to kick off 2025 with finalizing our work converting the 2D drawings to 3D models, sending those models off to our manufacturer and then start selling parts again. Once we've started selling parts again we have funds to finish the conversion of complete cases and then we're back in full again!

2025 will be the year that we are coming back with a boom, I am confident in that! The partner I hope to bring on will relieve me of some of my workload and together we can move things forward at a faster pace than I can do on my own.

I just want to thank you all for sticking with us for so long, for all your support and your patience while I'm trying my absolute best to bring CaseLabs back. Your support means a lot and is invaluable to me, without you there is no CaseLabs to bring back!

Right now I am preparing for Christmas and will be celebrating it with my family. I'll be back after Christmas and look forward to engaging with you all once again.

I wish you all a merry Christmas and a joyful holiday!

/Emil