

Surveying the CAD Licensing Landscape

The CAD software market has been slower than some to embrace rental or subscription plans, but more vendors are moving in that direction. This sampling of CAD developers provides a peek at the range of licensing options available today, and at the wide variety of perspectives on the subject.

Subscription Only

- **Autodesk:** Monthly, yearly, and multiyear terms available. Most titles run locally; some, such as Fusion 360, are cloud-based.
- **Onshape:** Monthly terms for Professional, Enterprise, and Free tiers. Entirely cloud-based.

The entire software industry is moving in this direction ... it's just a matter of time before all vendors have similar ways of buying.

Carl White, Autodesk

Perpetual Only

- ActCAD Engineering Solutions
- Bricsys
- Corel (for CorelCAD)
- Gstarsoft
- IronCAD
- Lectra
- ZWSOFT

Customers are used to buying licenses this way, most of our competitors do not have subscription plans, and in many emerging countries customers seem to prefer

perpetual licenses.

Nathalie Fournier-Christol, Lectra

Combinations of Perpetual and Subscription

- **Bentley Systems:** Perpetual licenses and monthly, quarterly, and annual subscription licenses for desktop applications, plus consumption-based subscriptions for enterprise access to all titles.
- **Dassault Systèmes:** SOLIDWORKS now offers a three-month term license, as well as perpetual.
- **Graebert:** ARES Commander is offered via perpetual license, flex license (the network version of perpetual), and annual subscription plan. Perpetual licenses include a one-year subscription to ARES Touch and ARES Kudo.
- **GRAPHISOFT:** Full and Solo perpetual licenses; 1-, 3-, 6-, and 12-month rental licenses; and pay-per-use licenses of ARCHICAD are available.
- **IMSI/Design:** For TurboCAD Pro and Pro Platinum, perpetual and annual subscriptions. Other titles are perpetual only, but the company plans to introduce annual subscriptions for TurboCAD Civil and LTE Pro by mid-2017.
- **Nanosoft:** One-year subscription, and a three-year subscription that includes a perpetual license.
- **PTC:** Creo and Creo Essentials Packages are available in both subscription and perpetual licenses.
- **Siemens PLM Software:** Four product tiers of Solid Edge are available in perpetual licenses and monthly and annual subscription plans.
- **Vectorworks:** Perpetual licenses are available for all products; in addition, customers who purchase an annual maintenance contract can rent additional licenses for two or more months.

There are circumstances where the subscription is more financially attractive, there are times when the perpetual license is more attractive.

Bhupinder Singh, Bentley Systems

We see CAD users are calling for more licensing freedom and that we can build great value by meeting their expectation instead of forcing them one way or another.

Cédric Desbordes, Graebert

While monthly subscriptions are currently a hot industry topic, most designers tell us that they appreciate the flexibility that our current license and annual maintenance model provides.

Nicole Davison, Vectorworks

cadalyst

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