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CAD Manager's Newsletter (#469)

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By: Robert Green

Plan, Disaster, Recovery — Be Ready!

It's never too soon to plan for potential CAD disasters.

I hate using the word disaster to lure you into reading, but events over the past year or so have made me much more aware of how little planning CAD managers have really done for disruptive events. In this edition of *The CAD Manager's Newsletter*, I'll share some disaster scenarios you may want to think about and give you some tips on how to better plan for them. Here goes.

Image source: bakhtiarzein/stock.adobe.com

Workplace Disruption

What if some unforeseen event forced you to leave the building and work 100% remote? That could never happen, right? I think COVID proved that it could and that we were woefully unprepared for such an event.

The questions that come to mind in such a case include:

- ► How mobile are your workstations?
- ► How could you move fixed workstations to remote locations?
- ► Is a plan for remote desktop access in place?
- ► How will remote user validation be handled?
- ► Will your CAD software licensing be impacted?
- ► What will be the impact of reduced bandwidth for home-base users and network servers be?

Clearly, some of these questions are within the purview of IT, but I found that in many cases IT was caught unaware of CAD issues during the start of the COVID lockdown. Here are some recommendations to help organize your plan:

Mobile vs Desktop. Is it worth buying more mobile workstations for CAD users even though they can cost more than desktop options? The answer is worth considering and budgeting for THIS year, so you can be more prepared for the years to come.

Licensing issues. How should a mobile workstation be configured for a remote worker to gain access to a CAD license? Does that include any special firewall or VPN settings at license servers inside your workplace? Every time there is an update, be sure to test those settings.

Bandwidth issues. Will remote workers find their access to large files so slow that software times out or they experience faults due to latency errors? Find this out now by testing a remote location with the slowest Internet access (such as a hotel lobby WIFI router) using the largest files in production use. If bandwidth is problematic, you may need to investigate file sync and replication tools to mitigate the problem.

Conclusion: These are not made-up scenarios — they are real issues that I've seen time and time again during the COVID lockdown. While we probably won't see another pandemic soon, it's possible that a regional event such as a hurricane, earthquake, or fire damage to a building could cause a similar set of issues. Isn't it better to know how to react than having to improvise on the fly?

Product/Data Disruption

You've configured your company to use a powerful cloud-based tool for some specific design functions and have grown dependent on it. Then, for no apparent reason, the tool goes offline and you can't gain access to your data at all. This could never happen, right? That's what everyone who used Garmin shipping or flight management software thought in July 2020 as a week-long ransomware attack stopped shippers and pilots from filing logs and plans. Or when Wells Fargo customers had no access to electronic banking for two days in February 2019.

The questions that come to mind in such a case include:

- ► How dependent are you on dedicated cloud solutions?
- ► Could you live through the disruption assuming no data loss?

- ► What would happen if there were data loss?
- ► What would happen if the vendor went out of business?
- ► Are you making regular backups of any cloud hosted data?
- ► Would you be able to function offline or is your company trapped?

Again, some of these questions regarding data backup are IT-driven, but the movement towards more cloud applications and data should give everyone concern.

Find out what CAD managers should do next concerning data disruption. What about project backups? How can you prepare for issues that have more to do with your software than your own process? **Read more** »

Tools and Resources

AMD Releases Next Generation of Graphics Cards
AMD just released its most powerful AMD RDNA workstation graphics to date, the AMD Radeon PRO W6000 series workstation graphics cards**.** Based on AMD RDNA 2 architecture and built for hardware-accelerated raytracing, these new graphics cards deliver performance and efficiency for demanding architectural design workloads, ultra-high resolution media projects, complex design and engineering simulations, as well as advanced image and video editing applications, according to the company. The AMD Radeon PRO W6000 series workstation graphics announcements includes the AMD Radeon PRO W6800 ($2,249 USD); the AMD Radeon PRO W6600 $649 USD), and the AMD Radeon PRO W6600M GPU for mobile workstations (available soon in the HP Fury Book G8 mobile workstations). **Read more** » ▼ ▼ ▼

Volume Graphics' CT Software Virtual Event 21
Register now free of charge for the virtual trade show CT SOFTWARE 21, from June 15–17, 2021. Stroll through the virtual trade show, get in touch with experts who can tell you all about industrial computed tomography (CT), and find out about current developments in metrology, defect detection, automation, and simulation. Explore Hexagon's approach to smart manufacturing, how CT can improve your product design process, and the benefits of fueling your statistics with CT data. **Sign up here**»

VIDEO: Autodesk REVIT 2022 Users Speak Up
Revit 2022 has been out for a bit. Listen to some users that have dug in and are using the new version. **Watch the video**»

Manufacturing COVID-safe Workspace Environment
Siemens has developed a workplace distancing solution that helps manufacturers simulate and manage employee exposure risks while enabling productivity throughout their facilities. Using a combination of Siemens' SIMATIC Real Time Locating Systems and Xcelerator portfolio to help customers to manufacture with confidence and future-proof their operations under COVID precautions. **Read more** » ▼ ▼ ▼

GPU Shipments Soar in Q1 Year-Over-Year
According to a new research report from the analyst firm Jon Peddie Research, the growth of the PC-based Graphics Processor Units (GPU) market reached 119 million units in Q1'21 and 38.74% year-over-year. The company states that, "Overall, the installed base of GPUs will grow at a compound annual growth rate of 2.87% during 2020–2025 to reach a total of 3,333 million units at the end of the forecast period. Over the next five years, the penetration of discrete GPUs (dGPU) in the PC will grow to reach a level of 26%." **Read the report**»

SOLIDWORKS 3DEXPERIENCE World 2021 Still Available
If you missed SOLIDWORKS' virtual event, you can find all of the sessions still online. The 3DEXPERIENCE World brings together a vibrant community of designers, engineers, manufacturers, entrepreneurs, and business leaders. **Find out more**»

CAD CARTOON

— By Roger Penwill,

Keep on laughing!
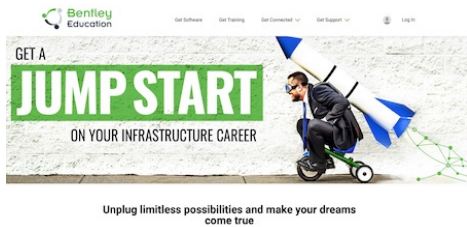

What's New at Cadalyst.com

DraftSight Insights: Lynn Allen Shows You How to Save Time by Assigning Layers to Object Types

Learn how to save time by assigning layers to object types in DraftSight! *By Lynn Allen* **Watch the video** »

Sponsored: Inspiring the Next Generation of Engineers

If you know any youngsters interested in engineering, be sure to send them this article! Bentley Systems introduces its new educational program designed to excite and inspire students of all ages and encourage them to discover their inner engineer.
By Lara Sheridan **Read more** » ▼ ▼ ▼

NEW! Cadalyst's Fab Freebies for CAD Users 2021
Why buy it if you can get it for free!

The editors of Cadalyst, with help from our contributing editors and readers who are in the CAD trenches day in and day out, have updated everyone's favorite guide to helpful tools and resources that don't cost a cent. **Download our guide** and you'll soon be asking yourself, "How did I live without this?"

The latest edition of the "Fabulous Freebies for CAD Users" guide has something for everyone, including unit converters, file and text utilities, PDF converters, BIM tools, CAD management tools, and more!

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About the Author: Robert Green

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