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# CAD Manager's Newsletter (#471)

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By: Robert Green

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## How to Excel at Support

**Fixing problems is your job, especially tech problems. Use these listening tips to make sure you understand the problem and, in turn, successfully solve the problem.**

One of the key pillars of CAD management has always been providing support to users, but how many of us work at building our support skills? During this past year, I've been pondering how best to support CAD users in this new world of less personal contact and more automated ticketing-based systems. It seems to me that providing support is getting harder, so I've felt the need to step up and make the experience better for both the user and the CAD manager alike.

In this edition of *The CAD Manager's Newsletter*, I'll share some of the tricks I use to provide support and offer some conclusions along the way. Here goes.



Image source: svetazi/stock.adobe.com

### What Makes Support Good or Bad?

A while ago I asked myself why I liked or disliked the support I'd received from a variety of places I do business with. I considered the times I'd called or emailed airlines, rental car agencies, hotels, internet providers, cable companies, cell phone providers, and — yes — software companies to resolve problems with an account or transaction. Some may say that these types of interactions have no bearing on how to support CAD users, but I beg to differ.

As I've explored my personal support experiences I've come to three conclusions:

1. Good support is good support no matter the product being supported.
2. Good technical support is as much psychology as technology.
3. Good support is not an accident, it is a skill that can be learned.

Let's unpack these concepts by outlining the support process with some tips and tricks thrown in along the way.

### Make a Good First Impression

When a support call begins, the first impression the user forms is almost totally based on your tone of voice and opening phrase. If you sound angry or say something like, "What's the problem?" the user senses that you'd rather be doing anything other than helping them, so they won't have a positive opinion of you. On the other hand, if you sound positive and use phrases such as, "What can I help you with?" the user perceives you as being interested in supporting them and they will like you. *Isn't it always easier to work with someone who likes you rather than someone who doesn't?*

When a support "call" is made by email or a ticketing-based system, the guidance is the same, but just in writing. Be sure to include language rich in use of the words such as **help, assist,** and **understand** to build a positive interaction with the user.

*Conclusion:* *No matter how good you are, how much you know, or the mode of communication being used, starting your support engagements in a positive, helpful manner always makes things easier.*

### Gauging the User's Tech Level

As you forge your positive first impression, you're not just making the user feel comfortable, you're also determining how much they know and what their comfort level is with technology. The goal is to use that precious first impression phase to read between the lines, so you'll know how technical or basic you'll need to be while supporting them.

*Conclusion:* *No matter how much you know, if the user doesn't understand your vocabulary you'll never resolve their problem, so always speak to them at their level.*

**Listen — Truly Listen**

After starting your support session, you'll start listening to the user, right? But will you be really listening or just going through the motions? You'd be surprised how many people in support really don't listen and you might be surprised to know why.

*Find out how to listen more attentively, and what clues to look for if the user doesn't understand. To add to the difficulty, sometimes a user really thinks they know what's wrong, but it turns out that isn't the problem at all. Read on to find out how to handle these sticky situations to resolve issues and keep everyone happy.*

**Read more**»

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## Tools and Resources

**New 3D Printer**
Stratasys Ltd. recently announced two new PolyJet 3D printers, the Stratasys J35 Pro and the Stratasys J55 Prime, along with new software solutions for research and packaging prototyping. The J35 Pro is Stratasys' first multi-material 3D printer for the desktop. The , while the J55 Prime adds a new set of tactile, textual, and sensory capabilities in addition to full color to the J55 3D printer.

**Find out more**

**WEBINAR: PLM is Dead. Long live PLM. June 24, 1pm EST.**
In this free webinar, leading experts from CIMdata, Salesforce, and Propel will share knowledge that will help inform your PLM evaluation and broader digital transformation journey. Specifically, you will learn how cloud PLM can help extend the definition of PLM to be increasingly business and customer-centric, equip companies to better overcome current and future disruptions, and simplify disparate and inefficient business processes.  **Sign up**

**New Utilities for Autodesk Products**
IMAGINiT Technologies launched new IMAGINiT productivity Utilities for Revit, Civil 3D, and the Vault Client. Available in standalone or network versions, IMAGINiT Utilities are complimentary to clients who have an active Autodesk subscription through IMAGINiT. Otherwise, companies may purchase and download individual IMAGINiT Utilities directly from the IMAGINiT eStore. **Read more** » ▼ ▼ ▼



**Let the Drones Fly High—Business is Booming as Regulators Relax Drone Laws**

A recent article in *The Economist* discusses how use of drones have created a thriving new industry. While they are used for inspecting power lines and buildings, new industry is building around them. Regulations continue to shift and are relaxing as use increases.  **Read more**»

**Quarterly Workstation Report**

As part of its ongoing research on the workstation market, Jon Peddie Research (JPR) released its *JPR Workstation Report Market Quarterly for Q1'21*. According to JPR's research, the Q1'21 workstation market volume grew about 27.7% YoY to establish a new record level. JPR Senior Analyst and JPR Workstation Report author (and Cadalyst author) Alex Herrera notes that the market's performance is anything but uniform. Herrera says, "While the overall number is encouraging, what's interesting is how market dynamics beneath the surface vary widely, by geography and form factor preferences, partly but not wholly due to the progression and subsidence of the pandemic. For example, we're seeing datacenter resident workstations starting to take meaningful share, displacing some sales of traditional deskbound machines." **Find out more**»

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**Sponsored: CAD Outsourcing Ramps Up**

VIEWPOINT: Manufacturers look for ways to better meet ever-changing demand while also reducing costs and increasing flexibility, especially during and post-pandemic. *By Greg Rankin* **Read more** » ▼ ▼ ▼



**AMD's RDNA2 Architecture Arrives for CAD Professionals**
**Herrera on Hardware:** Cadalyst looks at the two new Radeon Pro models first out of the chute. This month, AMD served notice it remains committed to the demands of applications such as CAD,

releasing the first members of a new generation of Radeon Pro products that leverage the advancements of the company's latest GPU microarchitecture. *By Alex Herrera* **Read more** »

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**IMAGINiT Tricks Tutorial:** Find your lost dialog boxes, format text quickly, and close down without slowing down in Inventor 2022.

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*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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