# CAD Manager's Newsletter

### Strategies and solutions for the real world *by Robert Green*

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# CAD from Home, Part 2: Training

**With many employees continuing to work from home, making sure that your team continues to grow, use standards, and work as a team becomes even more important.**

I recently started the *CAD from Home* series of CAD Manager's Newsletters with the focus on what it takes to survive the new COVID-19 normal of remote CAD workers. Our last installment covered workstation strategies and specs under the preface that CAD at Home begins with the workstation you use.

In this edition of the CAD Manager's Newsletter, we'll continue the series with the next most important component: Training. I'll strive to give you actionable tips and strategies you can use specifically for a remote workforce. Here goes.

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Image source: Mathias Rosenthal/stock.adobe.com.

### Why Training Matters

Ever since I've been a CAD manager, I've advocated training. And, most of the time, management agrees that there should be training. Sometimes though, I hear things like "We can always train later when we're not so busy" or "Now that we're not busy, we can't afford a training budget." I've come to reject these excuses and make the case that training is the bedrock activity that allows for overall organizational improvement to occur.

So, how should we address the topic of training in today's strange CAD from Home environment? The quick answer is that we must sell the concept of training in the right way and then deliver fast results tied to noticeable improvements. Let's see how.

### Pay Now or Pay Later

The saying: "*You can pay now or you can pay later,*" is 100% valid with respect to training. Training is simply the prevention of errors that would otherwise require support, money, and time to fix after the fact. It really does boil down to the fundamental question — Would you rather prevent errors today or fix them after they've occurred?

Of course, training has been complicated by the CAD from Home trend but the good news is there are ways you can approach training that makes the process easier than you might think. It turns out, if you show people the right way to perform a given task, then they are more likely to achieve correct results and make fewer mistakes. Plus, consistent training yields consistently better results over time. But, how do we sell the need to train to senior management? Like this:

*Strategy 1: Tell everyone from your boss to your users that training will be ruthlessly focused on the prevention of errors and workflow improvement. Keep repeating this mantra until people buy in.*

### Where is the Training Sweet Spot?

OK, so now that we know we need to recommit to training in the age of COVID-19. What should we focus on to get the most obvious benefits? This valid question requires some detailed thought. There are many topics for training but in the age of the remote worker these merit specific consideration:

**Standards compliance.** We can agree that proper use of standards increases efficiency. We can also agree that lack of standards compliance causes errors and costs money, right? These agreed upon concepts make a great case for conducting training that focuses on standards.

**Project coordination.** When everyone is working from home — including the client — project coordination becomes far different than when everyone is at the office. The reality is that these situations are constantly evolving and will never be truly standard until post COVID-19. So, frequent communication in the form of training becomes the only way to deal with the rapidly changing environment.

**Training as an FAQ system.** If several people all experience the same problem with a software tool or project coordination issue, why not use a periodic training session to focus on these issues? I call this FAQ Training and find that scheduling it on a weekly basis for 30 minutes yields great results. If no questions come up for the week, you can always cancel the meeting but this way you have a fixed training session each week that everyone commits to. At first, be prepared to drive the agenda, but over time you'll see users start to suggest topics.

**Record everything.** One thing I believe in firmly is: Never give the same training twice! By recording your FAQ Training sessions you'll have a library of recordings you can edit into short clips for a training library.
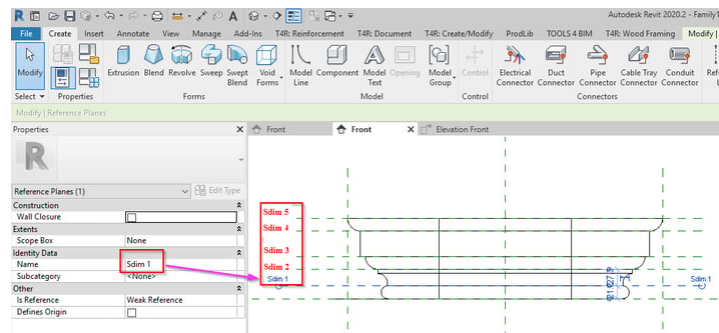
*Strategy 2: Be sure that any time you have training that you're either evangelizing standards, making projects run better, or solving user problems. Be sure to record it all to reap even greater efficiency later. Follow up and tell your boss you're doing all this work!*

*Learn the basic dos and don'ts of training, how to build your team using training as a strong basis, and encourage users to keep using the tools you've taught them.* **Read more** »

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## Tools and Resources

### Updated BIM Solution for Revit
AGACAD updated Smart Assemblies BIM Solution for Revit with new features based on user requests. You can now automatically measure to any point of your element, hide selected reinforcement in the view, measure nested elements differently, and more. **Read more** » ▼ ▼ ▼



### Film Digitizer Designed for NDT/RT
CAD/CAM Services announced its release of Microtek's NDT-2000 in North America. The NDT-2000 is an industrial film digitizer offering high-resolution images, while being engineered for the non-destructive testing (NDT) radiography testing (RT) industry.  The NDT-2000 is a DA, DB, and DS quality digitizer, and according to the company, it is easy to operate and reduces the need for maintenance and calibration. It Incorporates 1200DPI (dots per inch), 4.5D optical density, and 16-bit grayscale, plus offers hardware technology to reduce the noise ratio. **Read more**  »

**WEBINAR: Perspectives on SPDM in Vehicle Dynamics using Systems Engineering.** Presenter: Mr. Atsushi Tsubouchi, Chief Engineer, HONDA. September 21, 2021, 6 pm – 7 pm (ET).
As part of its multi-disciplinary analysis and optimisation series, Phoenix Integration, an Ansys company, will introduce the prospects for Simulation Process & Data Management, as applying the concept of

systems engineering to the performance design of the vehicle dynamics with effectively balanced performance. **Read more** »

**Work From Home Solution**

Pith & Stem is a startup dedicated to producing sustainable furniture. The company uses reclaimed wood, steel and plastic to create unique furniture, including compact retractable desks – the DropTop. The integrated, plug-and-play, wall-mounted folding desk is available in a range of options from the DropTop Duo with 2 inbuilt 24" inch monitors allowing triple screen extended display via the inbuilt DisplayLink dock when connected to a laptop, or the new Single and Single Max Ultra-Wide screen models. To add your own screens to your DropTop design, the range of DropTop Light models allow you fit your own displays up to 27" in 16:9 or 34" in Ultra-wide in size. **Read more** »



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Options evolve for automation and customization in AutoCAD and MicroStation to help beginners and power users alike. Regardless of how many features are packed into CAD software, end users inevitably want to add more features or adjust existing features. This article looks at programming options for two of the more commonly used CAD products in the AEC industry — Autodesk's AutoCAD and Bentley Systems' MicroStation. *By Andrew G. Roe* **Read more** »

**Herrera on Hardware:**
**The Evolving Role of the Mobile Workstation, Part 1**
HP's ZBook Power G8 epitomizes what's possible in a mobile form factor. Novel at its introduction in the early 00's, the mobile workstation has evolved from the niche to the essential. With a review unit in hand of HP's latest ZBook Power G8 mobile workstation, this month we get the opportunity to check in on the mobile workstation, both to assess its capabilities as a primary computing device as well as the reasons for its expanded market presence. *By Alex Herrera* **Read more** » ▼ ▼ ▼



*Image source: HP.*

**DraftSight Insights: Lynn Allen Explains How to**
**Open Your DraftSight Files in AutoCAD**
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## About the Author

Robert Green performs CAD programming and consulting globally and serves as Director of Implementation for Bricsys. He is the author of *Expert CAD Management: The Complete Guide*. Reach him via his web site.

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