



**SOME BUILDING PROJECTS WON'T  
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# cadalyst



**CAD Manager's Newsletter**

STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE REAL WORLD

*By Robert Green*

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## Back to Basics Boot Camp: Communication Techniques

**Develop elevator pitches to help you get what your CAD department needs.**

Sometimes we CAD managers get so far into the weeds of specific projects that we forget to tend to the basic skills that we must use as CAD managers in the first place. And, sometimes I'm guilty of not clarifying what some of those basic skills are for readers who aren't yet experienced CAD managers. Well, no more!

This edition of the CAD Manager's Newsletter will begin our Back-to-Basics Boot Camp series that will focus on the key skills and strategies that every CAD manager needs to function at maximum efficiency. The text will be written to serve all CAD managers — from novices to experienced veterans. In this edition, we'll focus on communication techniques. Here goes.



Image source: Niall/stock.adobe.com.

### Communicate via the Elevator Pitch

Do you use elevator pitches? You should.

The elevator pitch is a very brief explanation of an otherwise complex concept in the simplest terms possible with the sole goal of getting the other person interested in hearing more. The reason it is called an elevator pitch is that it should be conveyed in the span of time of a typical elevator ride.

Now, I already know many of you are thinking, “That’s sounds like a sales pitch and I’m not a salesperson, I’m a CAD manager!”

To this I reply, “Well, when you ask for new workstations, plotters, software tools, training budgets, or procedural authority, aren’t you really making a sales pitch to your boss?” When you think of it this way, you’ll realize that clearly and briefly conveying your concepts to your boss — so they’ll be interested in learning more — is the best way to communicate.

Below I’ll examine some classic CAD management topics by giving you example elevator pitch and follow-up scripts in hopes that you’ll see how powerful this technique really is.

### Standards

As I’ve stated often though the years, I don’t care what software you manage or what type of projects you work on, you must have CAD standards to maintain consistency and sanity. Yet, we all experience users and project managers who deviate from — or simply ignore — standards. So, how should we handle this issue before it blows up into a bigger problem?

The answer is to have proactive conversations with senior management.

**Suggested elevator pitch.** “You know, CAD standards really aren't about me trying control or dominate user behavior. They are simply an attempt to create

consistency so our projects will move forward faster and cost us less in rework time later.”

**Follow-up script.** “While it may seem like the CAD manager is trying to dominate the conversation, the reality is we just want consistency so we can make projects run predictably and lower our rate of error. What the standard is isn’t as important as the fact that everybody observes a consistent standard. I’m more than willing to work with anybody who has better ideas about how to standardize our workflows. Please understand my only motivation is to make our projects flow better and more profitable. Please help me by making it clear that you support standard work procedures.”

**Conclusion.** By framing the standards problem in terms of efficiency and savings, you’ve turned a technical issue into something financial — making it more interesting and important for your boss. Your challenge now is to keep the conversation going and provide examples where lack of standards has cost time so your boss will support standardization.

### The Training Problem

Unless you manage users who immediately understand all new software functions and features, you must have some sort of training program, right? But, when management sees training as something that costs money and contributes to non-billable time, how can you get approval? This is the age-old problem that CAD managers have in implementing training.

A strategy I’ve used with great success is to tie the standards problem (see above) with the argument for training. In fact, you may want to have this conversation at the same time.

**Suggested elevator pitch.** “We’ve invested a lot of time and effort into CAD tools and standards to make our projects profitable, but if we don’t train people on how to use the tools properly, how can we expect users to do what we want?”

**Follow-up script.** “If one hour of training per person on project standards and start up logistics saves us an hour of rework later, then the training pays for itself. In reality, I have observed that the time to fix these errors far exceeds the amount of time we would spend training, which means training gives us a great return on our investment. Please understand that I’m not training people just to say we have training — I’m training people to achieve better project execution. Not training users isn’t saving us anything; it is simply inviting error and inconsistency.”

**Conclusion.** By framing the training discussion in terms of time savings, you appeal to senior management, project managers, and users alike. After all, everyone wants to save time, right? Your challenge now is to implement a bare bones training strategy that delivers time savings and reduced project rework.

*What do you need to discuss next? Hardware! Find out how to ask for what your users need, so upper management says, "Yes!"* [Read More >>](#)



## Tools & Resources



### **BIM Integration, Keynoting, and Reporting**

Chaos released V-Ray 5 for Revit (update 2). This renderer offers linked document replacements, real-time support, and a new scatter tool as its new additions. Users can manage complex models for more realistic renderings without leaving Revit.

[Read more >>](#)

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### **BIM Integration, Keynoting, and Reporting**

Chalkline released the v22.0 major upgrade to VisiSpecs, The Visual Specification System. This upgrade includes a new Keynote Panel, navigation tools for integrated spec and BIM data, a new Document Explorer, custom outline reporting templates, and more. [Read more >>](#)

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### **Blog Watch:**

#### **Supersonic Flight: Will Commercial Travel Become a Reality?**

As technological milestones go, two inaugural flights set to take place in 2022 may well determine just how far away supersonic commercial air travel may be to become a reality again. Find out more about NASA and Boom Supersonic's plans.

[Read the blog >>](#)

**Training:****Keep Learning: Creo and SOLIDWORKS**

Design Engine offers two new courses: *Intro to Creo*. Introduction to constraint-based modeling, assembly, and detailing utilizing the latest release of Creo design engineering software. [Find out more >>](#)

*Learning Solidworks Surfacing* is a one-week intensive workshop that covers all the basics for advanced constraint based parametric Solidworks surface modeling. [Find out more >>](#)

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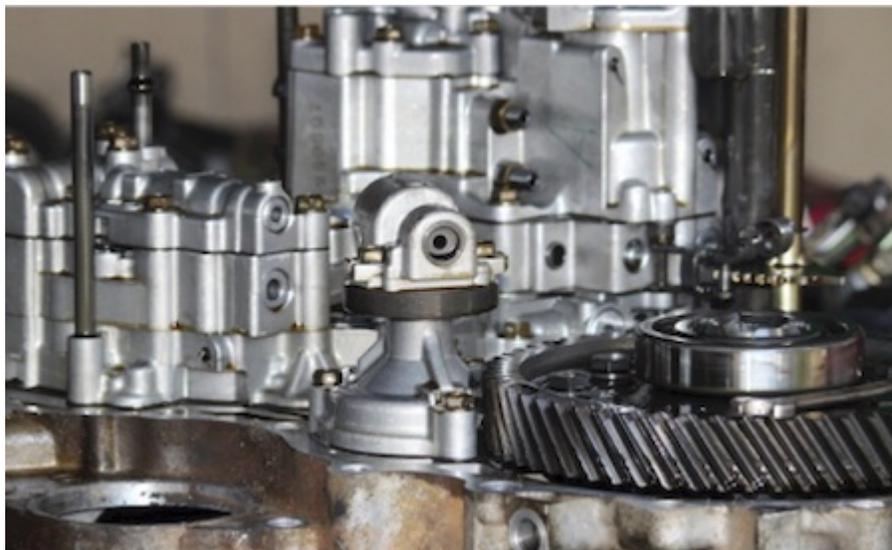
**IMAGINiT Technologies Adds New Utilities for Autodesk Vault Client & Vault Server**

IMAGINiT Technologies updated its Autodesk Vault-based utilities. Vault Client Utilities 2022.1 now offers Local Copy Cleanup to help users keep their hard drives clear of redundant files and Copy Folder Permissions which confirms that the right team members have the appropriate access to project folders. The Lifecycle Change Notification Utility now is more interactive and allows users to adjust the distribution list before notifications are sent and the Standard Folders Utility now allows administrators to customize the rollout of the standardized document sets and select the files that will be overwritten or cleaned-up post roll-out.

Vault Server Utilities 2022.1's new utility, the Related Files Checker scans for new files that meet specific criteria and align with the rules applied and if a missing file is identified, an automated process quickly searches for or creates the missing file. New enhancements include backup synchronisation, a license update so users can work remotely without having to request specific server access and Vault Metadata now lets users add missing data from an external source such as a spreadsheet and not overwrite current data. [Watch Webcast >>](#)

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## What's New From Our Sponsors



## **Sponsored: How are ZWSOFT's CAD/CAM Solutions Used in the Automotive Industry?**

Find out the differences between CAD/CAM and how ZW3D solutions are used in the automotive industry. [Read more >>](#)

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## **DraftSight Insights: Lynn Allen Shows You How to Easily Create (and Update) Multilines in DraftSight!**

One of the advantages of using a new CAD product is working with updated, easier to use commands — that often offer improved functionality. Such is the case with the Richline command in DraftSight (equivalent to MLine in AutoCAD). You'll find you can easily create and update the style whenever you want and watch in amazement as the Richlines update as well! Think of all the time you will save (and all the time you've wasted erasing multilines and starting all over)!

By Lynn Allen [Watch the video >>](#)

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## **What's New at Cadalyst**



### **Engineering Firm Embraces Digital Transformation**

Civil Engineering: E-learning from software developer-turned-trainer plays a key role in company's success. When Zutari Ltd., a South African engineering consultancy, committed to a digital transformation of its key processes, company leaders knew widespread changes and training would be needed.

By Andrew G. Roe [Read more >>](#)

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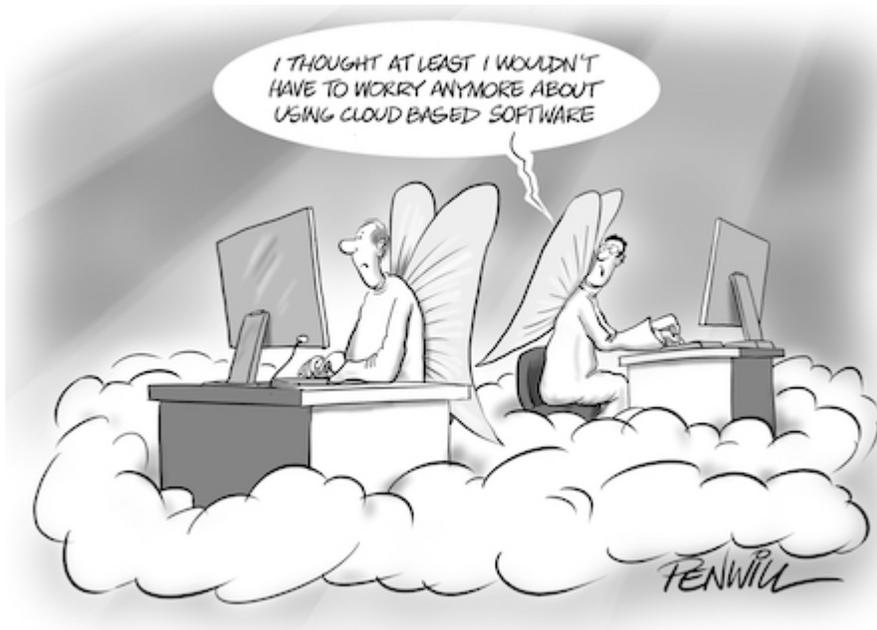
### Consumer Demands Drive Rapid Digital Transformation

Viewpoint: HP's Additive manufacturing is making mass personalization and sustainable manufacturing a scalable reality. Find out more! *By Wayne Davey*

[Read more >>](#)

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## CAD Cartoon



— By [Roger Penwill](#)

[Keep on laughing!](#)

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## Free Resources



## White Paper

### Implementing Generative Design for AEC

Cadalyst and Z by HP joined forces to write this white paper on generative design for AEC. Find out how you can get your design firm bought into this technology, what hardware you require, and how to secure funding for any upgrades you may need.

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## Ebook

### 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. 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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