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cadalyst



CAD Manager's Newsletter

STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE REAL WORLD

By Robert Green

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How Involved with IT Should You Be?

How does your job as CAD manager integrate with the IT department?

It's no secret that CAD tools/users have become more reliant on IT technology lately. We store files in cloud locations, validate CAD licenses via the Internet, swap redlines and markups via WAN connections, and confab with our remote teammates using video conferencing tools. Truly, to get CAD done these days you have to go through the tools that IT manages. And as these changes have taken root, CAD managers are ever more at the mercy of the IT teams that manage those resources.

More and more I've started asking the following questions: "How much should I be involved with IT?" and "Should CAD managers be treated as part of the IT department?" or even "Should CAD managers report to the IT department?" In this edition of the CAD Manager's Newsletter, I'll pass along some strategies you can use to decide how involved with IT you should be at your company. Here goes.



Image source: Alina/stock.adobe.com.

CAD Manager Personas

A consistent trend over the years is that CAD managers are typically designers, engineers, architects, or other technical workers who evolve into the CAD manager role. It is rare for someone with a pure IT background to become a CAD manager. So, the persona that emerges is that of someone who isn't a classic "computer nerd" but someone who evolved into the position because of their CAD expertise. Therefore, most CAD managers I talk to still report through the engineering manager, production manager, architectural director, or other technical management branch of the company — it is rare that they report through the IT department. As a result of not being in the IT department, many CAD managers have zero IT capability or permissions.

What I have noticed is that today's CAD manager either has to be more IT conversant or has to rely a lot more on the IT department than they did before. Could it be that CAD managers should now be part of the IT department or at least have all the power and permissions of an IT staff member? Could being a member of the IT staff better help us make IT reliant CAD tools run better? How can the CAD manager know the answer to these questions?

Ask: What IT Tools Determine Your Success?

Or, put another way, what IT tools/issues cause you problems? After all, if you know where the IT heartburn is you know what IT areas you need to pay more attention to. To answer the above, read through the following topics and answer each diagnostic question *Yes*, *No*, or *Sometimes* and write down your answers:

Network administration: Creating user accounts, creating user groups, assigning network permissions to users and groups, sharing and configuring network peripherals, access to cloud accounts, etc. If your IT department handles all these tasks, how well do they do so?

Diagnostic question #1: Do your CAD tools often experience problems because of incorrect network permissions, peripheral issues, or account configuration problems?

Peripheral management: The ability to reset printers/plotters, clear out document queues, configure device defaults, deploy drivers, etc., is something every CAD

manager should know how to do.

Diagnostic question #2: Do you often find yourself waiting for IT intervention to get a printer or plotter back up and running or have to wait for driver updates?

Data archiving and backup: The ability to store, find, and recover data is key for disaster avoidance and recovery. The ability to comb through old projects to find hidden nuggets of information from similar projects executed years ago can also save tons of time. Learning to use your company's backup and restore IT procedures could prove to be invaluable.

Diagnostic question #3: Do you find yourself waiting long periods of time to recover or find archived information due to IT delays?

Software updates: To the extent that CAD software requires administrative permission to be updated, the CAD manager should have the authority and knowledge to manage the process. This includes the ability to create software deployments and deliver automatic updates via user login and group membership. CAD managers who don't have IT authority to do this are at a disadvantage during upgrades and service pack installations.

Diagnostic question #4: Do you experience problems getting software installed and upgrades/service packs deployed due to lack of IT authority?

Wide area network (WAN) management: As companies use CAD tools across WAN connections to branch offices the CAD manager will be called upon to resolve problems at these remote locations. CAD managers need access to remote network servers and permissions to perform all manner of functions on any servers where CAD work is performed.

Diagnostic question #5: Do you have problems managing software tools and configurations at remote sites due to lack of IT authority?

Support bureaucracy: As companies have become more security-focused, the tendency has been to make IT more tightly locked down and to hide behind support ticketing systems rather than simply being able to call a specific person for help. While general users may be able to wait for help on an ordinary issue, CAD managers are responsible for many users and usually need to get resolutions in place quickly.

Diagnostic question #6: Do you have to wait long periods of time for impersonal IT service to resolve issues in your CAD environment?

Read on to find out how your company stacks up and read Robert's recommendations on how to fix communication breakdowns with your IT department. [Read more >>](#)

COMING SOON:



Tools & Resources



Meet the Finalists! Bentley Announces the Finalists in 2022 Going Digital Awards in Infrastructure

Bentley Systems announced the finalists in the 2022 Going Digital Awards in Infrastructure. The annual awards program honors the extraordinary work of Bentley software users advancing infrastructure design, construction, and operations throughout the world. Eleven independent jury panels selected the 36 finalists from over 300 nominations submitted by more than 180 organizations from 47 countries encompassing 12 categories. The finalists demonstrate excellence and digital advancements in their respective award category. The winners will be revealed on November 15 during the 2022 *Going Digital Awards in Infrastructure* celebrations in London at the Intercontinental Park Lane in front of invited press members and industry executives. [Read more >>](#)



Digital Event: Graphisoft Building Together 2022

25–27 October. Graphisoft's Building Together 2022 will dive into the AEC industry trends and digital best practices shaping our built environment. Graphisoft plans to "bring together leading professionals from around the world to discuss the future of AEC and how it can best respond to the demands of today's industry challenges." Event sessions will explore themes around socially responsible architecture, immersive experiences, digital transformation, and empowering future architects. Talks, roundtables, and case studies will be led by members of the BIM community and architects and firms. [Register now](#)

Trimble Dimensions+ Conference

7–9 November, The Venetian Resort, Las Vegas. Trimble

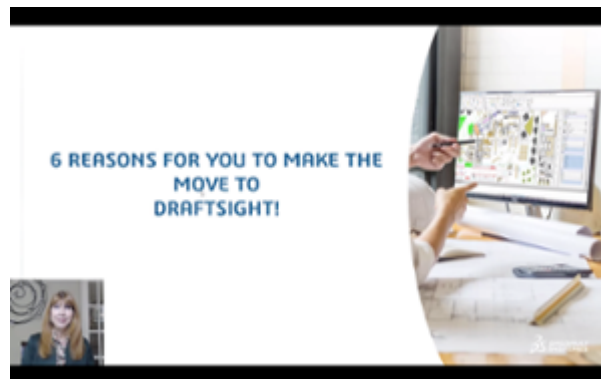
At Trimble Dimensions+ User Conference you can select from hundreds of expert-led sessions, live demos and hands-on workshops to expand your skills and find new solutions to industry-specific challenges. [Register >>](#)



Case Study: McLaren Racing Uses 3D Printing to Get an Edge

Find out how Stratasys' Neo800 stereolithography 3D printers enable McLaren Racing to make up to 9,000 parts per year to chase the perfect design. By bringing more production in-house and compressing development cycles, 3D printing is helping McLaren make the most of stricter design windows and cost controls set by the FIA. [Read the case study >>](#)

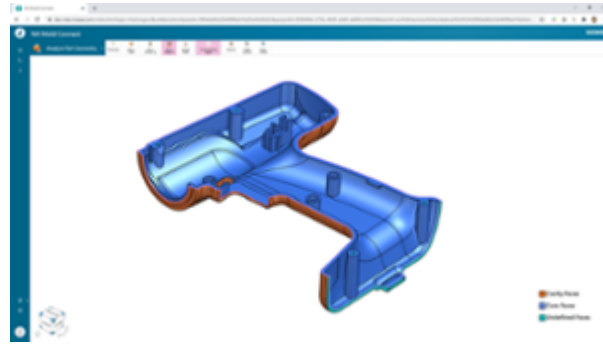
What's New from Our Sponsors



DraftSight Insights:

Lynn Allen Gives 6 Reasons to Move to DraftSight!

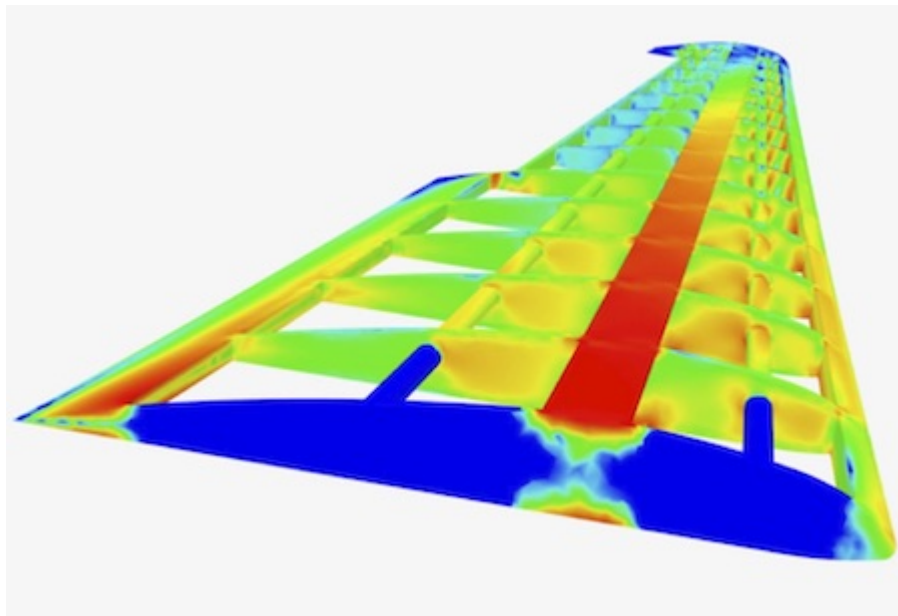
Lynn explains the top reasons why you might be ready to switch to DraftSight. What's the first and biggest reason? To save money. [Watch the video >>](#)



The Equipped Mold Designer: Providing a Simplified Approach to DFM Analysis

Part 3. Design for manufacturing analysis has become a critical step in the early stages of plastic product design. Follow how this mold manufacturing team is using DFM analysis within NX Mold Connect. [Read more >>](#)

What's New at Cadalyst



Viewpoint: GPUs are Taking Over Engineering Simulations

In Cadalyst's Viewpoint column, graphics industry pioneer Jon Peddie explains how GPUs are taking over engineering simulations. Find out more!

By Jon Peddie [Read more >>](#)



Herrera on Hardware: The Small Form Factor Fixed Workstation: A True Desktop Machine for CAD

The Small Form Factor was the first and most successful industry shrink of the tried-and-true workstation tower. *By Alex Herrera* [Read more >>](#)

Civil Engineering: Digital Tools Help Australian Team Tackle Challenging Bridge Project

Firm designs project under tight constraints while ramping up digital project delivery. *By Andrew G. Roe* [Read more >>](#)

Free Resources

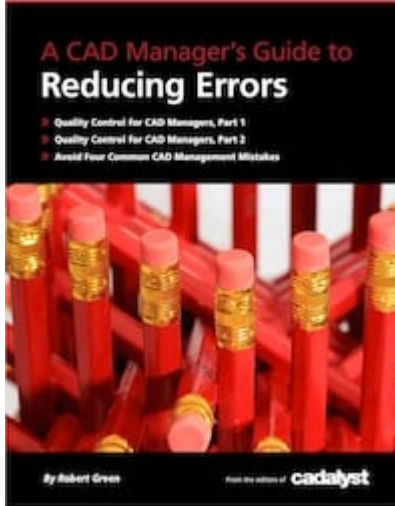


CAD Manager Chronicles Video Series

Episode 2: CAD Management Plan

Having a plan is your first step towards success. Watch this easy-to-follow introduction on how to streamline your process, ensure you have the right software and hardware, keep your team up-to-date with training, and save money. *By Robert Green*

WATCH NOW



A CAD Manager's Guide to Reducing Errors

Whether your problems stem from users who ignore standards, a company culture that doesn't prioritize quality, or self-sabotaging management techniques, this guide will set you on the path to greater efficiency, fewer mistakes, and better results. *(Compiled from Robert Green's CAD Manager's Column.)*

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