cadalyst

CAD Manager's Newsletter
STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE REAL WORLD
By Robert Green

December 15, 2022
Issue #503

Always Know Your Exit Plan

Follow this self-assessment to help you strategize your software contingency plans.

We've all experienced a safety talk when waiting for our plane to take off, right? Despite the information you ignore — I mean who doesn't know how to buckle a seat belt — there is one critical piece of advice in that speech where they tell you to, "locate the nearest exit in case of an emergency evacuation," that always catches my attention.

If we think of our CAD software as the aircraft that our data flies in, then doesn't it stand to reason that we may need an emergency data evacuation from our CAD software? And, in that case, wouldn't knowing your exit strategy be a great thing to plan in advance? In this edition of the CAD Manager's Newsletter, we'll lead you through a self-assessment so you can plan your exit just in case something bad were to happen. Here goes.

Image source: robepco/stock.adobe.com.

You Could Get Stuck

You sit down to work and log into your cloud-based CAD tool at the software vendor's server, perform some edits, then save your proprietary CAD file to a cloud-based server. So far so good, right? But, let's now ask yourself the following questions: If the software vendor's web site is down, how can I log in to make edits? If the cloud-based server is offline, can I retrieve my files? And, if the software vendor went out of business, can I access my drawings again? And, finally, what if the software vendor made a big change in license terms or prices that causes me to reconsider continuing to subscribe to their software — would I have any options given the proprietary data formats and system architecture?

I know that for many companies, the decisions about CAD software platforms have already been made and the software purchased, so the company may already be "stuck." But, before you consider any new technology platform — or blindly continue with your current platforms — you must understand your risk profiles. As CAD manager, it is important for you to understand these risks so your company is aware of them.

Assessing Exit Risk — Data Format and Access

At the end of the day, the only thing any of us produce is data. Be it CAD data, a spreadsheet, word processing, or survey instrument data, the data we create as we do our jobs is the electronic representation of our intellectual property. As such, you need to have a clear understanding of where your data is located, how portable it is, and how you can access it, if need be. Here are some diagnostic questions and points you can assign that will allow you to understand your company's risk profile. Answer honestly:

1. Is your CAD data in easy to access formats, like DWG, IFC, STEP, etc.? (If yes, score **0** points; if no, score **2** points; if you have a mix of formats, score **1** point).
2. Is your CAD data stored locally or on a data server that you control rather than at the software vendor's server? (If yes, score **0** points; if no, score **2** points; if you have a mix of storage locations, score **1** point).
3. Can your CAD software run on a local machine or is it hosted at a vendor's web site? (If local access works, score **0** points; if all software is on vendor web site, score **2** points; if you have a mix of software tools, score **1** point).

4. If your software vendor's web site or licensing site goes down, can you keep working? (If yes, score **0** points; if no, score **2** points).

5. Can any cloud CAD data you have be easily backed up to a local machine? (If yes, score **0** points; if no, score **2** points; if backing up is a tedious and time-consuming task, score **1** point).

Now add up your point totals to see what your exit risk score is. Your number will be somewhere in the range of 0 to 10 points which will allow us to draw some conclusions.

Based on how you answered our questions, let's draw some conclusions about your company's risk profile and solutions to consider. Click through to analyze various scenarios! >>

Tools & Resources

Product Watch: V-Ray 6 for Revit
Chaos recently launched V-Ray 6 for Revit. With a new link to Enscape, architects and specialists can collaborate on photorealistic visualizations at any part of their process — without losing design intent, directly in Revit. Choose from an array of high-quality materials and 3D assets—including detailed models of furniture, trees, cars, and people—to bring your project to life. The new Chaos Cosmos asset browser lets you place render-ready content directly into your Revit model. V-Ray comes with two powerful rendering engines. You can choose between super-fast GPU and CPU or Hybrid rendering to best suit your project needs and requirements.
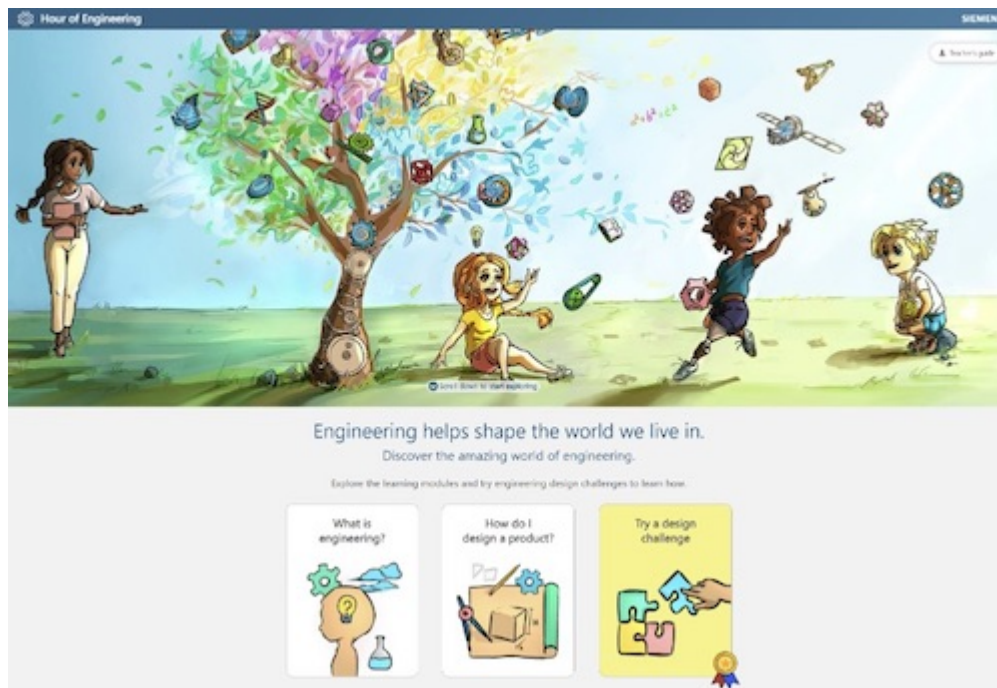**Read more >>**

Collaboration: Graphisoft BIMcloud SAAS
Use Graphisoft's BIMcloud SaaS (software as a service) to access your own secure BIMcloud server hosted by Graphisoft in the cloud. Using this new SaaS gives you fast, efficient, and secure access to shared projects in real-time, according to the

company and allows you to work in teams regardless of the size and location of your team or the complexity of the project. **Find out more >>**

Inspiring the Next Generation

Siemens Digital Industries Software recently announced Hour of Engineering, an engaging online learning program to empower educators to introduce students to engineering and technology with right-sized, kid-friendly learning content in as little as one hour. Through this new program, Siemens intends to inspire, engage and educate students about the role and fundamentals of engineering before they begin high school, helping to create a robust pipeline of future engineers. Without that spark of interest, by the time students reach high school many will have already decided against engineering, based on common misconceptions about the field. Work with kids or know someone that does? **Read more >>**

What's New from Our Sponsors

Bentley Gears Up for Infrastructure Work with iTwin Platform
Company announces new and enhanced products at the 2022 Year in Infrastructure and Going Digital Awards. By Cadalyst Staff, *December 6, 2022*. **Read more >>**

DraftSight Insights: Lynn Allen Answers: Which DraftSight is Right for You?
From DraftSight Professional (2D CAD) to DraftSight Enterprise+ (3D perpetual/network license) or 3DEXPERIENCE DraftSight, what version of DraftSight is right for you? Every office's needs are different, find out from Lynn which package fits your CAD needs best. By Lynn Allen, *November 21, 2022*.
Watch the video >>

What's New at Cadalyst

Herrera on Hardware: What's In a Name? Little to No Difference in a Processor's SKU Can Translate to a Big Impact on Performance, Part 1
Compact fixed and mobile workstations often dictate lower-power, lower-performance components not always easy to recognize on a datasheet. *By Alex Herrera, November 17, 2022.* **Read more >>**

AEC Solutions: Technology Helps Launch Sustainable Housing Projects
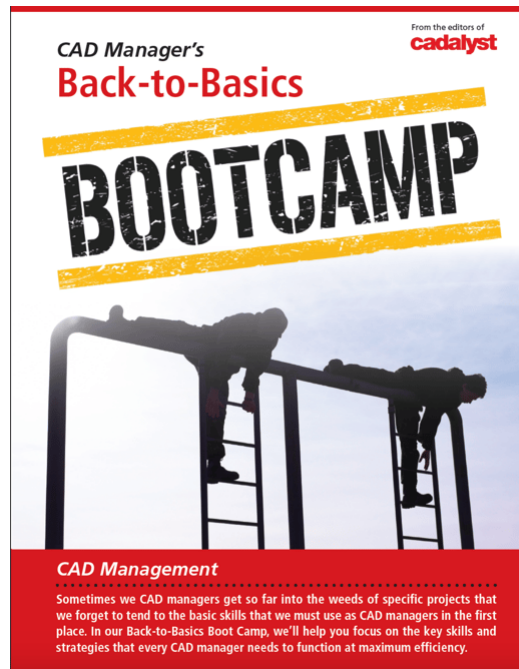Kenyan firm uses BIM and other digital tools to increase efficiency. *By Andrew G. Roe.* **Read more >>**

CAD Cartoon

— By [Roger Penwill](#)   **[Keep on Laughing!](#)**
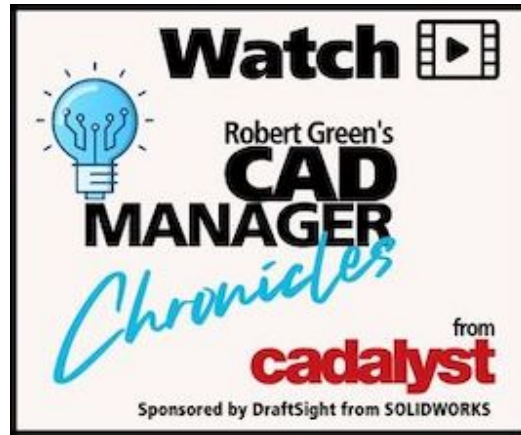

Free Resources

White Paper
CAD Manager's Back-to-Basics Bootcamp
Sometimes CAD managers get so far into the weeds of specific projects that it's easy to forget the basic skills that are needed as CAD managers. In our Back-to-

Basics Boot Camp, we'll help you focus on the key skills and strategies that every CAD manager needs to function at maximum efficiency.
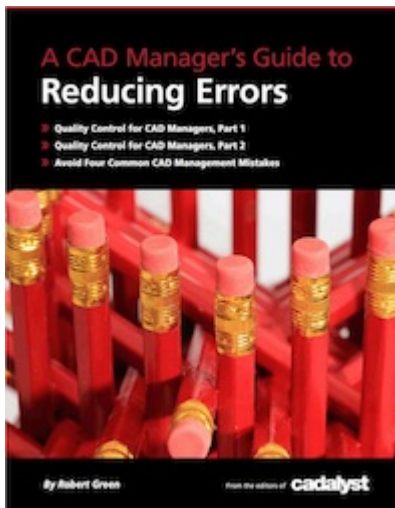
DOWNLOAD NOW

CAD Manager Chronicles Video Series
Episode 3: CAD Management Constants
While many things change as time goes on, there are key parts of being a CAD manager that remain the same. What are they and how do you keep improving on those things to build success? *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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