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## CAD Manager's Newsletter

STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE REAL WORLD

*By Robert Green*

January 19, 2023  
Issue #504

## New Year, New Plan

**Even with all the uncertainty in the global economy and day-to-day work, the best way to have a successful year is to set goals and make plans.**

2023 is now upon us and with global economies in a state of uncertainty due to high inflation, interest rate hikes, global energy problems, and war in the EU, 2023 is a bit of a crap shoot to forecast. All things considered, New Years is as good a time as any to refactor your CAD management plans. But, how can you adjust your plans given all the uncertainty?

In this installment of the CAD Manager's Newsletter, I'll share some of my analysis and predictions for the New Year along with some resolutions that should help you meet the challenges we'll all face in 2023. Here goes.



Image source: [hakinmhan/stock.adobe.com](#).

*Author's note: I base my opinions on my interactions with CAD managers, senior management teams and personal experience to draw my conclusions.*

### **Management and IT Become Ever More Important**

This trend became a big deal during the remote work upheaval brought on during COVID. As companies struggled with how to host remote meetings, control files, and integrate new technology for remote work, CAD became less about CAD and more about remote work management.

This trend shows no sign of reversal as management of file sharing, cloud apps, scattered resources in Teams silos, remote access issues, and CAD licensing changes continues to be an ever-larger part of the job. Think you can just focus on CAD or BIM work as a CAD manager and make everyone happy? No way. Not anymore. We all have to become more IT and management savvy and this will impact everything from software to projects to staff.

*So, what resolutions can we make for this increased management burden and how do we know where to place our emphasis?*

**Resolve to:** Manage your CAD and IT resources in a way that saves money, increases employee output, and maximizes speed of output for your company. If any task you are asked to do doesn't support these objectives, then it is low priority.

**Resolve NOT to:** Change software just to make changes, undertake big organizational changes, or enter into expensive new software contracts without seeing PROOF from vendors that it will keep IT costs down.

### **Software Costs Go Even Higher**

Any of you who participate in budgeting know that software costs keep going up. And, more and more it isn't the cost per seat that is driving up costs so much as other ancillary factors. These trends became prominent last year but are accelerating and will become even more common this year. Consider the following:

- Named user policies mean license sharing or "pooling" can no longer be used to keep costs down.
- More and more "extras" and "upcharges" are being applied, such as premium fees for Single Sign On (SSO) or cloud data tools.
- Migration from traditional desktop-based CAD/BIM tools to a patchwork quilt of cloud applications costs a substantial amount of implementation time, and time is, after all, money.
- Administrative burden — in terms of IT and CAD manager time — continues to increase as licensing compliance becomes a more difficult task.
- Dealing with licensing issues like AWS server outages that power cloud-based licensing and application services can cause serious loss of production time.

Taken together these trends are making CAD/BIM a lot more expensive these days and causing a lot of consternation in corporate boardrooms. In 2023, I predict more calls from CFO's and boards to reduce seat counts and licensing costs; you know they'll be asking you for recommendations, right?

*So, how to approach this problematic budget reality?*

**Resolve to:** Optimize what you already have — especially if you can leverage perpetual software tools rather than annual subscriptions.

**Resolve to:** Skip software updates to keep implementation costs down unless absolutely required.

**Resolve to:** Analyze what software your users need to do their jobs and lower license counts aggressively to save.

**Resolve to:** To be creative in using remote access and machine sharing to keep software costs down. I'm not telling you to violate any licensing policies here, but I am saying that you should do everything you can to keep seat counts down.

**Resolve NOT to:** Buy software that isn't mission critical at your location or cave-in to software company pressure to buy things you simply don't need.

### **CAD Software Becomes More Modular**

The good news is that there is a whole new selection of products (not from the big CAD companies) that are making CAD a more modular and plug-in architecture than in years past. Products like Enscape, Grasshopper, and Lumion are changing the visualization and complex surface modelling environments, for example. And, as more modules that operate with IFC file formats permeate the BIM environment, it will become even more modular.

*So, how should you take advantage of this and how do we navigate this complex, plugged-in, and modular landscape?*

**Resolve to:** Evaluate any modular tools based on their function and merit and only use those tools that provide value to your users/company — particularly if you can replace subscription tools with perpetual tools.

**Resolve NOT to:** Play the “plug-in of the week” game! Don’t allow users to randomly install the latest modules they’ve downloaded without supervision from you.

**Resolve NOT to:** Allow users to install proprietary plug-ins or modular apps on workstations, tablets, or phones that deviate from your CAD/BIM application’s native OS without specific vetting from you and/or IT.

### **Hardware and OS Mostly Stable, but Laptops are Problematic**

Powerful hardware and the relative stability of Windows 10 has made it easy to specify CAD machines in the last few years, but new laptops increasingly ship with Windows 11 which makes managing mixed environments more likely. Since legacy CAD applications can sometimes have problems on Windows 11, I try to keep everyone on Windows 10.

*So, what is a minimum configuration for CAD/BIM that you should you specify to IT then? Use these guidelines.*

**Find out the minimum configuration you should have for CAD/BIM seats, plus how to handle the staff shortage and to keep your CAD management position relevant. [READ MORE >>](#)**

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## **Tools & Resources**

### **Product Watch: Solibri and Autodesk BIM 360**

Solibri Office, a BIM quality assurance program, is now integrated with Autodesk BIM 360 and according to the company allows “users to create an efficient and reliable workflow to validate the quality of their BIM models, and easily share changes, issues or resources with relevant stakeholders.” [Read more >>](#)

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### **Call for Speakers: GEO Business 2023**

Are you leading the way, using geospatial technology in innovative new ways and driving the profession forward? Or are you just starting out and have knowledge that could help others in the same position? If you have insights to share relating to any aspect of geospatial, GEO Business (ExCeL London on 17–18 May 2023) is looking for speakers. [Read more >>](#)

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### **News: Companies Work Together for Sustainability Goals**

[Dassault Systèmes](#) and [IBM](#) extended their long-standing collaboration with a plan to combine their technologies to address the sustainability challenges affecting asset-intensive industries. To help companies ensure business continuity while achieving their sustainability goals, Dassault Systèmes and IBM have decided to combine Dassault Systèmes’ 3DEXPERIENCE platform and virtual twin experiences with IBM’s solutions for Asset Management, Resources Optimization, Environmental

Risk Management and ESG governance. Over the coming months, Dassault Systèmes and IBM will work together to structure the details of their joint offering. Both companies will first target owners and operators of water / energy distribution and energy transmission projects, wind farms operators, airports and IT infrastructure projects that focus on datacenters.

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### **Coming Soon: Marketplace for CAD software and industry solutions**

MERViSOFT is launching an appstore for CAD plug-ins in April 2023. Users will find the complete spectrum of applications from a wide range of industries at CADSOMA.com. Dirk Redmer, Managing Director of MERViSOFT, decided to start this initiative to help users more easily find solutions. "In the future, users will find exactly the application they are looking for on CADSOMA," says Dirk Redmer, managing director of MERViSOFT, explaining the concept, "regardless of which CAD platform is used." In addition to CAD software, CADSOMA will also offer services, such as training and support, plus hardware. The company hopes to bring advantages to software providers. Companies that already register on CADSOMA will receive the benefits of the new app store for CAD plug-ins free of charge in the first year. [Read more >>](#)

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## **What's New from Our Sponsors**

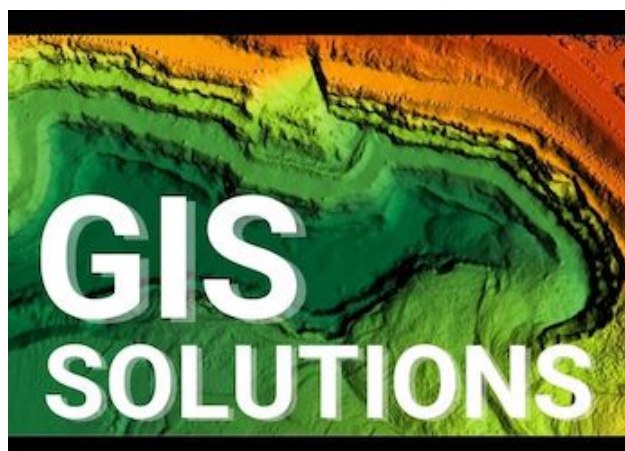


### **Bentley Gears Up for Infrastructure Work with iTwin Platform**

Company announces new and enhanced products at the 2022 Year in Infrastructure and Going Digital Awards. By Cadalyst Staff, *December 6, 2022*. [Read more >>](#)

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



**GIS Solutions: All-in-One Handheld Devices Aid GIS Workflows**

Combined receiver and data collection units expedite processes for U.S. utility company. *By Andrew G. Roe, January 12, 2023.* [Read more >>](#)

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**CAD Programming: Rediscovering AutoLISP**

Using AutoLISP to automate CAD tasks. *By Andrew G. Roe, January 10, 2023.* [Read more >>](#)

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**MCAD Solutions: New Product Development Strategies for Smaller Companies**

Use an NPD plan to help your company successfully bring new ideas to market. *By Cadalyst Staff, January 9, 2023.* [Read more >>](#)

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**CAD Cartoon**

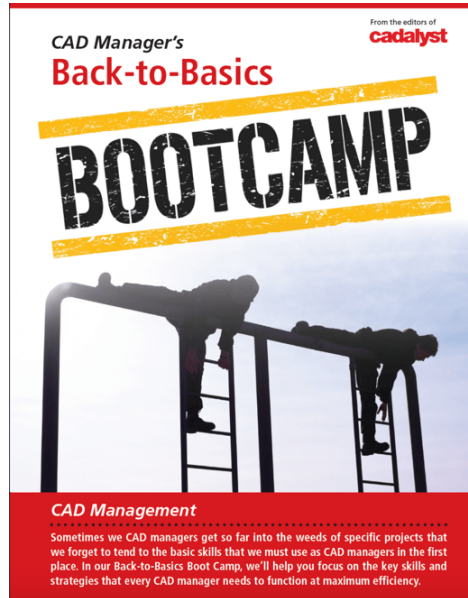


— By [Roger Penwill](#)

[Keep on Laughing!](#)

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## Free Resources

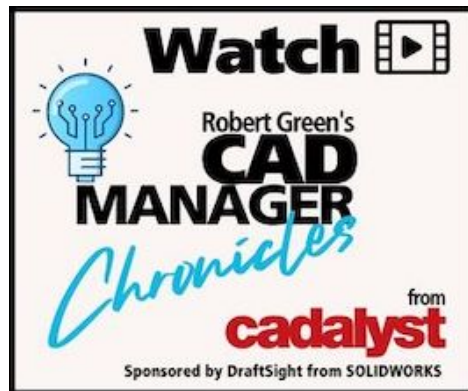


### White Paper

#### 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](#)

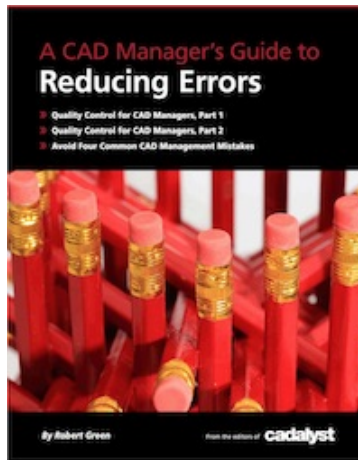


### CAD Manager Chronicles Video Series

#### Episode 4: Making Upgrade Decisions

In this fourth episode of Cadalyst's CAD Chronicles, Robert Green discusses how best to make decisions around upgrading your software. When, what, how much, which seats? Find out how to make the best decisions for your work place. *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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