Another Twist for World

May 6, 2009

I'd like to offer a few other arguments for the use of the DVIEW TWIST routines discussed in North Rotation: Using Twist Screen. The four Carlson DVIEW routines cited:

1. ***Standard*** *– This option allows you to select a rotation angle using the mouse.*
2. ***Line, Polyline or Text*** *– This option allow you to select an object to set as a view baseline. It is the most useful when trying to match views to objects such as property lines or road centerlines.*
3. ***Surveyor*** *– This option prompts for the manual entry of a bearing or azimuth for the rotation angle.*
4. ***Restore Due North*** *– This option returns the screen to the orientation where North is straight up.*

fall right in line with remarks made by ESRI's Brent Jones at the 2009 Carlson User Conference who said:

> *"GIS changes the whole domain for surveyors," Jones added, "And surveyors need to be ready for what's coming next –*

> *high accuracy GIS. The key is geo-referencing," he said. "We can use our data to communicate to our world with greater precision over greater areas."*

In my opinion, a **U**ser **C**oordinate **S**ystem (UCS, by its very definition), takes the data one step further away from being geo-referenced. There are those that would probably argue that having data in a World Coordinate System (WCS) and at assumed coordinates of something like 5000,5000,100 is no better than using a UCS to shift this same data to a proper geo-referenced coordinate system. From a holistic stand-point, I'd tend to agree. However, what sets the WCS *vs.* UCS argument apart is this simple statement:

All drawings must have a WCS yet not all drawings have a UCS.

When one considers the longevity of information represented in drawings created to this point in time and then reflects on how this information might also be used in the future, I feel it is important to model that information (and subsequently allow that information to be easily extracted) in a consistent and reliable fashion. A **U**ser **C**oordinate **S**ystem is typically only understood and used by its creator

which in turn, limits its use and subsequently increases the risk of liability when the **U**ser **C**oordinate **S**ystem isn't known or understood by a "downstream" recipient of the drawing (survey stake-out, machine control excavation, *etc*).

Side note observation… Is it me or are there some parallels between UCS and custom ARX objects used in other products? When I look at how long the DVIEW *vs.* UCS arguments have been made, I can only surmise the length of time that will be involved to bring the non-proprietary *vs.* proprietary data argument to a close. I suspect it's going to be a long, tough road.

In any event, it is my opinion that standardizing on a single WCS should provide more consistent deliverables when the drawings/projects span multiple people, offices and/or disciplines. When properly adopted, using a "twisted view" of geo-referenced data in a World Coordinate System should provide more feature-rich information now and into the future when our data is mapped onto the Earth.

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Ladd Nelson

Ribbon vs. Menu… Your preference is??

May 6, 2009

I was reading a recent AP article that was similar to the article entitled Meet Microsoft's antidote to Vista and saw the following:

> *You probably don't know her name, but if you're using Office 2007, the sleeper hit of the Vista era, you're already familiar with Larson-Green's work.*
>
> *She was the one who banished the familiar system of menus on Word, Excel and other programs in favour of a new "ribbon" that shows different options at different times, depending on what a user is working on.*

Hmmm… I'm wondering if she'd be willing to re-think that decision?

I'm not sure what it is about the ribbon interface but I cannot seem to get used to it. I've tried… I mean *I've really tried* to be productive with the Office 2007 ribbon but continually find myself wasting lots of time searching for a particular command whose location I could find instantly in the traditional pull-down menu system used in Windows and Office applications for the past +15 years. The article also said:

> *"We want to reduce the amount of thinking about the software that they have to do, so that they can concentrate all their thinking on the task they're trying to get done," Larson-Green said in an interview.*

The task I'm trying to get done?? I'm trying to figure out where all my favorite old commands went for getting my work done. I'm finding that I'm spending **more** time thinking and searching for commands and having less time for the task(s) I'm trying to get done. Don't even get me started on the new default file formats for Office files (*.docx, *.xlsx, *.accdb, *etc*) and having to Save As for those who haven't adopted Office 2007 and later.

Side note observation… I wonder how soon it will be until Autodesk decides to release a **.dwgx* file format? Perhaps the Open Design Alliance should beat them to the punch.

According to the frequently changing Wikipedia write-up on ribbons:

> *Microsoft has started the process of acquiring a patent on the ribbon user interface concept[2] and licenses the ribbon design to third-party developers royalty-free, as long as the user interface conforms to the Microsoft's design guidelines and they can get an approval from Microsoft. The ribbon design guidelines are confidential and an evaluation copy is only available when a non-disclosure agreement has been signed.*
>
> *The Ribbon has been licensed by Autodesk for AutoCAD 2009…*

My fear is that when I eventually have to migrate out of AutoCAD 2008 (I'm running the ribbon-less AutoCAD 2008 and IntelliCAD and haven't even looked at AutoCAD 2009/2010), I'll be too far behind the 8-ball. Maybe I'm too grounded and comfortable with pull-down menus. I still prefer Windows XP

over Vista and suspect I'd prefer pull-down menus in my CAD product like many of comments left at AutoCAD 2009 – How do you use the Ribbon? blog. Perhaps it is time to accept the fact that ribbons are likely here to stay. However, if my CAD productivity takes a hit due to the migration to ribbons like my Office productivity took a hit, I suspect I'm "going to have some 'splainin' to do." Personally, I'd love to have a one-to-one chat with Julie Larson-Green (*a.k.a. "Microsoft's antidote to Vista*") to learn why throwing away +15 years of interface familiarity is/was a good idea.

What do you think?

[polldaddy poll=1552888]

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Ladd Nelson

Carlson + ESRI = Wow!

May 6, 2009

That CAD Girl

So, how cool is this?

At the Carlson User Conference this week in Lexington, KY, Brent Jones of ESRI announced a new grant program in coordination with Carlson Software. The program will bring ESRI products to every IntelliCAD-based Carlson program.

Speaking with Brent on Tuesday, he said that a few of the details have yet to be worked out, but Carlson IntelliCAD users should be hearing details in about a month.

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Jennifer Dibona

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Brent Jones of ESRI discusses 'Why GIS Needs Surveyors'

May 6, 2009
Combining all the GIS and land development technologies that

exist today is what Brent Jones suggested surveyors do in his keynote address to the attendees at the 2nd annual Carlson User Conference. Jones, PE, PLS, is the Survey, Cadastre, and Engineering Industry Manager for ESRI, which designs and develops the world's leading geographic information system (GIS) technology.

To help surveyors accomplish this, Jones announced an upcoming grant program to be offered by ESRI for every Carlson IntelliCAD user. "ESRI is very supportive of Carlson's development on IntelliCAD and we want to support your users," said Jones of this specialized grant program being developed exclusively for Carlson IntelliCAD users. "We want to help surveyors leverage their existing resources to help in the GIS market." With this offer Carlson IntelliCAD users will be able to access GIS technology and jump-start a GIS practice. Read More

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Karen Cummings

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Dewberry's Dave Palumbo presents 'Choosing and Implementing Carlson'

May 6, 2009

Starting his presentation at the Carlson User Conference by saying "Carlson works for us," Dave Palumbo, PE, Technology Manager for Infrastructure Services at Dewberry, noted that Dewberry, an ENR top 50 design firm was an early adopter of technology as a differentiator. The evaluation and implementation of three competing solutions took Dewberry more than two years. "Patience was of the essense," Palumbo said.

Read the entire post

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Karen Cummings

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BIM vs. “CIM” – Is it a Noun or Verb?

May 6, 2009

I wanted to share my opinion related to the BIM this, BIM that… What is BIM? article to essentially equate (or draw parallels between):

“Acronym”	“Location”	“Data”	“Mechanism”	“Discipline”
BIM	Building	Information	Modeling	Architectural
GIS	Geographic	Information	System	Civil

If one turns the acronyms around,

- **BIM** is another way of saying Owners/Architects who utilize Model Information for Buildings, and,
- **GIS** is another way of saying Officials/Civil Engineers who use a System of Information for Geographical projects/studies.

If the message(s) from the Autodesk marketing department

http://usa.autodesk.com/company/building-information-modeling and
http://www.cenews.com/article.asp?id=3137

is/are to believed, Autodesk is expecting the market to swallow the hype that the Civil 3D (*C3D*) product can function within the confines of a building or as a BIM solution.

I don't buy this (and in my opinion, neither should the public). By the looks of the responses to a discussion on the C3D newsgroup this past September, 2008:

http://discussion.autodesk.com/forums/message.jspa?messageID=6033685

it looks as if C3D users aren't necessarily swallowing the attempted message either. As the thread eloquently points out, it largely depends if you take the context of "building" to be a noun or a verb:

1. ***Noun***
   http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/building – "1 a usually roofed and walled structure built for

permanent use (as for a dwelling)”

2. ***Verb***
   http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/build[1] – “1 to form by ordering and uniting materials by gradual means into a composite whole”

Side note observation… Since GIS is/has been a well established market for other products on the market and is also one that Autodesk does not control, could it be that Autodesk is trying to capitalize on the relative newness of BIM by generalizing the Noun form of BIM into that of a Verb so they can use it to further confuse the market?

Whatever the context, I also feel C3D falls short for BIM in one key aspect; all of the C3D seems to get locked up into the ARX/proxy objects within a given drawing. To my knowledge, C3D doesn’t allow the “Information” aspect of the design to be externalized outside of the drawing. As Civil Engineers and Land Planners look down the road for the next 10 or 15 years (or more), I tend to question how they’ll be able to manage/maintain/extract the data locked away in C3D drawings that are being produced today. As I heard one DOT employee say, their projects typically span years in the

design/life cycle. If I were in their shoes, I wouldn't be looking forward to having to carry around all the LDT/C3D object enablers that will likely come out with each annual release of each C3D product for the next decade or two.

My ¢2.

Ladd Nelson
Sales Director – Midwest Region
Carlson Software

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Ladd Nelson

Carlson Software Expands Carlson College™

May 6, 2009
Carlson Software recently expanded their expert level training program, Carlson College™, and started the Carlson College Training Program. This new program will allow

individuals and companies to get training direct from Carlson Software or through the members of the Carlson College Training Program. New members of the Training Program include Harken-Reidar Inc. of Front Royal, Va.; Carlson Desktop Solutions (CDS), based in Austin, Texas; That CAD Girl, located near Raleigh, N.C.; and, for C&G products only, Larry Phipps of the Land Surveyor's Workshop in Jefferson, N.C. Membership in the Carlson College Training Program is available to any person or organization that makes a commitment to providing quality training on Carlson Software products.

For more information on the Carlson College Training Program or training, please contact Carlson Software at 800-989-5028, email training@carlsonsw.com or visit www.carlsonsw.com/training. Members of the Carlson College Training Program are independent entities from Carlson Software.

Read the entire Press release here.

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Karen Cummings

Coming in Carlson 2010

May 6, 2009
I'm not privy to the "official" list of coming updates, but I can share a few things that I know will be in the next release. Most of these come from "wishlist" items I have submitted on behalf of my clients.

The folks at Carlson are welcome to add their 2-cents in the Comments of this post or on Direct From Carlson.

Option for placing building footprint a distance off the building setback line.

Currently, the LotNet command places the building footprint exactly on the midpoint of the building setback line. We heard the request several times to have the option of placing the footprint some distance behind the setback line. It will be in the 2010 release.

C & G Survey

Instead of having two separate survey programs, Carlson will be incorporating C & G as a separate set of menus in Carlson Survey in 2010.

Basic IntelliCAD Menu

If you're running Carlson on top of an AutoCAD-based program, you have an icon or menu option to switch over to an AutoCAD menu that has basic Draw commands such as line, pline and text and basic Modify commands such as copy, explode and pedit. Although it's not easy to get to right now, IntelliCAD has a similar set of menus and toolbars. Carlson 2010 stand-alone with IntelliCAD will have a menu item and toolbar icon allowing you to easily switch over to the IntelliCAD menus and then back again to the Carlson menus.

Lookup table of curb slopes for super-elevation transitioning

This new feature will handle curb transitions like those shown in this NC DOT detail drawing.

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Jennifer Dibona

Poll Question 3/30/2009

May 6, 2009

[polldaddy poll=1493826]

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Jennifer Dibona

AutoCAD 2010 Release, Autodesk 2006 Software Retirement

May 6, 2009

Autodesk has announced that their 2010 products will be released on March 24, 2009. I found this post by Randy McSwain to be a good overview of the new features in AutoCAD 2010.

That CAD Girl

As of March 13, 2009, Autodesk no longer supports or offers upgrades from their 2006 products.

Because of the retirement of Land Desktop, I see that Autodesk is offering to crossgrade existing Land Desktop customers to Map or Civil 3D with special pricing. Subscription will probably be mandatory, but I’m not certain.

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Jennifer Dibona