It's Trade Show Season – Come See Me!

January 20, 2015

It's trade show season again and I am happy to get the chance to go visit old friends and meet new ones over the next few months…

Next one upcoming is the SAMSOG Technical Seminar in Atlanta later this week. I appreciate the opportunity to present my classes to this group for the first time and I understand it's going to be quite a crowd; but they take walk-ins on the day of the event. I'll be covering *Tips & Tricks in CAD and Carlson* and an *Introduction to Field to Finish*.

Next will be the NJ SurvCon in Atlantic City which starts on 2/4. I think this is my third year and I really enjoy seeing everyone although they all tell me I talk funny! Again, it's *Tips & Tricks* but I'll also be presenting *How to Take a Project from Field to Finish with Carlson Survey*.

That CAD Girl

February 11th thru 13th I'll be in Columbus, Ohio for the 40th Anniversary of PLSO's Annual Conference. I'll be in the exhibit hall for most of the time but on Friday will be teaching *CAD & Carlson Tips & Tricks*. Make sure you visit my booth and see how your CAD skills match up to surveyors in other states!

And, lastly (I think), I'll be in Murfreesboro TN at the TAPS 47th Annual Meeting & Exhibition from March 12-14. I'll be in the exhibit hall most of the time but will also be teaching *Field to Finish for Survey and GIS Collection from a GIS Dummy* on Thursday March 12th.

It's not a trade show but don't forget Carlson's 2015 User Conference at the end of April. I'll definitely be there since it's practically in the backyard of my hometown in Kentucky.

Looking forward to seeing everyone!

Carlson Tip of the Day… Virtually “printing” to PDF, DWF, JPG and PNG files

January 20, 2015



If you’ve recently switched from an AutoCAD-based program to Carlson with IntelliCAD, one thing you may miss is having the ability to virtually “plot” your drawings to PDF, DWF, JPG and PNG files instead of to paper. This functionality is not included in IntelliCAD and, from what I understand, including it would have significantly increased the price of each license so the developers decided to leave it out and allow users to purchase add-on programs if needed the functionality.

So, if you need to print to one of these formats, how can you do it?

If you primarily need to create PDF files and don't mind spending some kinda-big bucks, you can purchase a program such as **Adobe Acrobat**. Acrobat is a standalone program but it also installs as a virtual printer into Windows-based programs like Carlson, AutoCAD and even Microsoft Windows and Outlook.

If you need to print to PDF, you could save some money and consider other after-market programs such as **CutePDF** or **PDF995** (or many others) that essentially serve the same purpose – installing as a PDF printer into Windows-based programs. Most of these programs have a free version but there's usually a catch such as a watermark on each PDF that says something like, "This document printed with …". If you purchase one of their other products, the watermark goes away. I currently use **Adobe Acrobat** but used **Win2PDF** for years.

If you need to print to PDF but also to other formats such as PNG, JPG and TIF, you may want to take a look at **PDF Creator from SourceForge**. I know this is the utility recommended by

several of the tech support team at Carlson but I haven't used it myself.

I am not sure if the other programs that I listed above (PDF995, CutePDF and Win2PDF) allow you to "print" to formats other than PDF and I can't tell from their websites but, if anyone knows and wouldn't mind passing that information along to me, I'll update this post with the additional information.

As mentioned above, having these PDF-creating programs installed like a printer directly in your Carlson programs makes them very convenient and handy – but there is most likely a cost associated with them all.

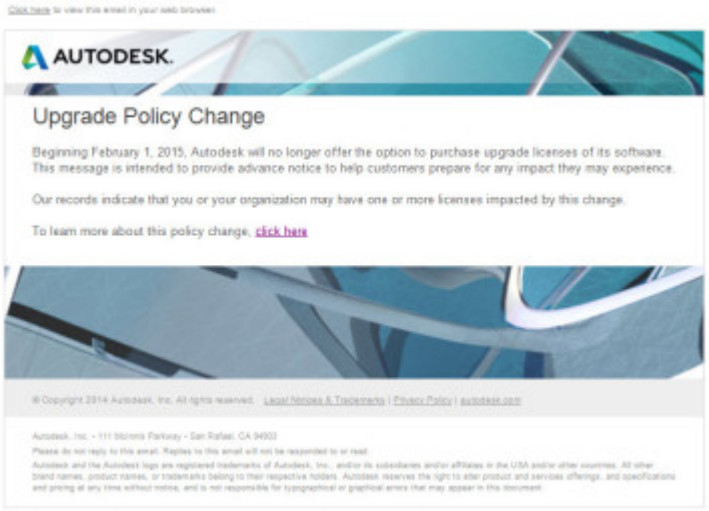
My final recommendation is free, but a little less convenient – it's **Autodesk's DWG TrueView** (this link changes all the time – apologies in advance). It's free, but it allows you to use all the virtual printers included in AutoCAD such as DWGtoPDF, DWGtoJPG, DWGtoPNG and DWF ePlot. In addition, TrueView also includes the oh-so-cool DWG TrueConvert program that enables you to convert one or more DWG files from any version to pretty much any other version. The downside to using this program is that it's a standalone program so you must save your drawing and then open again in TrueView in

order to plot.

Happy Plotting!

Autodesk Policy Change – No Upgrades After Feb 1, 2015

January 20, 2015
As a current Autodesk subscription customer, I received this message in my Inbox yesterday:



The link to find out more takes you here: **Frequently Asked Questions about the Autodesk Upgrade Policy**

I think we all saw this coming but now that it's upon us, it's time to make sure our software licensing ducks are in a row.

Robert Green's "An Open Letter to CAD Software Companies" and a Response from IntelliCAD

January 20, 2015

If you're one of the many folks out there who don't believe that the developers of your CAD software are listening to you… you're not alone and you should take the time to read **Robert Green's** "**An Open Letter to CAD Software Companies**" in **Cadalyst**. And, as to the part about feeling like you're all alone, here is Robert's follow up describing the **overwhelming response to his open letter**.

I receive email versions of **Robert's bi-weekly CAD Manager newsletters** but had fallen behind and didn't see the original post until yesterday. If I'd read it when it was first released, my response would have been, "Amen brother!".

Just yesterday morning I had a conversation with a colleague

whose company does Landscape Architecture, Civil Design and Land Planning. They are fully invested in Civil 3d (including much blood, sweat and tears in addition to money, money, money) but they're as productive as any company I know of with the program. Their main complaint? They feel like Autodesk is pushing them toward Revit and they have no need for the software.

In my own experience, I see the push toward NavisWorks and 3ds Max. I had two seats of Civil 3d until I downgraded one of them to Map last year – only to be "rewarded" with an upgrade to Infrastructure Design Suite (and more money for Subscription) this year. This was supposedly something that owners of a Civil 3d and a Map license were able to opt-in to. I didn't opt-in. So, it took me several days to get them to un-opt-me-in and revert my licenses back to what I'd purchased. Is it any wonder I'm suspicious of any "bonuses" that come my way **because of this**?

I don't know how much Robert intended to point the finger at **Autodesk** in the original column but, with my experiences described above, the references to BIM (which **we've long argued** was a way for Autodesk to avoid talking about Esri and

GIS) and Cloud and other buzzwords, that's certainly the connection I made in my mind.

Because the **Carlson Software** I sell now includes **IntelliCAD**, an alternative to AutoCAD, I passed links to the open letter and the responses to a few folks to get their reaction. Dave Lorenzo, the Development Director for the **ITC (IntelliCAD Technology Consortium)** took the feedback to heart and, considering the interest in the future of IntelliCAD the past few years, I asked his permission to post his response. I very much appreciate his willingness to let me do so…

> *I agree that the features mentioned are focused on AutoCAD, but the article is not so much about features as it's really about the user's perception if someone is listening. While Autodesk is moving too fast providing features that users don't want or need, we are not moving fast enough to provide the basic productivity features users are requesting, so it appears we both are not listening to our users. That is the perception we need to fix too.*
>
> *Our next release has several user requested productivity features and I hope our users will see we are listening. Actually we have always been listening but our rewrite of*

IntelliCAD 7 took so many resources that there was little time for new features – that situation is finally changing. I believe that there are a lot of unhappy AutoCAD users who want IntelliCAD to be successful, we just need to listen and add those remaining productivity features that are keeping them from making the switch.

Thank You!

January 20, 2015

As 2013 wraps up I'd like to offer a sincere 'Thank You' to all of my customers for your business. I've had a lot of repeats from previous years but I've also added more new customers in 2013 than I did in 2012 – that's one thing I look at to determine whether my year has been better than the one before.

Another number that may be surprising is that almost 90% of my software sales so far in 2013 have been to companies who

purchased only 1 or 2 seats of software through the year. As much as I love selling a bunch of seats to one customer, I know that larger organizations typically have a larger support system around them. I'm happy I can help out so many of the "little guys".

The economy has been tough on everyone the past several years but it's been particularly brutal to those in the land surveying, civil engineering and construction fields. For good or for bad, we've all had to figure out just how efficient we can be and how we can get as much work done by as few people as possible and for the least number of dollars.

I hope I've been able to help in some way by extending software discounts where possible and training your staff to help your company get the most out of your software investment.

I wish everyone a safe, happy and prosperous 2014!

Carlson Software Training – New and Improved in 2014

January 20, 2015
With the new year upon us I'm announcing some exciting new changes to my training policy and offerings…

First, the bad news: My hourly rates for custom online training will be going up on January 1. If you've already scheduled training at the old rate, this doesn't apply to you. **Email me to request new rates**.

Second, the good news: Anyone who purchases software from me will receive discounted training rates. Like I said, **email me to request the new rates**.

Third, the great news: Starting January 15th I will be conducting a series of monthly webinars that you'll be eligible to attend if you purchased software from me in the preceding 12 months. These 1-2 hour sessions are something new I'm trying for 2014 as a way to provide my customers between 18 and 24 hours of training over 12 months.

That CAD Girl

In January, March and other odd-numbered months, we will spend approximately 2-hours introducing you to Carlson Software. These will be repeat sessions meant to accommodate new users coming on through the year. These sessions will cover settings & setup (using the IntelliCAD/for AutoCAD version), importing points, overview of Field to Finish, surface creation, deed entry and annotation, centerline definition and stationing and creating profiles. There will be time for questions at the end.

In February, April and other even-numbered months, we will hold 1-2 hour training sessions on other, specific features in Carlson Software. Some topics we have planned are for survey traverse adjustment, surface modeling and drafting of pipes and structures in hydrology. These sessions will also be interactive and you'll have an opportunity to ask questions.

The fine print: There will be a limited number of "seats" available for the sessions (limits of the technology). If we start bumping up against the limit of attendees, only one person per company will be able to attend each session. If we

have plenty of seats available, that won't be an issue.

You can pre-register for the January, February and March 2014 events here

The topics, date and time for future sessions will be posted later. After pre-registering, we will confirm your recent purchase and, if you are eligible to attend, I will send you the meeting login information.

This looks like a big deal…

January 20, 2015
A colleague pointed me to this post on the **CADTechs** group on LinkedIn:

Autodesk today said it would discontinue the ability to purchase software upgrades on February 1, 2015

Job Opening in Raleigh-Durham area of NC

January 20, 2015
Greater Raleigh AE firm looking for CAD talent. C3D 2012 Drafter for machine modeling, site survey, construction and engineering projects.

Carlson experience is a plus and Microstation/Geopak a double plus. Our ideal candidate will be able to learn new software quickly, have a good understanding of survey mapping and site civil design. For consideration, Drafter must be willing to take the lead, work on computer all day, have a stellar attitude, able to pass drug screening and have a good driving record.

Please forward resume to cary@taylorwiseman.com or fax to 919-297-0090

That CAD Girl Newsletter | September 2013

January 20, 2015
Click here for the September 2013 issue of my newsletter…

Professional Surveyor Magazine – Assorted CAD Tips & Tricks

January 20, 2015
I’m a bit late pointing this out, but here’s my latest Picks

That CAD Girl

‘N’ Clicks article for **Professional Surveyor Magazine**

CAD Tips & Tricks