

Carlson Civil Suite \$2,125

Yes, I know that I just sent out an email advertising my price for Civil Suite at a different price, but Carlson surprised everyone by initiating their special pricing. New pricing for other products:

- Carlson Survey \$ 1,275 (Regularly \$ 1,500)
- Carlson Civil \$ 1,275 (Regularly \$ 1,500)
- Carlson Hydrology \$ 850 (Regularly \$ 1,000)
- Carlson GIS \$ 850 (Regularly \$ 1,000)
- Carlson TakeOff – \$ 7,650 (Regularly \$ 9,000)

That CAD Girl may offer additional discounts on Civil Suite, Civil, Survey, Hydrology, GIS and TakeOff. We also include one FREE hour of online training with any Carlson Software purchase.

[Click here](#) for a complete list of Carlson pricing.

That CAD Girl – March 2010 Newsletter

Our March Newsletter can be downloaded [HERE](#)

Carlson Software VS Civil 3D® – Revisited

There is a loooonnggg conversation comparing Civil 3D and Carlson Software that is taking place across two websites: www.civil3d.com and Autodesk Civil 3D Discussion Group: Carlson VS 3D.

I give kudos to James Wedding for extending the discussion on his website www.civil3d.com and also to Autodesk for allowing the conversation to happen in their Civil 3D Discussion Group. This topic is of vital interest to many people and, I think, will be a valuable resource.

I have posted a lengthy response to the comments from both sites below. In order to make it follow-able for those here on www.thatcadgirl.com, I have included links to the comments I was responding to.

Neil – I’ll cede several of the points you made in your post. (Read it [here](#)). Both programs have dynamic design capabilities; but, if you define dynamic as, “like Civil 3D does it”, then: No, Carlson doesn’t do it like Civil 3D does. And I definitely agree with the pad template example. You do have to pick the “Process” button to get it to re-design and there is no Undo for the surface model. Dynamic? I’ll agree that’s a stretch; however, I don’t think I’ve ever cited it as an example of Carlson’s dynamic reactions.

But, even with those and other supposed drawbacks such as the number of files Carlson creates, can I get my job done and out the door on time and under budget? Can most of my staff learn it on their own? Can I easily recover my data after an AutoCAD

crash? Can I share my designs with others using any version of Land Desktop without having to explode everything? Can I avoid upgrading and the associated headaches every year? With Carlson, I can.

Bottom line, there will obviously be trade-offs. So, what is it worth to me? You cannot have this conversation without looking at what makes your company money. Dewberry probably has the moral high-ground here: Dewberry – CE News Article. They went through all the motions with Civil 3D and undoubtedly put their checkbook behind that effort. But Civil 3D must not have returned the favor. If they'd met productivity and profitability goals with Civil 3D, would they have given it up?

I'm not trying to deny that there are people and companies out there who are able to be efficient and turn a profit with Civil 3D. If you have figured it out and it works for you and your company as it seems to have for Arthur Miller, a gentleman who posted at James' site (Read it here), then more power to you – I think that's fantastic.

I've looked for good hard numbers and more "Arthur Millers" but they seem to be few and far between. Instead, Civil 3D defenders usually point to bells and whistles, whistles and bells...

MSpatz makes the argument for the bells and whistles very well here on this DG thread and then cross-posted the same thing here: (Read it Here). He states that it only cost his company \$500 per person to implement. I must say that's the lowest cost I've ever heard. Is this typical? MSpatz knows Civil 3D well enough to be a contributor at www.civil3d.com. Do you need an MSpatz on staff to create and maintain Civil 3D installations in order to keep those numbers that low? And what if an office only has one MSpatz on staff? There's a potential cost there too... Who picks up if he's out of the office or leaves the company?

Redundancy in knowledge is pretty important. I'm happy to admit that I'm wrong, but I'd like to hear from others what it really costs to get it up and keep it going (training, upgrades, pilot projects, creating templates, assemblies, styles, etc.). Contact me here ContactUs@thatcadgirl.com.

He also states that, "It is not a layer thing, it is a style thing – KEY". No matter how KEY he believes "Styles" are, they don't pay salaries. I agree: dynamic objects are COOL! and can also greatly increase productivity. But they also have a cost and complexity component. How much money does, "Look how cool this is!" bring in the door on an annual basis? That's why, instead of touting the **features** of either Carlson or Civil 3D, I tend to focus on the **benefits** to a business as a whole. **Features** make money for Autodesk, their resellers and consultants. **Benefits** make money for the people using the software.

Sinc's post (Read it here) summed this up very neatly. As much as they like Civil 3D, he's just not sure they'll be able to justify the cost. And it sounds like they are extremely productive with it.

Which leads me to my last point: If and when they have to leave Civil 3D behind, Sinc's group will have a choice and that choice might lead them away from Autodesk entirely. It seems that in so many things Autodesk is doing these days, they are forcing everyone to, not just move to Civil 3D, but to move to the **latest version of Civil 3D**. Retiring products so quickly... making 2010 C3D objects incompatible with 2009... punitive costs for letting subscription lapse... the list goes on. Business decision for them, too – I understand that. They must have decided it's profitable for them, but it's pricing many people out of Autodesk's civil/survey market.

I had a conversation with Jason Hickey at AU right after he

started with EE. I think he was either just starting or just finishing up an implementation with Stantec. I told him that I thought that Autodesk was missing the vast majority of small to mid-size engineering & surveying customers out there because the cost/benefit just wasn't there and they wouldn't adopt Civil 3D until it was. I'm paraphrasing, but his response was something like, "Once the Stantecs of the world move to Civil 3D, the others won't have a choice."

I had just recently signed on with Carlson at that point and wasn't yet sure whether Carlson would be competitive. But, I told him then what I've told many people since, "Whether it's Carlson or another software company, someone, someplace will develop an alternative for that market. Because they just will not sign onto something that will make them lose money."

PS – Working on putting together a real shootout, invitations have been extended... will keep you posted.

Poll: What Are Your Upgrade Plans?

We ran this poll last year and thought it would be interesting to run it again to see how and if things have changed...

That CAD Girl – February 2010 Newsletter

Our February Newsletter can be downloaded [HERE](#)

Carlson Software: Student Version

Answering a need that's been out there for some time, Carlson has recently announced the availability of a "Student Version" of their products.

From the announcement in the American Surveyor magazine:

Carlson Software is offering civil engineering, land surveying and mining students the option of purchasing their own software on which to learn and work at home for \$99 for a full academic year. This program is available for fulltime students.

The software that Carlson is offering for this program includes the following:

- *Carlson Civil Suite – Carlson Survey, Carlson Civil, Carlson Hydrology and Carlson GIS in one powerful package.*
- *Carlson Survey – now with C&G Survey included is the ultimate office survey software*
- *Carlson Takeoff – provides fast and accurate CAD-based*

- estimating, plus essential quantity and quality controls*
- *Carlson Mining – the software choice of the U.S. coal mining industry in Underground, Surface and Geology modules*

To apply for your Student Version of Carlson Software, you must complete this application and submit it online. Lauren Brown, the Academics Coordinator for Carlson Software, will contact you to complete your purchase.

Carlson Software: In the Classroom

Did you know that there are almost 200 colleges and universities currently participating in Carlson's Academics Program?

Carlson works simply and simply works – making it the ideal CAD-based software program to learn while in school. Why spend time fighting the peculiarities of a software program when Carlson, rightly, allows students to concentrate on learning the concepts essential to their chosen Surveying, Engineering, Construction or Mining fields?

Learning to use Carlson Software helps improve students' chances to get jobs after graduation and makes it possible for them to complete projects on their own both during school and after. Because Carlson includes a FREE copy of IntelliCAD with every Carlson license, learning institutions can also use Carlson with IntelliCAD for basic CAD training in other programs such as

general design, architectural & mechanical design and many others.

For an annual fee of \$650, Carlson Software provides **unlimited** desktop licensing to qualified colleges and universities. Carlson Software with IntelliCAD allows institutions to stay within their budget while still providing their technical students with the tools they need to be competent and competitive in the marketplace.

Interested in receiving your first year for FREE?

Contact Lauren Brown, Carlson's Academic Coordinator, at 606.564.5028 and let her know you heard about this offer from "That CAD Girl".

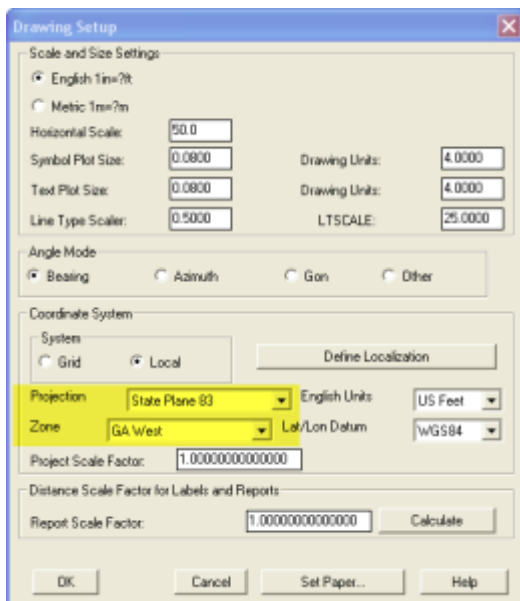
That CAD Girl is working with Carlson to schedule "Train the Trainer" events for the Summer of 2010. These hands-on, multi-day training events will assist classroom instructors with development of lesson plans and exercises. Events are tentatively being planned for Eastern Tennessee, Ohio, Florida and Oregon. Please contact us at 919.417.8351 or ContactUs@thatcadgirl.com to request additional locales.

Export IntelliCAD or AutoCAD DWG files to Google Earth

I've recently started using a very cool feature in Carlson Software. The bad thing... it was in the 2009 version and I didn't even realize it!

I had no idea exporting our DWG files from IntelliCAD or AutoCAD out to Google Earth was so easy.

1. Download and install Google Earth. You can download it here: <http://earth.google.com/>
2. Open any one of your project DWG files that has been positioned at its correct state plane coordinate system.
3. In Carlson, go to Settings → Drawing Setup and then select the correct **Projection** and correct **Zone** for the project site. If you're not sure of the **Projection**, try using "State Plane 83". This will work for most systems.



4. Next, go to File → Polyline File → Write Polyline File. When prompted for "Polyline File Format", type "G" for Google. You will be prompted to specify a new filename and save location for a "Google Earth File to Write (.kml)".
5. You will then be prompted to select the entities that are to be exported out to the .kml file and viewed in Google Earth. After selecting the entities, press Enter. For this exercise, we only want to see the drawing entities in 2D, so press "N" for "No" when prompted to "Use elevation from drawing in Google Earth [Yes/<No>]?"
6. Finally, you are then prompted "Would you like to display the file in Google Earth now [<Yes>/No]?". Press "Y" for

“Yes”. Google Earth should automatically launch and zoom into the project location.

In the example shown below and pointed out with arrows, notice how closely the new roads and designed turn lanes match up to the existing roadway. Also, you can see the designed graded slopes perfectly avoiding the tank that is to be preserved during construction.

Not too shabby...

This feature is available in all of the Carlson Desktop products: Carlson Civil, Survey, Hydrology, Construction and TakeOff.

Look for a future post on bringing Google Earth surface data into Carlson Software. Hint: It's easy too!

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

PDF Conversion in Carlson 2010

With more construction bid sets being issued in Portable Document Format (PDF), more companies find themselves in the position of needing to generate estimating and construction data from these files. Carlson Software now provides tools to import PDF files into a drawing as either an image or as CAD linework. These tools are available exclusively through Carlson Takeoff 2010 and the new Carlson Construction 2010.

To import a PDF file into your CAD drawing, go to the Tools pull-down menu, then choose Import/Export, then choose Import PDF. You will be prompted to select whether you want the file imported as a background image or as linework. If you choose the

linework option, it will automatically convert the elements of the PDF image into separate polylines. Please note, since this is an automatic conversion, it may take a while, so be patient as it processes.

Once the polylines have been brought into the drawing, you can use the standard clean-up tools to assign elevation information to these polylines. These tools can elevate polylines representing contours (single elevations) as well as those representing breaklines (varying elevations). This can be done with most of the Carlson desktop software modules including Takeoff, Construction, Survey, and Civil.

Once the polylines have been updated with the elevation information, they can be used to create surface models for design, estimating, staking, or machine control. This procedure can literally save hours of time that used to be spent manually recreating the information released as paper drawings or PDF files. Digitizing may have become a thing of the past!

Originally posted on **Carlson Connection** by Felicia Provencal

Carlson End of Year Pricing Specials

Through the end of 2009, Carlson Software is offering special discounts on their Civil Suite and TakeOff office software and SurvCE data collection software.

- Carlson Civil Suite – \$ 2,500 (Regularly \$ 3,500)
- Carlson TakeOff – \$ 7,200 (Regularly \$ 9,000)
- Carlson SurvCE – 50% off with TopSurv or TDS trade-in

(Prices vary according to configuration)

[Click here to download an advertisement detailing this offer](#)

That CAD Girl offers additional discounts on Civil Suite, Civil, Survey, Hydrology, GIS and TakeOff. We also include one FREE hour of online training with any Carlson Software purchase.

[Click here for a complete list of Carlson pricing.](#)