

# That CAD Girl – October 2009 Newsletter

Our October 2009 Newsletter can be downloaded [HERE](#)

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## Carlson vs AutoCAD Civil 3D

This conversation heated up after I made a post to a thread on an Autodesk Discussion Group. Since then we've started a valuable conversation about the strengths and weaknesses of both programs.

My response and the original discussion group thread can be found here: [Carlson Vs 3D](#)

Now, James Wedding of [www.civil3d.com](http://www.civil3d.com) fame has started a thread on his website asking his readers to comment on the validity of my post [Why I Chose Carlson Over Civil 3D](#).

James' post is here: [View from the Other Side: Why I Chose Carlson Over Civil 3D](#)

Keep watching this space for updates. I'm interested to see what James' readers have to say and will respond in a week or so.

**Update 9/12/2009:** I've posted my response to the comments from both [www.civil3d.com](http://www.civil3d.com) and the Autodesk Discussion Group here: [Carlson VS Civil 3D – Revisited](#)

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# Carlson, Civil 3D and Shootouts

**Update 9/12/2009:** Much appreciation to James Wedding at [www.civil3d.com](http://www.civil3d.com) for extending the Carlson VS Civil 3D discussion to his website. A lot of commentary and good discussion has taken place on both sites. I've just posted my response to the comments. Also, as noted at the end of my reply, I am working on setting up a very thorough Shootout between Carlson and Civil 3D. Invitations have been sent, so keep looking for updates.

**[www.civil3d.com](http://www.civil3d.com) Carlson VS Civil 3D Post**

**Latest Autodesk Discussion Group Post**

**Update 9/1/2009:** Folks at [www.civil3d.com](http://www.civil3d.com) have started a post comparing Carlson to Civil 3D. **Link is here.** James has a minor detail wrong about my background. As a sole-proprietor, I was never an Autodesk reseller, but I did work for a couple of them before going out on my own. I've posted that as a comment and thanked James for starting the thread but, as of a couple hours later, it is still telling me that "Your comment is awaiting moderation".

**Update:** Not that the edits, so far, have changed the original Posts too much, but wanted to make everyone aware that the Moderator is revising some of the posts. Mostly, it makes me look like I don't know grammar and don't proofread very well.

An interesting discussion has been started on the Autodesk Discussion Group here:

<http://discussion.autodesk.com/forums/message.jspa?messageID=6243535#6243535>

Harry Ward discusses the shootout between Carlson, Civil 3d and Bentley and several others discuss their experiences and compare their use of the products.

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

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## The Kansas City Carlson User Group

I'm reflecting on my impressions of the inaugural meeting of the Kansas City Carlson User Group meeting held at the corporate office of Griner & Schmitz on August 20, 2009. About a dozen individuals showed up to form new business relationships with one another and draw on the strengths from their common bond.

The meeting started out with the gracious hospitality of Griner & Schmitz who hosted the event at their corporate headquarters in Kansas City. Complimentary food and beverages were aplenty and the guests quickly found themselves forming or renewing friendships with others in attendance.

After a bit of socializing, the guests were treated to a sneak peek of Carlson SurvCE 2.5 from Carlson Software South Central Regional Sales Director Aaron Newman. Aaron demonstrated many of the new and powerful features of SurvCE and showed the attendees how to leverage the power of the Carlson Field-to-Finish routines. Throughout the presentation, one of the key benefits of a User Group is that questions posed by one individual benefits the others and attendees are generally willing to share

their observations and experiences with others. After Aaron's presentation, I was given the opportunity to demonstrate some of the new features that will be released with Carlson 2010 with particular focus on surveying and the communication of information between the field and the office.

It was amazing at how quickly the two-hour meeting flew by but it is my opinion the Kansas City Carlson User Group is off to a great start. If you're in the Kansas City area in mid-October for the expected follow-up meeting, consider dropping in for some informational aspects of the products and services offered by Carlson Software. Otherwise, express your interest in forming a Carlson User Group in your region!

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

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## December Workshops 2009

Our Carlson workshops the past couple of years have drawn great crowds, but we're changing it up a bit for 2009.

Join us on December 8th in Raleigh or December 9th in Statesville for joint presentations on Carlson Software, ESRI and IntelliCAD.

**The cost is only \$99 and lunch is included. NC licensed land surveyors and engineers will receive 7.5 hours of PDH credit.**

Our special guests this year will be:

- Bruce Carlson, founder & President, and Scott Griffin, National Civil Sales Director, of Carlson Software
- Donny Sosa, Surveying Industry Specialist, of ESRI

- Felicia Provencal of ProCADD Hawaii and Carlson Connection

Join us for a variety of sessions and topics including:

- BIM, GIS and Carlson Software in the land surveying, civil engineering & construction arenas
- Making money with GIS using Carlson Software, ESRI and IntelliCAD
- What's new with Carlson 2010
- Surface Modeling with Carlson Software

**Register Online for the Dec 8, 2009 Raleigh event [here](#).**

You can download the Raleigh NC announcement [here](#).

**Register Online for the Dec 9, 2009 Statesville event [here](#).**

You can download the Statesville NC announcement [here](#).

**Register by PHONE** by calling us at 919.417.8351.

**Register by MAIL** by downloading and completing this form and mailing a check for \$99 to P0 Box 294, Clayton, NC 27528. Registrations by MAIL must be received 5 days in advance of the event.

**Register by FAX** by downloading and completing this form, faxing it to 919.573.0351 and mailing a check for \$99 to P0 Box 294, Clayton, NC 27528. Registrations by FAX must be received 5 days in advance of the event.

Our postcard advertising the event can be downloaded [HERE](#).

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# BIM for Civil... Not

Several months have passed since I made my original post BIM This, BIM That... What is BIM?. In that time, I have asked a lot more questions, read a lot more on the internet and had a lot of discussions with Ladd and Felicia and also read the post by one of our commenters. I think I've developed a more concrete idea about BIM and how it applies, or doesn't, to the civil/survey world and where the various software packages stand in regard to their "BIM-ability".

Now, after all this additional information has percolated in my brain, I'm drawing two main conclusions:

1. It's a fact that the term BIM as it's always been used applies to actual **BUILDINGS** – the noun form of the word. But, more specifically, it starts with construction drawings/design data but then incorporates the as-built data and, over time, continues to grow and collect data through the entire lifespan of the building.

Nothing in all this discussion of "BIM for Civil" gets beyond construction drawings and design data of a civil project. Autodesk is trying to stretch the definition of BIM to cover Civil 3D even though they never move beyond the design process with it either.

Remember, we do not talk about "BM" or Building Modeling. And, we don't work with "GS" or Geographic Systems. The "I" is THE critical factor. And the "I", or Information, piece of BIM is so valuable because it chronicles and helps manage the building through its lifespan.

To be able to legitimately call what we're doing with our Civil programs "BIM", we would need to have a mechanism to attach some

sort of database or information to the objects in our drawings.

I know, I know... that's why Civil 3D is so great – you can attach data to the objects. But, remember, we're talking about attaching **AS-BUILT** data to these objects. Even though we could attach data using Carlson GIS or AutoCAD Map or ESRI, it's simply not part of our current project scope to go back into our construction drawings and update them with as-built data so that:

- maintenance schedules are attached to roadway template surfaces based on asphalt type,
- model numbers are associated to pump stations or
- inspection reports and flow rates are attached to fire hydrant blocks.

My conclusion here is that neither of these products – Carlson nor Civil 3D – meet the true definition of a BIM for civil. Until we start addressing the Information piece for the lifetime of a project, starting with the as-built data, using the term BIM is wrong.

In my opinion, if anyone has the lead on this in the civil arena, it's ESRI.

2. Just because we don't yet attach as-built data to our objects doesn't mean that the data we do attach to our objects isn't valuable. But, leading to my 2nd conclusion, why is it valuable? It's only valuable if it can be shared. And this is where I believe Carlson has the undisputed edge. The image below shows the number of formats and other programs that Carlson is able to import data from and export data to.

Points	Surfaces	Profiles	Cross Sections
Explode Carlson Points Convert Surveyor 1 to CRD	Convert LDD-AEC Contours Convert Civil3D Surface Drawing Export Topcon TIN File	Import Columnar Text Import Calce Import Leica Import MOSS Import Softdesk Import Sokkia/SOR Import Spanish ALZ Import Spanish RAS Import Terramodel	Import Columnar Text Import Agtek Import Arkansas DOT Import Ceal Import Geopak Import Georgia DOT Import GRDS Import MOSS Import NJC DOT Import Pizer Import RoadCalc Import SMI Import Softdesk Import Spanish SC 1 Import Spanish TRV Import Terramodel
Convert CRD to LDD MDB Convert LDD MDB to CRD Convert Land Desktop to Carlson Points Convert Civil 3D to Carlson Points	Centerline/Alignments	Export Softdesk Export Leica	Import Calce Earthworks
Convert Carlson Points to Softdesk Convert Softdesk to Carlson Points	Import Geodimeter Import Geopak Centerline Import Geopak Road File Import Leica Import MOSS Import SAMS Import Softdesk Import Sokkia/Leitz Import Spanish ISPOL Import Spanish CLIP Import TDS RDS File Import Terramodel		Export Geopak Export GRDS Export RoadCalc
Convert Carlson Points to C&G Convert C&G to Carlson Points	Export Leica Export SMI Chain Export Softdesk Export Sokkia/Leitz Export TDS		
Convert Carlson Points to Simplicity Convert Simplicity to Carlson Points			
Convert Leica to Carlson Points Convert Geodimeter to Carlson Points Convert Carlson Points To Ashtech GIS			
Convert PacSoft CRD to Carlson CRD			
Convert Carlson Points to EaglePt Convert EaglePt to Carlson Points			

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

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# Carlson Webinars – BIM, GIS and CAD Standards

Carlson Software recently asked Felicia and me to present webinars on topics we have particular interest in or specialize in.

Felicia's webinar on BIM, GIS and Carlson Software can be viewed here: [BIM, GIS and Carlson Software Webinar](#)

My webinar on CAD Standards can be viewed here: [CAD Standards for Carlson Software with AutoCAD or IntelliCAD](#)

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

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# **BIM, GIS and Carlson Software Webinar**

Felicia Provencal's webinar for Carlson Software on the topic, "BIM, GIS and Carlson Software" can be viewed or downloaded [here](#).

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## **That CAD Girl Presenting at the NCSS Institute, Nov '09**

That CAD Girl will be presenting at the NCSS Institute in November 11-13, 2009

You'll have to wait a few months to see the full lineup, but I can confirm that I will be presenting a 3-day class at the Training Institute sponsored by the NC Society of Surveyors.

- Day One – AutoCAD/IntelliCAD basics with a focus on CAD Standards management
  - Day Two – Carlson Software Features
  - Day Three – Surface Modeling with Carlson Software
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# Dewberry Implements Carlson Civil Suite in 40 Offices Nationwide

There has been a lot of interest and discussion about Dewberry's decision to use Carlson's Civil Suite as their civil/survey/hydrology design package. Dave Palumbo, PE, Technology Manager for Infrastructure Services, has written an article for CE News discussing the 18-month process his team went through to come to their decision.

The article in CE News can be downloaded [HERE](#).