Welcome!

Thanks for taking the time to visit us at Carlson Connection.

The site is a little bare right now, but keep checking back. We hope to make it an active community with lots of good information and discussion.

If you'd like to be a Contributor to the site, please **email me here**.

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

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That CAD Girl – March Newsletter

Our March Newsletter can be downloaded HERE

Is IntelliCAD&#0174 A Good Alternative?

Carlson Software now includes a copy of the IntelliCAD engine with each copy of their software so that users
who have planned to install Carlson on top of their AutoCAD&#0174-based program can try it out, do a comparison and judge for

themselves whether it is a good option for their office. You can see the
history, a comparison to AutoCAD and a 5-minute video demonstration of IntelliCAD by following the links.

I have been told that the current IntelliCAD platform (version 6.4) contains approximately 70% of the functionality of AutoCAD. Also, some commands currently run slower than in AutoCAD and some will run faster than in AutoCAD. The next major release will be IntelliCAD 7 which will have ObjectARX type abilities and will run faster.

For current AutoCAD users who dive into every new feature or push customization to its limits…
I doubt you'd be happy with the IntelliCAD version at this time because some of those commands are missing or have legacy behavior.

For current AutoCAD users not as invested in the bells and whistles…
IntelliCAD will probably be a fantastic, cost effective alternative to your AutoCAD.

The ideal situation(s) for IntelliCAD?

- Offices currently using AutoCAD LT as a "gap-filler" instead of more costly CAD licenses. Why? Because IntelliCAD supports
  LISP files, 3D data, XREFs, Images and several other AutoCAD functions that are not included in AutoCAD LT
- Survey/inspection field crews using an IntelliCAD version on laptops to be taken out of the office
- Offices needing a low-cost CAD option for project managers
- Offices needing short-term CAD licenses for summer interns

Visit our IntelliCAD with Carlson software page and our More

About IntelliCAD page to learn more.

The Case for Online Training

With the economy what it is and everyone trying to get as much bang for their buck as possible, I’m finding that online training for your CAD software programs is an increasingly popular and cost effective option. Although this post describes my personal approach and may be different considering your trainer, hopefully it will answer some of your questions about online training and will encourage you to give it a try.

How does it work?

There are several online services that trainers may use for online training. WebEx, GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar are all very commonly used and popular. My preference is GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar as they have a very low footprint on your computer and are simple to use. When first entering an online meeting, a small installation of the program occurs allowing you to view and interact with the presenter’s computer.

GoToMeeting is smaller scale and better for personalized training. GoToWebinar can handle up to 1,000 “attendees” and is typically used for presentation or demonstration to a large group.

Some of the online meeting services are free, but most require a monthly fee. The fee is paid by the organizer who then has the ability to schedule meetings/webinars in advance or “Meet Now” for meetings on the fly. Your organizer will either email you a link to the meeting site or can tell you the link on the phone.

Each meeting has a unique “Meeting ID” that you will enter at the main page.

GoToMeeting is typically used for standard training where more than one person may need to show their screen and/or be given control of the mouse and keyboard. This interaction can take place in a variety of ways. When in a meeting, anyone can be given (and must accept) the “Presenter” role which allows others to view their computer. And, even though the Presenter always has priority, control of the mouse movement and keyboard entry may be granted to others in the meeting. This allows someone else to work on my computer remotely.

The audio portion of the training usually takes place by calling in on a conference call line supplied by GoToMeeting. VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) is also available allowing you to use your computer’s speakers and microphone but it is not recommended because of quality.

GoToWebinar is used for larger scale demonstration and presentations and can accommodate up to 1,000 Attendees. Online Webinars are generally structured to have one or more Presenters making the presentation.

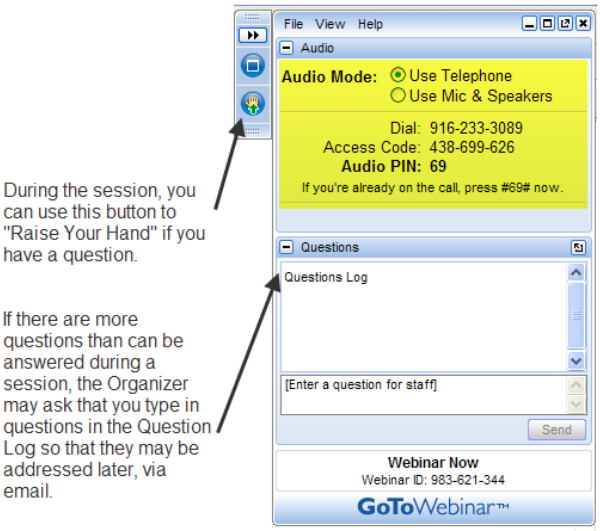
Like GoToMeeting, the audio portion of GoToWebinar usually takes place by calling in on a conference call line supplied by GoToWebinar. However, in a Webinar setting, the Attendees are muted automatically by the Presenter so that everyone isn’t blessed with the sound of crinkling potato chip bags and elevator music when someone puts the call on hold! The Presenter has the ability to un-mute one or more Attendees as needed. The audio of all Attendees is managed by the Presenter by having each Attendee enter a unique “Audio PIN” upon arrival.

GoToWebinar has 2 ways to ask and respond to questions from Attendees. The Control Panel has a “Raise Your Hand” button that

notifies the Presenter there is a question. Depending on time constraints, the Presenter may decide to un-mute and answer the question during the online session. If there are more questions than can be answered during a session, the Organizer may ask that you type in questions in the “Questions Log” so that they may be addressed at a later time.

Pros and Cons

I’ve put together what I consider to be the Pros and Cons of online training for CAD Software programs.



Pros

- Can eliminate travel time and expenses
- Very cost effective option for customized one-on-one training
- Allows for personalized, absolutely customized training because it’s normally one on one.
- Can’t find a local trainer? No problem. Felicia Provencal can train you from Hawai’i – although you may want to go to her!
- Can be set up within minutes if there is a pressing

technical support issue or project that suddenly comes up.
- Can be scheduled in shorter blocks of time – one of the best ways to make sure you retain what you are taught. I like to schedule 2 hours maximum per session.
- Shorter blocks of time allow for easy customization of training topics from one session to the next. If more time is needed on certain features, it's easy to squeeze in another 2 hour session.
- It IS interactive!
- All sessions can be recorded and played back at your convenience for a refresher

Cons

- Some people are more comfortable sitting beside and working directly with the trainer
- It's less interactive than hands-on, in person training.
- For hands on training and depending on the material being covered, it may not work as well if you have several folks needing training at one time.
- Requires a high-speed connection and a telephone headset allowing two hands on keyboard. A speakerphone can be used as long as feedback doesn't become an issue.

Real World Example

I recently worked with a client from out of state. He is a grading contractor who thought he needed Carlson TakeOff training but, after some discussion, realized training in basic CAD (IntelliCAD) needed to come first and then TakeOff training.

The initial proposal was for me to travel there and spend 3-4 days training this client plus a second person (a competitor, in

this case) who needed the same training. Both of them decided to give online training a try.

We scheduled online training for every morning one week. I worked with one from 7:30 to 9:30 am and then with the other from 10:30 – 12:30 pm. After the 3rd day, we had covered so much material that one asked to skip the next day so he could work with it himself and apply what he'd learned so far.

We ended up skipping two days. By the time we met again, he'd worked with it enough and become so much more proficient with the basic CAD operation that we were able to fast-forward through the next couple sessions and started working on his current project. Another subsequent session was cancelled because the rain finally stopped!

And then a few days later, he needed to get his project finished and out to bid. So, after our first session one morning, we set up another session at 4:00 that afternoon and worked until almost 7:00 that evening.

Both customers ended up very happy with the amount of material we covered and where they were with the software when we wrapped up our regular training. They still have the video recordings of the training for their reference to go back to when needed. In the end, the cost was almost the exact same as it would have been had I fulfilled the original proposal but they both learned and retained much more because the training was customized and personalized to their specific jobs.

Like to know more?
If you'd like to discuss online training for yourself or your group, please call 919.417.8351 or email us at ContactUs@thatcadgirl.com.

Top Ten Benefits of Carlson Software

1. **Gives Users Platform Choice**
   Carlson Software is built on both AutoCAD® and IntelliCAD®, allowing its users to choose their CAD platform. The software can be run on AutoCAD, AutoCAD Map®, Land Desktop® or Civil 3d® for versions as far back as those built on AutoCAD 2000. The IntelliCAD that is included for Free is a virtual clone of AutoCAD that works natively in DWG format files (no need for import, export or conversion).
2. **Goes from Concept to Completion**
   From data collection, to design and drafting, to estimating, through stakeout, to machine control, you'll find complete, interactive software solutions with Carlson, therefore allowing you to skip rework and data conversions.
3. **Provides Advanced Technology & Innovation**
   Carlson provides industry-leading breakthrough features across land surveying, civil engineering, construction and mining to enable its users to do more, do it better and in less time.
4. **Enables Dynamic 3D Design Using Standard Drawing Entities**
   A unique approach that gives Carlson users all the power they need for automatic or by-command updates and still allows for regular drafting on the entities plus seamless sharing of drawings with other design professionals.
5. **Works For and With Its Customers**
   To us at Carlson, success is measured in the quality of

our products and the satisfaction of the individuals and companies that use them. Customer input leads directly to new state-of-the-art features.

6. **Believes in Independence**
   Carlson Software's independence fosters both our creativity and innovation and that of our users. We are free to focus on our customers to provide better, constantly improved software that "does more."
7. **Provides Full Data Compatibility**
   Carlson's product line provides full data interoperability through the use of dozens of built-in drivers, including full support of the industry standard LandXML format for civil data exchange.
8. **Gives Free Technical Support**
   Get support from Carlson via phone, email, discussion groups and webcasts. There is no limit on the number of support calls and no product retirement. We service all versions of all of our products.
9. **Has World-Class Training Options**
   Software is an investment and you can learn how to best put it to work for you at Carlson College. Attendees get personal one-on-one attention – it's a hands-on learning experience.
10. **Allows Choice of Maintenance as Needed**
    Each new product line at Carlson Software provides new customer-driven features. Carlson customers are allowed to choose to upgrade based solely on the merits of the software's new features. There is no retirement of software.