



IT18037-R

The CAD Manager Wish-List Roundtable

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Learning Objectives

- Discuss your needs and wishes with Autodesk employees and your peers
- Connect with seasoned CAD managers who may share your experiences
- Share best practices and innovative solutions to common CAD management issues
- Feel like part of a community with common needs to direct future changes to the CAD manager's toolset

Description

The tools and ancillary programs that CAD managers use seem to miss out when it comes to updates and new features. In fact, some of these tools haven't been updated in years. This roundtable discussion will focus on what feature changes or improvements would make the CAD manager's job more efficient. Tools and features to be discussed will include (but will not be limited to): Reference Manager, Sheet Set Manager, Standards Manager, eTransmit, and Fields. Attendees will be expected to actively participate, as an AutoCAD Product Team member will attend, so this is an opportunity to have the CAD manager's voice heard!

Your AU Expert



Frank is currently the CAD Manager for the Oil, Gas and Chemical division at Benham in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In this role, he oversees all aspects of the AutoCAD, CADWorx and Plant 3D environments.

He has been using AutoCAD since 1986 (v 2.61). Frank is an Autodesk AutoCAD Certified Professional, a volunteer with AUGI as a forum manager, and is a member of the AutoCAD Customer Council, Autodesk User Panel, and the Autodesk Advisors Community.

He was part of a select group invited by Autodesk to attend the inaugural CAD Manager Summit in 2015. As a top-rated member of the AutoCAD All-Star Mentor program, he has provided live guidance and answered questions for over 2,100 in-trial users in more than 50 countries worldwide.



Overview

The position of CAD Manager has often been described as a thankless job. In some ways, that's true; our users should take it for granted that things "just work". We often get our satisfaction from knowing that they do just that.

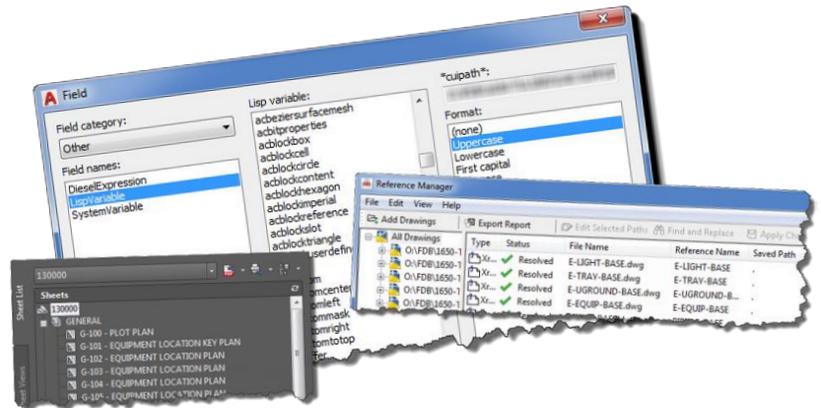
Every now and then though, we're expected to pull a rabbit out of the hat. For me, that's when the job satisfaction is the greatest. Generally, this magic is performed with the tools Autodesk has given us, such as Reference Manager, eTransmit, Sheet Set Manager etc.

All too often though, our magic is reduced to wishes, as the tool just won't do the job for us. Key features are missing. For those of us who have been doing this since the early 2000's, we may remember the excitement we felt when we got new tools nearly every release. It was like Christmas morning and your birthday all rolled into one.

But just like that new bike you got, after a few years you realized there were things that would make it even better – no matter how great it was when you got it.

Everything it was designed to do still worked fine, it just needed some improvements. What you need is "Bike 2.0".

Our CAD Manager's tool set is essentially the same. Great when it was new and shiny, but after a few years went by, we found that it could use some improvements. Unfortunately, there have been few updates, if any, over the years.



Now, like you perhaps, I've been using these tools for years, but literally lost track of when they were introduced. I did some informal investigation, and was able to come up with the following timeline (Figure 1) that shows when they were introduced, and any major upgrades. As you can see, most were introduced after R14 up through AutoCAD 2005. That's anywhere between 12 to 16 years of using the same feature set in the same tool.

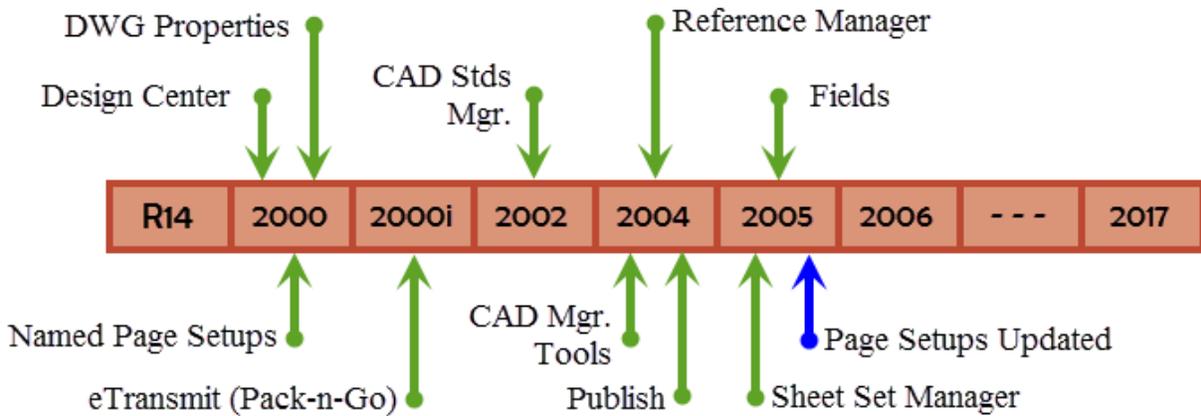
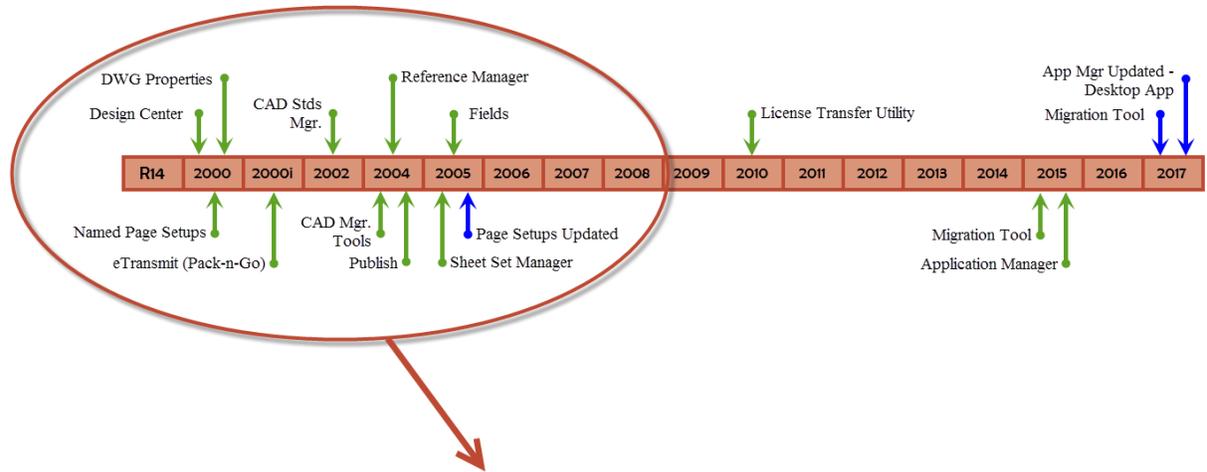


FIGURE 1: A TIMELINE OF AUTOCAD'S CAD MANAGER TOOLS

The Objective

After years of frustration, I finally decided to broach the subject. After all, I was at the Venetian for Autodesk University in 2006, so after nearly 10 years, I was going to embody the theme from that year's AU – I was going to become an **Agent of Change!**



IMAGE 2: AUTODESK CEO CARL BASS AT AU 2006

While I lacked Carl's cool 3D spectacles, I could only work with what I had. At that point, it was an unprecedented face to face with AutoCAD team members at the inaugural [CAD Manager's Summit](#) at 1 Market Street in San Francisco in October of 2015.

It was there I was fortunate to meet some wonderful Autodesk folks, and while the focus of the summit was directed elsewhere, I was still able to find time to lay the groundwork for these issues, as I saw them.

I continued to follow up at AU the next month, and was introduced to a whole new group of Autodesk developers and managers that heard my concerns. It was also at AU that I began talking to my peer group about it. I heard some concerns I hadn't thought of, but mainly I was met with a general agreement about our problems.

Since then, I've continued the conversation through various social media channels, industry events and so on. Soon, it was class proposal time for AU 2016, and having been in numerous Autodesk hosted focus groups, I thought that would be the perfect medium for spreading my word. But, since I had no avenue to *make* Autodesk host a group, I decided to take matters into my own hands and propose a roundtable to discuss it further. I was thrilled to have it selected, and I can't wait to continue my quest to influence positive change for we CAD Managers.



Our Topics

Reference Manager

- Ability to change file names, not just paths.
 - Some firms like to prepend a project number on file names. Others might add a revision number at the end.
- Launch the app directly from AutoCAD.

Sheet Set Manager

- Performance issues in large sets.
 - (works great with hundreds of files, not thousands)
- Ability to merge separate sheet sets.
- Ability to renumber a set from 1 to N.
- Ability to view the UNC path.
- Ability to have a sheet in more than one SS.
- Total number of sheets as a field object.
- Sheet Revision exposed to the Index.
 - (must use a custom field now to get the rev into an Index table)
- Make previews independent of Tool Tips control.
- Onboard tools like JTBWorld's SSMPPropEditor or the new DST Tool.

eTransmit

- Binding improvements:
 - Bypass or warn about issues that prevent binding.
 - Unloaded Xrefs
 - Proxy Objects
 - Anything else that prevents it.
 - Don't just cruise thru the transmit as if everything worked right.



- Initial speed of gathering info.
- At least give us a progress bar.
- Overall performance improvements.

Fields

- Allow fields to be “locked” so users can’t just type and override them.
- Allow lisp expressions or function calls, not just lisp variables.
- Duplicate all features of RText, and/or eliminate one or the other.
- Allow control over the FIELDDISPLAY shading color.

Page Setups

- Stored in a single, external, project location, not in each .dwg file.

Other Topics?

CAD Standards Manager

Design Center

DWG Properties

Page Setups

License Transfer Utility

Migrate Custom Settings

Desktop App