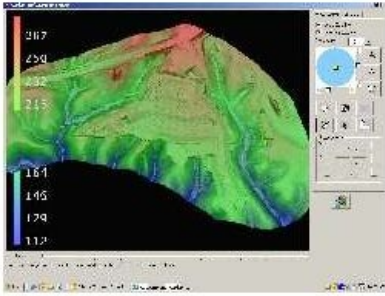


CARLSON SOFTWARE INC

Independence All the Way



Independently owned and privately operated, Carlson Software is headquartered in Maysville, Kentucky, USA, with branches in Boston, Massachusetts, and Queensland, Australia. The company produces comprehensive software solutions for professions including civil engineering, survey, machine-control, mining, and investigative law enforcement.



Carlson Software celebrated its 25th anniversary at its first user conference in April 2008. Founded in 1983 by Bruce Carlson, then a practising professional land surveyor and civil engineer, the company began by offering surveyors office software running on an Apple II, and soon expanded into the PC environment. By 1987 Carlson Software was porting all office products to the AutoCAD platform.

Small Beginnings

The company grew slowly at first, adding a range of civil engineering and mining software products. Carlson Mining is now in use by 90% of the US coal industry, and coal mining from Columbia to Russia, India and Australia, as well as mineral mining. In 2001 Carlson

released SurvCE, a data-collection product now adopted by partners such as Magellan, Navcom, Sokkia, Leica and Topcon, and translated into fourteen languages.

Since the dawn of the machine-control market in 1997 Carlson Software has been involved, and has hundreds of clients worldwide. The Carlson Grade product is suited for mining, construction and landfill grading. The new 2010 release will include multi-language translations, beginning with Spanish and Portuguese. Also to be translated are Carlson Civil, Carlson Hydrology and Carlson Construction (3D model building).

Bruce Carlson, still active in product design and onsite software demonstrations, continues to lead the company in its worldwide endeavours. Under his hands-on direction the company retains a culture of strong customer service and support based on intuitive and feature-rich software.

High Ideals

The Carlson Software mission is to become the premiere independent developer of land survey, civil engineering, construction and mining software; to maintain its reputation for technological innovation; to provide industry-leading customer service and support; and to provide one-source technology solutions from data collection to design, on through to construction. A complete suite of solutions is offered for land-development professionals, covering data collection, surveying, engineering design and drafting, mine planning and modelling, construction estimation and machine control; data-collection expertise produces accident and crime reconstruction field and office software for law-enforcement personnel or law consultants.

Customers are encouraged into a 'positive feedback loop' that ensures annual software releases are full of customer-driven new features. There is a high rate of customer retention, and the company continues its own tradition of providing free technical support.

Another goal is platform-independent field and office software. Carlson field software includes both data collection (SurvCE, Carlson Field and CSI Mobile) and machine-control solutions (Carlson Grade) that run on nearly all current GPS and total-stations.

Global Reach

About 25% of Carlson's business is currently outside the United States, but Europe, Asia and South America are seen as potential growth markets. Per-population sales in Australia are already strong, matching those in the US. The machine-control sector provides the best international business for the company, with well over 50% already coming from Canada, Australia, Europe and Dubai. The next goal is to reach the civil engineering market in areas of road and site design and hydrology by translating the Carlson Civil Suite into major international languages.

Looking Ahead

Carlson Software invests heavily in R&D, applying approximately 30% of all revenue to product design and software engineering. While the market has congealed to some extent around the 'Big 6' of Leica, Topcon, and Trimble on the equipment side, and Autodesk, Bentley, and ESRI on the office software platform side, we see greater ascendancy in the ESRI product, where CAD capabilities are augmented by strong association with intelligent data critical for government, designers and project managers.

Carlson Software plans to port its software to ESRI and Bentley platforms, and duplicate its field product interoperability on the office side. By working on all platforms Carlson offers a consistent user interface with fully integrated field and office products that work on any equipment, any CAD, a philosophy that recognises the paramount importance of free choice to the professional consumer in the land industry. Although it is difficult to predict overall directions in the global market, the human element remains a constant, and there will always be a strong market for consistent software interfaces across hardware and across disciplines.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/article/independence-all-the-way>
