

# Bentley launches Be Employable

In a generous move in these troubled times, Bentley Systems has unveiled an initiative to give unemployed AEC professionals access to the latest versions of MicroStation with online training, for free. **Martyn Day** asks what it is all about.

**W**e all know things aren't exactly rosy out there in the job market at the moment and our thoughts are with those readers that have found themselves unexpectedly in-between jobs. While there are some signs that the situation has perhaps plateaued (fingers crossed), getting back to work will still be a challenge. With this in mind, one major AEC CAD vendor, Bentley Systems has launched an initiative that allows unemployed professionals to get access to the latest tools and training for free.

Called 'Be Employable', the offer is a really well thought out selection of software, training and access to the company's professional Be Careers network. On the software front, those that sign up get access to Bentley's V8i software portfolio for non-commercial use. The extensive list of software available includes the most popular Architectural, Civil and GIS flavours of MicroStation V8i: Bentley Architecture/Structural and Mechanical/Electrical Systems, PowerSurvey, PowerCivil, StormCAD, SewerCAD, WaterCAD, WaterGEMS, GeoPAK, Map and Descartes.

In terms of training, once registered you get access to any course that's available on Bentley's LEARN Server, which is an on-demand eLearning companion to Bentley SELECT (subscription) customers. On top of that you can attend live scheduled courses. Every on-demand course you take earns credits and the system keeps track to see the volume of courses taken. This produces a 'transcript', which can be used as part of a CV to demonstrate MicroStation skill level.

## Signing up

To qualify, during the registration process you have to confirm your employment status, providing the name of your most recent employer. You then join Bentley's social and professional networking site (also for free), called Be Communities, which includes blogs, wikis, tips and tricks and forums. There is also a Resume Centre where you can post your qualifications for browsing HR departments.

This is a very generous and well thought through offer and we fully back this initiative. It's made possible through Bentley's investment in the

development of its SELECT program and on-line training Institute server infrastructure. While this is the backbone of Bentley's business model, it just so happens to allow Bentley to facilitate grand gestures like this. I don't know of any other CAD vendor that has equivalent enabling infrastructure.

To discuss the initiative I talked with Joe Croser, global marketing director, platform products at Bentley Systems. Croser explained: "We recognise that there are tough economic challenges facing our infrastructure customers and we wanted to offer something to maintain or enhance skills and maintain continual professional development credits while they look for new work. We have the software, distribution mechanism and professional network to make this happen and we really want to enable professionals to resume their careers as quickly and easily as possible."

The benefit to Bentley is in potentially winning some converts over to their software, but for anyone else it's surely a big plus to be able to claim proficiency in Autodesk and Bentley products. Looking the gift horse in the mouth, I asked Croser why Bentley was doing this. He replied: "This isn't about us making money. From our perspective, it's a stimulus to the economy. Only a year or two ago, in the press and at conferences, people were talking about the shortage of engineers and the demographic time-bomb we faced. All that has changed because now there are more unemployed professionals seeking fewer jobs.

"We have found ourselves with this hopefully very small window to train professionals, to help them increase their skill sets. So when they find new work they will be more productive, using the latest and best technology. We have no doubt, the time will come again when we lament the shortage of experienced infrastructure and building professionals. To Bentley, it therefore makes good investment sense to help people skill-up now. It is good for individuals, good for firms and good for clients because it means that they will all be more competitive on future projects."

While the Be Employed offer runs until the end of this year an extension to this will be reassessed by Bentley nearer the time. Croser explained: "Because our SELECT server licensing enables this offer and



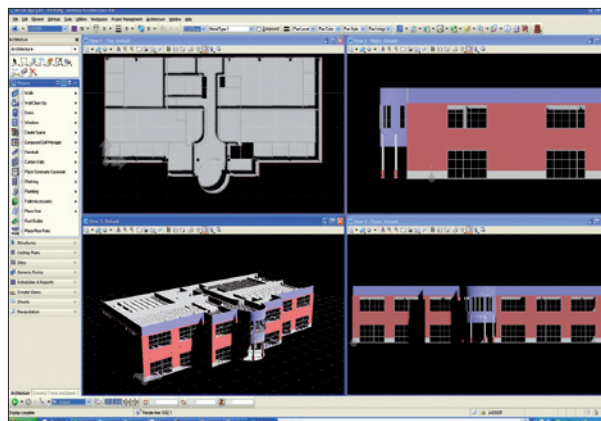
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it's online, if we choose to extend the program because the economy is still sluggish and many people can still benefit from skilling-up then we will probably extend it. People won't need to do anything to extend their software use, as we can alter it at the server-side."

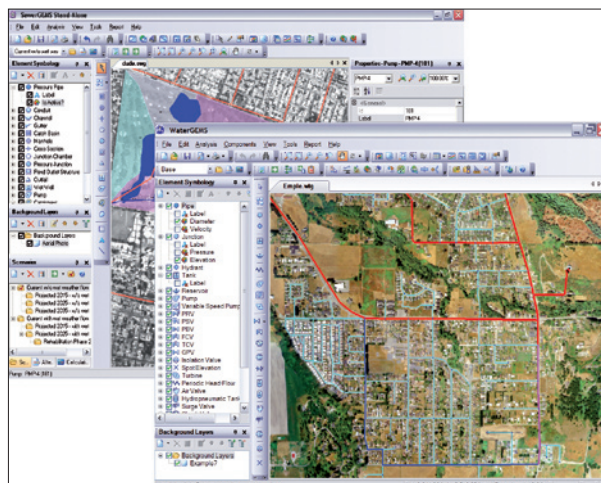
## Conclusion

To be able to maintain legal access to high-end design software, get unlimited training, support and be put in front of potential employers, all for free, is probably the best bit of news we have come across all year. Well done and thanks Bentley Systems. I hope the other key vendors follow suit soon.

[www.bentley.com/beemployable](http://www.bentley.com/beemployable)



**The MicroStation V8i Architecture is one of the software solutions that Bentley is offering for free to unemployed professionals to download with access to online training.**



**Bentley Systems is offering a wide range of vertical tools to unemployed AEC and Infrastructure professionals. WaterGEMS V8i is the company's solution for fire flow and water simulation, to criticality and energy cost analysis.**

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**Joe Croser, global marketing director, platform products at Bentley Systems.**