

Discovering Design Power

For hitting out design ideas, Matt Macarewich relies on the power of Cadsoft Envisioneer.

Profile

Matt Macarewich is no stranger to the design/build industry. His 20+ years of experience began as a young boy, helping out with his dad's construction business. This naturally led to the start of his own design/build business, Matt Macarewich & Associates, located in Capistrano Beach, California. Now a seasoned design/build professional with a passion for design, Matt is aiming for a more cutting-edge drafting operation.

With a focus on design, Matt was looking for easy-to-use software that would help him get out his design ideas, visualize them, and directly produce working drawings. Following up on a recommendation from a colleague, he decided to try Cadsoft Envisioneer.

Getting a Quick Start

His first impression was that it was very easy to use. After only a week he was in the full swing of things, using it for actual projects. Having worked with Autodesk Revit in the past, he was very pleased that he could jump right into the software. "In Revit you have to set up everything. You have to convert all of your data from your previous program into it.

There is a tremendous amount of commitment and setup needed for a firm to convert over to a program like ArchiCAD or Revit," says Matt, adding that such applications are better suited to large-scale operations. According to Matt, Envisioneer's quick start-up time is a definite advantage, especially for smaller business owners who want to get up and running as quickly as possible.

Helping Clients Visualize

When asked what he thought were the most impressive features of Envisioneer, Matt put 3D presentation at the top of the list. "People see a set of 2D plans and they don't really understand what's going on. Using Envisioneer I can actually walk people through a house, and by adding objects like people and beds, it really puts the house into perspective and allows them to see the space they're going to have. For them to be able to see the project done is critical."

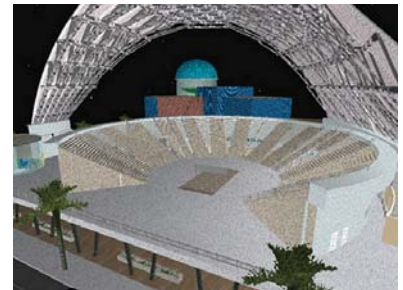
From Design to Documentation

Previously, Matt had been using Punch software, which he felt was adequate for creating a presentation piece, but wasn't capable of producing complete working drawings.

To create designs he essentially had to scrap the work he had done in Punch and redraw his models in AutoCAD. Envisioneer, on the other hand, with its ability to produce floor plans, elevations and sections, seamlessly tied the design stage and working drawing stage together. "With this program I was able to use all the work I had done and turn it right into working drawings, so there was no time wasted", says Matt.

"Envisioneer is a very useful and powerful design tool, and for the money, it's fantastic."

Matt Macarewich, Partner
Matt Macarewich & Associates



Integration is Key

Especially important to Matt is the ability to export to AutoCAD, which he uses to create final working drawings. By rolling his drawings over into the program he was already using, he didn't have to spend any time inputting existing details or title blocks into a new program. "It was so easy to just sort of paste my drawings right onto the standard sheets that I'd already been using in AutoCAD. That helped expedite my plans." Not only can he use all of his existing sheets and title blocks, but he can also refine his drawings and put an "artist's touch" on them using AutoCAD's special nuances and advanced feature set — a definite advantage for client presentations.

Real-time Navigation

So how does Envisioneer stack up against its competitors? Matt had previously evaluated a number of similar programs, and has found that Envisioneer shares many of the same features. However, there are a few things that stand out in Envisioneer. "Just being able to click to 3D perspective and do a walkthrough without having to place cameras, which is something you have to do in ArchiCAD and Revit, was probably the most impressive feature. Envisioneer lets you just fly through the house."

Power Tools

Matt has also found Envisioneer's ability to produce elevations and sections to be very powerful. "The fact that you can cut a section anywhere you want is really slick. If I want to know how my stairs are working out, I can just cut a line through them, look at the section, then select the stairs and make adjustments as needed. Being able to edit those sections live is a very powerful tool."

Going Deep

When asked what feature is most important to him in design software, his response was, "it has to be easy to use". According to Matt, Envisioneer really hits the mark. Its intuitive interface and right-click menus "really help a designer or presenter get through a project faster". At the same time, Matt says, Envisioneer has a lot of depth. "It surprises me how deep and how involved I can get with the program. When I show people what it can do, they're just blown away."

Final Impressions

So what are this design professional's overall impressions? "Envisioneer is a very useful and powerful design tool, and for the money, it's fantastic. It's something that I use on a daily basis now, and I intend on doing all my projects in Envisioneer." His system of creating drawings in Envisioneer and exporting them to AutoCAD is allowing him to do a lot more work than he could do before. "Just being able to export into a widely known program like AutoCAD is key. Anything that can't interface with other programs is not going to be very useful." In Matt's opinion, Envisioneer's design and editing power, along with its 3D presentation and integration capabilities, push it well out of the consumer-level bracket. Envisioneer is a professional product that is ideal for getting design ideas across quickly and effectively.

To learn more about Envisioneer, please visit www.cadsoft.com.



Matt's top three Envisioneer features are:

- **3D Presentations**
Instant switch from 2D to 3D. Effortless, real-time walk-throughs.
- **Export to AutoCAD®**
Quick and easy integration with existing sheets and title blocks.
- **Sections**
On-the-fly section cutting, and live editing.