



What is the Sheet Manager

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What is a Sheet Set?

A Sheet Set is a collection of Sheets (drawings used to publish or plot) in a "project". The concept is an old one. Project drawing file organization is often subject to a number of variables: – operating system, network bandwidth, folder search paths, and the ubiquitous employee who just has to organize "his" way.

Sheet Sets in AutoCAD based applications allow you to organize the drawings you will use to publish your project. You are no longer subject to the whims of your IT department's folder conventions. Sheet Sets and Sheets allow you to organize output around your project presentation needs.

The Sheet Set Manager recognizes that Sheets in your project share information: a common pool of templates, support files, and libraries. Sheet Set Manager creates and maintains linkages between the Sheets (drawings), Sheet Sets, and your published plan set. The automation can include Detail and Sheet reference tags so that you don't have to hunt down and manually update page numbers when the inevitable change to your plan set occurs.

Used correctly, Sheet Sets can improve your organization and productivity. Just as importantly, they force everyone to focus on the final product throughout the design process by working through model space *and* layouts. The Sheet Set Manager allows a new type of organization and customization for entire projects by managing and linking all the sheets in a sheet set under one module.

About the Authors

Portions of this document were produced and edited by multiple members of our Technical Services staff without whose knowledge and expertise this document would be impossible to produce.

Special recognition to our Clients and their staffs who aided in the validation and review of the contents.

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The PULSE of Your Project

Since the 2005 release, AutoCAD based applications have included the Sheet Set Manager. The Sheet Set Manager does not introduce any new drafting, annotation, modeling, or style technology into the AutoCAD platform. Rather, it uses the power of features already available – layouts, fields, templates, plotting – in a more integrated manner, and across an entire project's files. For this reason, it is less a singular vital organ to your project than a circulatory network. You can think of the Sheet Set Manager as the "PULSE" of your project for the many ways it can help you: Publish, Unify, Link, Setup, and Edit.

- **Publish:** The most obvious reason for a sheet set is to publish your sheets. Through the Sheet Set Manager, you can publish any number of sheets, from one to your entire set, with a few clicks of a mouse. Apply uniform plot tables, paper sizes, and .pc3 driver files to all of the sheets. Plot to paper, publish to the web, eTransmit your files into one package, and Archive the results.
- **Unify:** Create one set of standards for your drawings over the entire sheet set, and have them automatically apply. Templates, title blocks, views and layouts, standard libraries, text and dimension styles, page setups,

08.06.2

plot stamps ... from start to finish, keep your standards the same across all your sheets. Save it all to one sheet set for everyone in your project to use.

- **Link:** Link sheets together through the Sheet Set Manager. Project- and sheet- specific callouts, sheet names, numbering schemes, and hyperlinks allow you to intelligently organize of all your sheets, from details to aerial views, no matter how complex the project.
- **Setup:** Forget about the file menu! You can do anything it can through the Sheet Set Manager, and to all of your sheets at once. Create new sheets from standard templates, with title bars already populated. Organize your sheets into the same groups and subgroups that you'll see in your final product, then completely reorganize them – all without touching your file paths or copying a single file. Apply page setups, even save all your sheets at once!
- **Edit:** When you change project properties like view label blocks, callouts, project name, sheet numbering and organization, and any of a slew of other properties, it can be applied across your whole sheet set. The Sheet Set Manager acts like a modeling program for your drawing annotation. Vary view representations that will show in all sheets.

How Does the Sheet Set Manager Work?

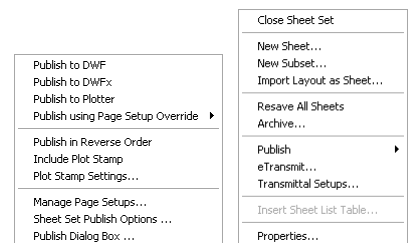
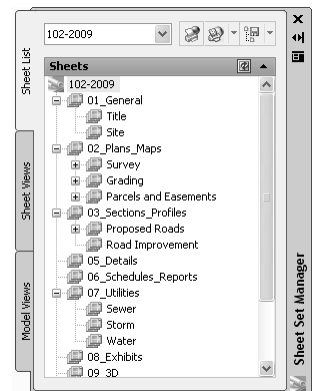
The Sheet Set Manager is really a database based on XML. What you see in the Sheet Set Manager Tool Palette represents views of what you have stored in the named Sheet Set XML file (.dst). In other words, pretty much everything you see is "virtualized" in the Sheet Set Manager interface. This reduces the time you have to spend worrying about file locations etc, but only if you have things set up properly in advance. The properties of the Sheet Set and properties of individual Sheets control how the Sheet Set behaves.

The key to Sheet Set Manager implementation and effectiveness is to get the initial example Sheet Set you use for your projects set up to work the way you want. In other words, you definitely do not want to experiment and change things in working projects. The Sheet Set Manager's integration expects you to have planned things out and covered the details you care about.

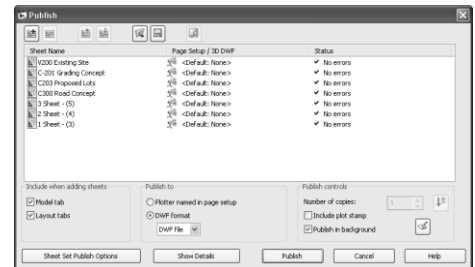
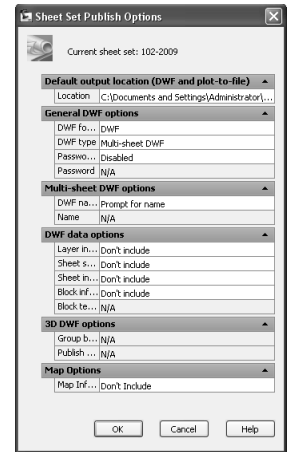
Publishing Sheets

The Sheet Set Manager can handle all publishing and plotting functions for the sheets in a set. Combined with the background plotting several options are available from the right-click menu in the Sheet Set Manager for publishing your sheets.

- There are multiple one-click publishing options for sheets:
Publish to DWF and DWFx (3D dwfs)
Publish to Plotter.
They do not bring up a plot dialog box. By default these use existing page setups and other properties of the Sheet Set or the Sheet.
- A plot stamp can be customized and included in all plots from the Sheet Set. The Plot Stamp properties are part of the Sheet Set.
- Page setups can be applied to any number of sheets in a set simultaneously. They can be chosen from a list, or can be imported from DWG files. These will apply to the sheet display, as well as the plotted output of the sheet. The plotter to be used is specified in the page setup and where the page setups are stored is a property of the Sheet Set.



- The default DWF publish options can be customized. These options will automatically apply to the plotted sheets when a one-click option is selected. Options include single- or multi- sheet DWFs, password protection, and which AEC property set and layer data to include in the DWF file.
- A publish dialog box is also available, in case you want to customize plotting options before publishing. Options include DWF plotting versus plotter, inclusion of a plot stamp, and page setup to use. The sheet list can also be saved, in case certain sheets are to be plotted together regularly.
- Another option, available for sheets, views, and resource drawings, is to eTransmit. The eTransmit feature will package all drawing, data, and custom support files in a folder, collapsing the folder structure, so that an entire project can be sent and viewed with the same settings.

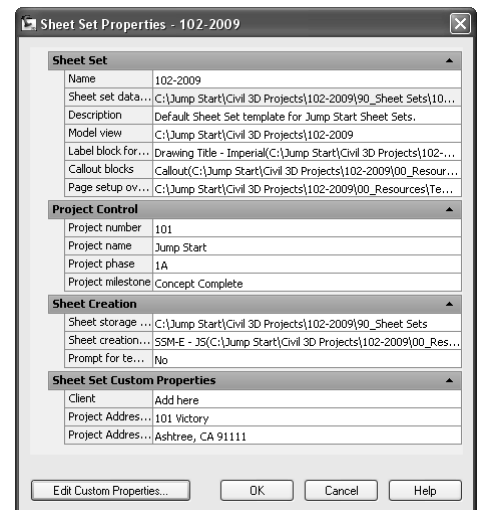


Unifying Project Standards

The Sheet Set Manager is a useful tool for applying standards across your entire project. The Sheet Set Manager can decrease the confusion and mistakes involved when dealing with Windows file structures. All members of a team can use the same DST file for opening, coordinating, and saving drawings.

- The Sheet Set Properties allow you to specify DWT files as templates, and this is use whenever you create a new sheet. You can enforce specific templates for specific types of drawings, use a single template, or allow users template choice when they create new Sheets.
- Custom Sheet Set Properties allow you to supply project and/or Sheet level data to your title block annotation automatically via AutoCAD fields.
- Standard label blocks and callout blocks are specified in the Sheet Set properties
- Using fields, all sheets in your Sheet Set can access the same set of project- and sheet- specific properties, which update automatically if you reorganize, renumber, or rename your Sheets or Sheet Set.

The use of external references of named AutoCAD Views also makes drawings much more versatile. By using Views attached as to Viewports on Layouts instead of opening DWG files, the same resources can be shared by several people at the same time. All users work on the same set of files, and file locks prevent contradictory changes (if a file or layout is already open elsewhere, it will only open read-only).



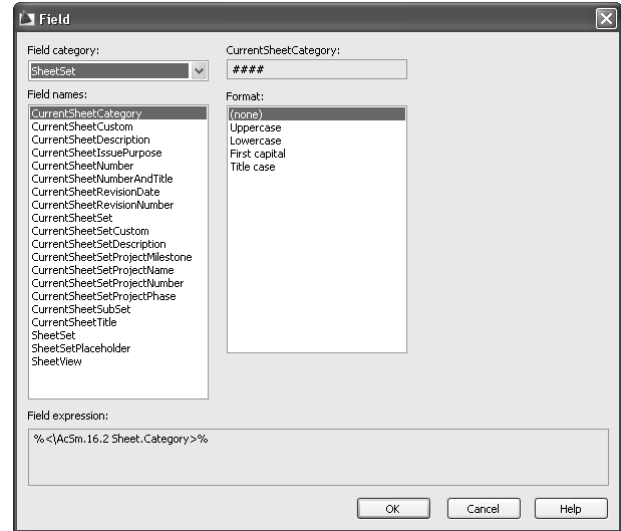
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Link Sheets in a Sheet Set

The Sheet Set Manager facilitates the linking of project information by reducing redundant drawing elements.

Model space views are “pictures” of select parts of a dwg model. Rather than having several drawings, each with layouts with layer settings and scales, the named views allow you to reuse the same information countless times. This means that, if anything in your project changes in one place, it will change elsewhere. This two-step portal from model to finished sheet maintains both common data, and customized view.

Callouts are also a very important feature of any Sheet Set. Just keeping them all correct through a project can eat man-hours better spent elsewhere. Using Sheet Properties in fields, you can now reorganize, renumber, and add and delete Sheets at will, and your callouts will update automatically.



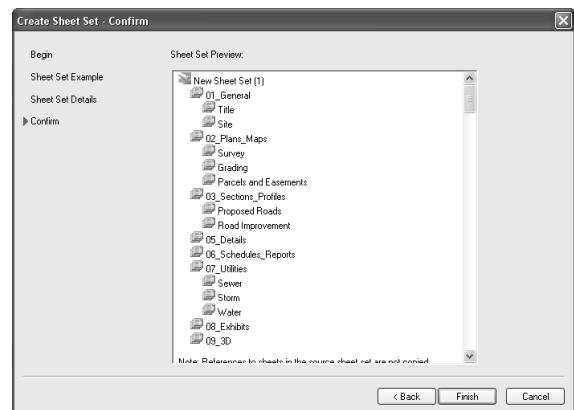
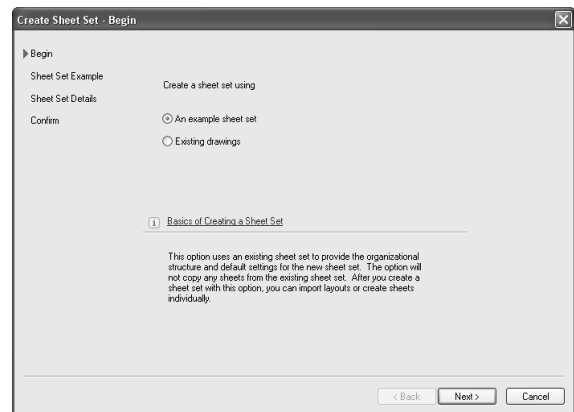
Set Up a Sheet Set

When creating a new sheet set, the Sheet Set Manager creates a **.dst** file in the location you specify. This file can either be created from scratch or modified from an existing file. The modified from existing option is useful if your company has a default set of sheets and library drawings for all drawing sets, or if you plan to have separate sheet sets for different aspects of the project. The DST file contains project-specific information. When you create it, you can specify:

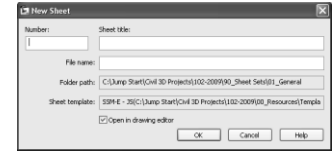
- The name, and a text description of the sheet set
- The location of resource drawings
- The name of a DWG file containing the standard project view label block
- The name or names of DWG files containing the standard project callout blocks
- The name of the DWT file containing page setup overrides
- The path where new drawings created through the Sheet Set Manager will be saved
- The name of the DWT or DWG file used to create new sheets through the Sheet Set Manager, and whether or not to prompt for that template
- A list of pointers to layouts in DWG files that are to be used as sheets in the sheet set

In addition to storing project information, the Sheet Set Manager also includes a host of sheet creation and organization tools.

- Sheets can be created through the Sheet Set Manager. Creating a sheet actually creates a new DWG file with the specified name. It will be created from the template specified in the Sheet Set Properties, and with optional



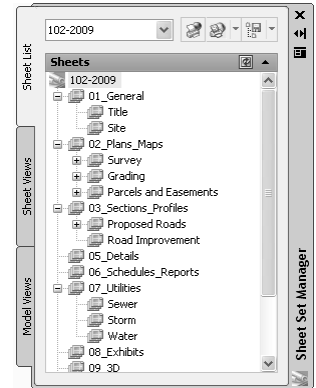
- page setup overrides specified in the same place.
- Sheets, views, and resource files can be organized into subsets in a tree fashion. This *does not* affect file locations in Windows, since the icons are just pointers to the files.
- Create new sheets from layouts in existing resource drawings.
- Open sheets and resource drawings. Resave all your sheets.
- Remove sheets from the sheet set



Edit Sheets, Drawings, and Project Information

The Sheet Set Manager aids in changing project information in many ways. Many of these changes can even be updated in all sheets simultaneously.

- The Sheet Set Manager includes not only organized listings of your final sheets, but also listings of named views and resource drawings. Sheets use views to display drawing information rather than inserting blocks or xrefs. This means that sheets are display representations, so that any changes made to the models reflects in the views and sheets containing those changes. The Sheet Set Manager interface allows a change-and-check process accessible through one interface.
- Custom properties can be edited through the Sheet Set Manager and populated to fields.
- Files can be opened, saved, and changed using the Sheet Set Manager, rather than Windows Explorer.



About the Authors

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