MicroStation® moments

The only computer-aided design software in infrastructure development that has been trusted by architects and engineers for decades.

1985
The origins of MicroStation

Before MicroStation, there was PseudoStation. It allowed users of Intergraph's VAX systems to use low-cost graphics terminals to view and modify the designs on their Intergraph IGDS (interactive graphics design system) installations, and was made commercially available in 1985.

1987
MicroStation 2.0

MicroStation version 1 was introduced to the market in 1986. MicroStation 2.0 followed closely in 1987 and was the first MicroStation with the ability to write DGN design files. It had simple modification capabilities and showed elements in their intermediate states during placement and editing, a breakthrough capability for users of terminals attached to minicomputer-based systems (like IGDS).

1988
MicroStation 3.0

The MicroStation 3.0 release introduced menus to the program. Before the addition of menus, keyboard commands were the only form of interaction available. Menus increased the ease of accessibility for the user. MicroStation 3.0 was released on multiple operating systems. MicroStation Mac (v3.4) was released in late 1989 and was followed by a CLIX version and, later, a DOS version.

1990
MicroStation V4

The start of the 90s saw the release of MicroStation V4, which debuted the Motif graphic user interface and the MDL programming environment (MicroStation SDK). A host of new features included shared cells, online help, design options, named levels, rendering enhancements, and many more. The Nexus update included the first DWG translator. Nexus also included Windows Connection to run on Windows 3.1.

1993
MicroStation V5

MicroStation V5 focused on modularity and usability. New features included photorealistic rendering, binary raster support, custom line styles, dimension driven design, font resource files, and more. MicroStation V5 for Intel NT was the first version to be a native Windows application. It was demoed at Bill Gates' introduction for Windows NT in Baltimore.

1995
MicroStation 95

MicroStation 95, preceded by the introduction of MicroStation PowerDraft® in late 1994, was the first release to depart from version numbering and introduced AccuDraw® and SmartLine®. New features included MicroStation BASIC, dockable toolboxes that were resizable and included tool tips, Raster Manager, solar study, cell selector, Archiver, drawing composition, movie generation/playback, and many more.

1997
MicroStation SE

MicroStation SE was the first version that had colored icons. The software included MicroStation MasterPiece and was the last multi-platform release, supporting 13 different platforms. It also introduced Engineering Links, digital signatures through Archive, LiveLinks (OLE Client & Server), Enhanced Precision, tabbed dialogs, combo boxes, QuickVision, and PowerSelector.

1998
MicroStation/J

MicroStation/J® was the first release that integrated Java. It introduced solids modeling (SmartSolid/SmartSurface), QuickVisionGL, an SGML-based help system, a reorganized directory structure, and dimensioning enhancements. It was the first version to offer concurrent licensing via SELECTserver®. MicroStation/J included MicroStation Engineering Configurations. MicroStation/J v7.1, released in November 1999, included a spell checker, and offered Windows 2000 support for the first time.

2001
MicroStation V8

The first release of the new millennium was MicroStation V8. It brought many new and updated features; translation was no longer necessary to read or write DWG files, and undo, levels, and references became unlimited. It featured the introduction of Design History, AccuSnap, multiple design and sheet models per DGN, Packager, PopSet, compressed files, standard definition working units, particle tracing, MicroStation VBA, text and dimension styles, TrueScale, 3D in 2D, workmodes, and HTML help.

2003
MicroStation V8.1

The next release in the V8 generation, MicroStation V8.1, introduced digital signatures and file protection through digital rights. It also featured an improvement in the 3D functionality of raster manager. Enhancements to selection sets included quickset save/recall, display sets, and the addition of named groups to utilities.

2004
MicroStation V8 2004 Edition

The MicroStation V8 2004 release was the first to include the Adobe PDF libraries, allowing for direct PDF printing and 3D in PDFs. It integrated feature modeling into the product and added multisnap as a snap option. It also allowed exporting information to U3D and 2004/2005/2006 DWG, including ADT objects.

2006
MicroStation V8 XM Edition

MicroStation V8 XM featured an updated interface to go with the DirectX-based display subsystem. It introduced structured workflows and structured content to improve the consistency of work. It was the first version to offer Windows Vista, Microsoft SharePoint, and AutoCAD 2007/2008 DWG support. This was also the first MicroStation version to deliver the MicroStation GenerativeComponents® extension as a value to SELECT subscribers at no charge.

2008
MicroStation V8i

The MicroStation V8i release was the first for a new generation of MicroStation. In addition to updated interoperability with AutoCAD 2009 DWG, it included importing the Rhino 3DM format and exporting the OBJ format, as well as new intuitive modeling tools along with precise freeform modeling tools. Dynamic views were introduced, providing easier ways to interact with drawing sections and details, and the printing system was completely overhauled with an integrated print organizer.

2015
MicroStation CONNECT Edition

On September 1st, 2015, Bentley introduced MicroStation CONNECT Edition, the first version of MicroStation providing more connected workflows and a personalized experience. It featured new capabilities for modeling and delivering projects in a new, streamlined interface. The software enabled users to view personalized LEARN content, work on connected projects, and maintain the association with project standards and configurations.

2023
MicroStation 2023

MicroStation 2023 (23.00.00.108) was released on June 28th, 2023. It was the first major release to adopt a new naming convention and version support lifecycle as per the Bentley Fixed Lifecycle Policy. MicroStation 2023 announced the integration of geospatial context directly into the CAD environment.

2024
MicroStation 2024

MicroStation 2024 was released on July 11, 2024, and brought a powerhouse of transformative features, including Python integration for customization and automation, enhanced GIS data integration, new collaboration workflows, improved 2D and 3D modeling tools, and enhanced drawing production capabilities.

This short history of MicroStation is not a comprehensive listing and dates are approximate. For additional information on MicroStation and Bentley's modeling and visualization offerings, see this product page. Also see the modeling and visualization community.

Bentley®