

Parsons Brinckerhoff

Customer Success Story

AutoCAD®

AutoCAD® Civil 3D®

Autodesk® Buzzsaw®

Autodesk Professional Certification

Autodesk Authorized Training Center (ATC®)

The Autodesk Certification Program has been a fantastic way for Parsons Brinckerhoff to invest in its employees and gain a competitive position in the marketplace.

—Rebecca Arsham
CADD Training Manager
Parsons Brinckerhoff

Certified success.

Parsons Brinckerhoff helps to increase employee productivity and satisfaction with Autodesk Certification Program.



Image courtesy of Parsons Brinckerhoff

The Company

Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) is a planning, engineering, program and construction management, and operations and maintenance organization. The company has been involved in planning and designing some of the world's largest public works projects, such as the Woodrow Wilson Bridge outside Washington, DC, the tunnel under Turkey's Bosphorus Strait, Kuwait's First Ring Road around Kuwait City, Cairo's Metro, and the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System in Singapore. Headquartered in New York City, PB has approximately 13,000 employees worldwide.

Creating a Global Standard

PB faced several challenges, including employee retention, a global workforce using multiple versions of software, and limited budget to develop comprehensive training tools for staff. The company needed a reliable way to assess the skill level of employees, help ensure that skills are up to industry standard, and prepare staff for their next project.

"The reality was that we had staff at varying levels of expertise," explains Rebecca Arsham, CADD training manager at Parsons Brinckerhoff. "We wanted to take a step back and consider where our employees really were in terms of software versions, level of knowledge, and how we wanted to effectively utilize the certification program to accomplish several goals."

PB looked to Autodesk to help address these issues, seeking to incorporate Autodesk's certification program into its existing internal employee development and training plan. The resulting PB-Autodesk Professional Certification Pilot Program focused on AutoCAD® and AutoCAD® Civil 3D® software—the primary Autodesk applications in use at PB.

Phased Approach Brings Measurable Results

Autodesk and PB developed five project phases: launch, skills assessment, exam preparation, certification testing, and results. After taking an assessment test, candidates were given a personal learning plan that identified areas for improvement based on the results, which included study materials, Autodesk Official Training Guides, online training classes, exam preparation webinars, sample exam questions, recommended practice time, and a personal milestone calendar to track progress.

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Faced with the challenge of keeping in touch with participants in different time zones and countries, PB needed to ensure that the training resources would be available for access at any time, regardless of location. “Obviously, we couldn’t just pull everyone into one large conference room for training, so we had to think outside the box a little bit,” says Arsham.

Several tools were used to solve this problem, including Autodesk® Buzzsaw® collaboration software as a service, which functioned as a centralized repository for all pilot program materials. In addition, PB took advantage of email communication templates that were branded with a consistent look and feel to help users easily distinguish important messages: instructions and next steps on how to achieve program goals, updates on materials and resources available, and important dates and reminders. Last, webcasts were recorded and posted for viewing at any time.

Authorized Training Centers Essential to Program

Because certification exams must be proctored at an Autodesk Authorized Training Center (ATC®) site, ATC partners were chosen based on proximity to participants’ office locations: Avatech Solutions, CADsoft Consulting, Excitech Limited (UK), Future Media Concepts, Hagerman & Company, IMAGINiT Technologies, MicroCAD Training & Consulting, Striker Technology Solutions, and U.S. CAD.

Pilot program participants were able to evaluate their skills, use blended learning resources to prepare, and pass their Associate and Professional exams—all within a span of five months. The pass rate on the Associate exam was 83 percent, and 71 percent on the Professional exam—an impressive feat for a pilot program.

“Adding the Autodesk Certification Program element to our existing PB training program has provided us with real ROI statistics,” explains Arsham. “With the high pass rate on the certification exams, we have validated the success of our CADD training program. These numbers enable PB to market our accomplishments and ultimately add value to the projects we work on.”

Certification a Win-Win for Companies and Their Employees

For PB, the program brought clear benefits: a productivity increase among employees by focusing learning on needed skills; a competitive advantage through the ability to market Autodesk-certified staff on projects; and lower turnover due to increased employee job satisfaction. Perhaps the most compelling testament to employee development came from this employee feedback: “When ‘The Company’ does so much for you, it makes you wish to do more (than necessary) for ‘The Company.’”

“We couldn’t be happier with the results of the program,” says Arsham. “Given that the cost to replace a highly technical employee can range between one-half to five times the yearly salary of that employee, we are more than happy to invest in our employees so that they can fully leverage the Autodesk technology at their disposal. I think the results of our pilot program have proved that an investment in a certification training program does convey the right message to employees and in turn the employees become advocates for the company’s training program.”



Image courtesy of Parsons Brinckerhoff

Learn More

For details about Autodesk Professional Certification and the certification process, visit www.autodesk.com/certification.

Locate a local Autodesk Authorized Training Center (ATC) site and learn more about the ATC network at www.autodesk.com/authorizedtraining.

Autodesk offers a flexible portfolio of learning tools, for the novice to advanced user, to help users increase performance and remain competitive. Visit www.autodesk.com/learning.

To learn more about Parsons Brinckerhoff and the services the company offers, visit www.pbworld.com.



Autodesk Certification is a must for engineering professionals and companies like PB; it sets a standard benchmark of knowledge we can rely upon when hiring or forming project teams.

—Rebecca Arsham, CADD Training Manager, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Image courtesy of Parsons Brinckerhoff