



September 2001

Topic: **CAD Applications for PDAs**
CAD & PDA

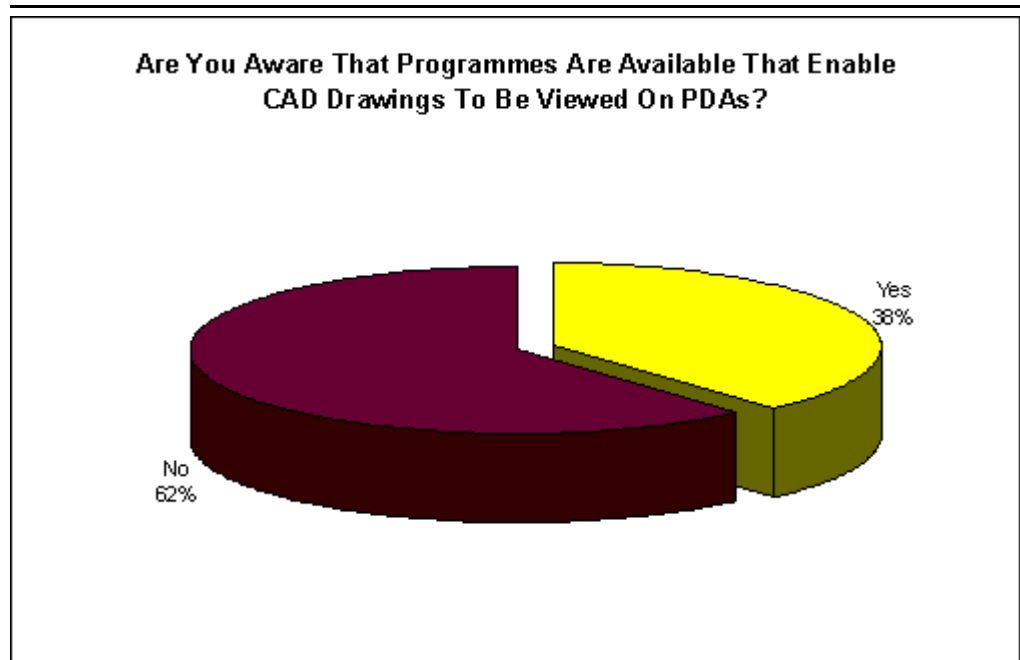
iCAD is produced by Business Advantage, a B2B research, business development and marketing consulting practice operating in the global IT, Digital and Telecommunications sectors.

Views from AEC CAD Managers

Advances in the capabilities of handhelds are galloping along and opening up new opportunities for people needing to work with data away from the office. Although still in its relative infancy, the scope for viewing, editing and even creating CAD data on a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) is available from a number of specifically designed packages. Are architectural, engineering and construction firms (AEC) aware of these capabilities - and how interested are they in using them? We interviewed senior managers with responsibility for CAD functions at 250 UK sites to find out.

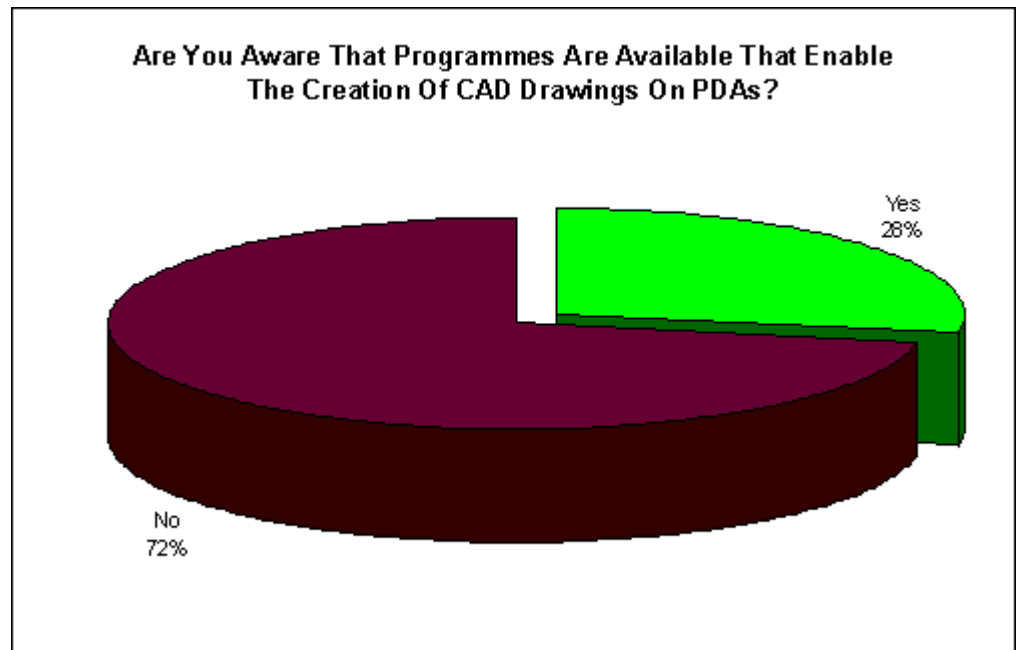
Viewing On The Move

Nearly two out of five of our sample were aware that applications are available that enable the viewing of CAD drawings on PDAs.



Creating On The Move

What about creating design drawings while out in the field? Less than a third of our sample were aware that this is possible on PDAs (albeit still at a relatively basic level).

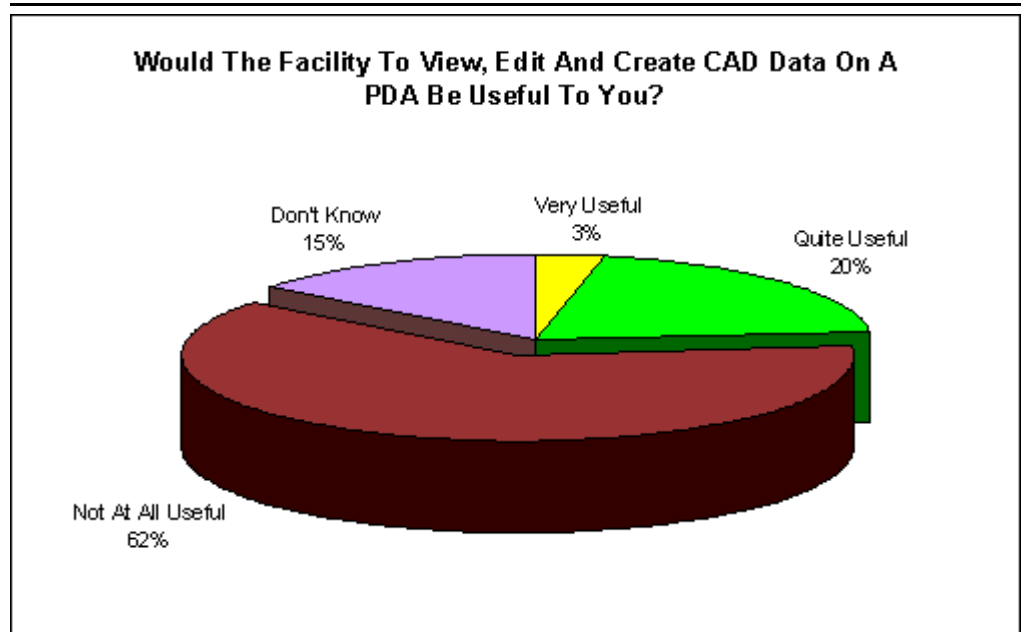


Have You Tried It?

Only 3% of our sample have experimented with CAD applications on PDAs, or are currently using them.

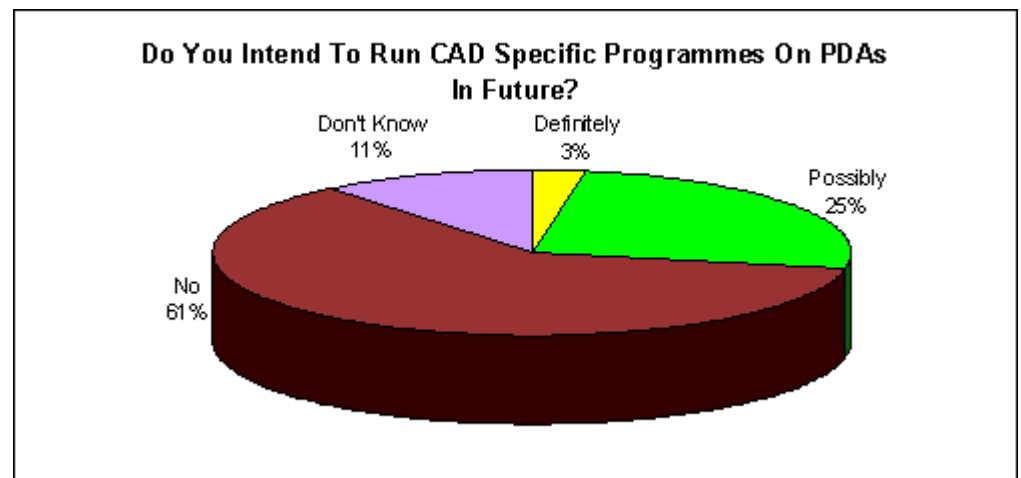
How Useful Would It Be?

We asked our sample how useful the capacity to view, edit and create CAD data on a PDA would be to them. The responses were the same for the viewing and creating options; just over one in five thought these functions would be useful (including only 3% who stuck necks out to say it would be very useful). 15% said they were undecided (reasonable given that they were unaware it was possible), leaving 62% who view the technology as no use to them.



Do You Intend to Use It In Future?

Only 3% of our sample said they definitely intend to use mobile CAD software solutions in future. A quarter said it was possible that such solutions would be introduced. One in ten couldn't comment without more information, and 61% gave a resounding no.





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Conclusion

Awareness of the availability of CAD applications for PDAs is currently low, but then these have only become available in the last couple of years. While there is some scepticism that PDAs will make a good platform for content creation, further enhancements to these solutions should mean that interest in this area increases. Some analysts are predicting that PDAs will be used for an increasing range of functions in the construction world in future, particularly with the advent of wireless technologies. Although four out of five in our sample thought they would have no use for CAD applications for PDAs, the majority are likely to be unaware of the breadth of complementary functions that will be available to them via handhelds in the near future.

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