MASTERTEMPLATE ARCHICAD TRAINING – Part One - Introduction to MasterTemplate

Hello, this is Eric Bobrow and today we are going to take a look at MasterTemplate. This introductory training will be focused on giving you an orientation, as a MasterTemplate owner, on: how to download and install MasterTemplate and what resources there are to get help when you need it, the basic structure and idea of MasterTemplate, what benefit you will get from it; and just a general overview. By the end of the next hour you should have a good sense of what you've got on your computer or should have soon if you haven't downloaded it. [0:00:47]

I know some of you on this call have had MasterTemplate for a while, and others may have recently purchased it. So I'm going to be focusing today primarily for those who are new to this to get an orientation. We will have two additional training sessions that will be in the next couple of weeks. All of these will be recorded and placed in the member area. The second session will be on the basic usage of MasterTemplate; basically, how you approach working in the template to design your project and take advantage of what is set up in the template. [0:01:29]

The third session will be on customization, basically how to set up MasterTemplate to have your own kit of parts and your own preferred settings. We'll look at some of those questions of making it the best possible resource for your office. So I see we have quite a few people online. I want to thank you for taking the time to join me and I think you'll find that this will be a real benefit, at least that's my aim.

[Dialog about audio test, questions box and announcement of attendees ends at 0:03:31]

So here we have the website for MasterTemplate, some of you who bought it a while ago haven't seen this but basically on the website I used to have a very complex introduction with a lot of words. Now there's a video that talks about what is included with MasterTemplate. If you have a little bit of time you might want to take a look at that presentation. And of course, if you have colleagues who you may want to refer to MasterTemplate, this is what they will see. In addition there are basically some words talking about what it addresses and so on. [0:04:15]

Now at very bottom of the page here, if you scroll down, you'll see Login to the website. So I'm going to click on that and you can go directly of course to this login page, it's www.actemplate.com/login. And you'll then have the opportunity to login to the membership area. And I will just go in with an account that I have setup for demonstration purposes. So this is as a user as opposed to an administrator, and I'll go ahead and login. There is a "Forgot Password" link there, so if you aren't sure, you can type in your email address and click the forgot password link and it will be emailed to you. And if you can't remember what email address you used when you purchased it or there's a problem, send an email to me at support@actemplate.com. [0:05:11]

Now here I am on the member homepage, and this is where we have some information about the products that are available to you. Now MasterTemplate is very much a single purpose website. This website is really focused just on MasterTemplate but of course we have many different versions depending upon what version of ArchiCAD you have. So if you purchased it recently, you would have MasterTemplate 15, but you would also have access to earlier versions, perhaps you're still on and ArchiCAD 12 or 14 or something like that. And you'll see these download links on the left side. So if you purchased it earlier, when say ArchiCAD 13 was current, then you will have access only up to that level. [0:05:56]

Now this thing down below that pops up sometimes allows you to sign up for emails from me. You can hide it by clicking on this button on the bottom right. Since you are already a MasterTemplate owner, you're going to be getting emails from me periodically anyway. You'll also see down below here are the links. I'm going to click on "Download MasterTemplate 15" and this takes us to the page that has the download links for the template. So you would go to the one for your own particular version. [0:06:33]

There's a little bit of an overview telling you to download it and open it up and here's how you deal with some of the basic installation. Pick the version that you need, USA or international. Now if you're in Canada and you're working in the metric system, then there are some special considerations you have. You should probably be using the USA version of the template, because that's the version of the library and set up that comes with ArchiCAD in Canada. But you might want to also download the international version to get the metric standards in the template. [0:07:15]

Obviously we need to support both feet and inches in the U.S. and in parts of Canada, and metric in all the rest of the world. You will see here AMT15 Release Notes. This is some of the documentation that talks about what was updated in version 15 of the template. And there are some supplemental files. I will be talking about these in general shortly. Down lower you will see that there are some links to the manual and other release notes, and we'll take a look at this so that you understand what is there and what is important to pay attention to. And then very important is the sample project files. These sample project files, depending on what version you are downloading, they may be included. But in this case, they are included in the supplemental files. You can see I'm pointing at that. [0:08:11]

So this sample file we will take a look at. It does help you to understand MasterTemplate better. Now basically all you would do on this website here is download. You can also go to the support area. You can see there are video tutorials and support. So if I go to the support item here under the Support menu, you'll see there's a support forum and you can also send emails to me primarily and sometimes to Scott Boehmer who co-created the template. The email is support@actemplate.com. [0:08:55]

Now the forum, if I click here or go up to the support menu to the support forum here, this is an area where you can post questions. And the idea here is that if you want to ask a question and have me answer it instead of sending it as an email, if you post it here - for example this, I will just click on this one here. You can see this is a question that was posted by Ron Dillman, and he says, "I get this message…" and then I responded to him. Now the reason why this is important is you may have a

problem that is similar and if you can browse through these questions you may be able to find your own answer. And there is a search option here, if you click on the search button up at the top, you can type in something and it will look. And there are quite a few posts in the forum, although it hasn't been used recently as much as it was used in the early days. But I think it is a really excellent place that you should know about. [0:10:00]

And finally under the support menu here is Documentation. You will see that there are links for the manual and the release notes as well as the information on the Cadimage legends which is an add-on that is available for people who use Cadimage products. It's a small additional cost on top of the template. But there's documentation about that. Now the video tutorials are definitely worth looking at if you haven't already. If you go to installation for example, I'm going to give you a brief version of it but you will see a video pop up. I'll just click on it to get it started and you'll see that it comes up with a screen, and you can hear me talking. [0:10:52]

So this will tell you how to download and install the template, and there's also some initial customization video about setting up your company logo on the title block. This is the minimum customization that everyone should do is to set their own company information on the master pages. And then of course starting a project, there's a basic tutorial on how you start working with MasterTemplate. Now I'm going to be giving you short versions of these today so that you have some sense of the overview, and I will be doing some more extended training on some of this in the second of these three training sessions. [0:11:44]

Finally if you click on the "Contact" button here you will see information on how to send an email for support. So you are always welcome to send email if you have a problem. Obviously, I expect you to do your best to figure it out yourself, read the manual, and watch the tutorials. But I'm there for you and will make sure that you get the answers you need. That's it for the website for now. I'm planning on putting up some more materials on this including the three sessions that we're recording right now. [0:12:18]

Now let me go to the reference manual. This is available for you. I do recommend that you browse through it. If I look here, you can see that it goes up to 100 or more pages here. If I click on this, it's not linked. I thought it was linked in the PDF. But you can certainly scroll down to page 75 to find that. You can see that there is a lot of information here to browse through. It's not important that you go through the whole manual to get started, but I do think it's probably worth your time. Notice that there are a lot of images on some of the pages. So it isn't as many pages as you might think. There are some very common questions that come up that people ask about MasterTemplate like what layer should I put things on. And for example, here is the list of where elements belong. So if you do go through this manual, you'll see a lot of information that will answer your questions. [0:13:34]

Now this manual had a major overhaul for MasterTemplate 13. We did update MasterTemplate for version 14, and the 14 release notes have a summary of changes. They are primarily, in version 14 and 15, they were compatibility updates. So in other words, just changes to make sure that they worked

with ArchiCAD 14 or 15. So the manual that was last redone in 13 still applies almost 100%. However, there are some new features that you can see here that were added into version 14. And in version 15, we also had some other things that were reworked a bit. So these are worth looking at. [0:14:24]

Over time as you have MasterTemplate and you work with it and you are moving forward from one version of ArchiCAD to another, you will need to upgrade your template file. And there is a guide in every one of these release notes on how to do that. Essentially there are two basic approaches. One is that you start over with the new template that we supply and bring in your customization. So for example, if you put your title block in, how do you get the title block into the new version of the template? However, if you've done a lot of customizations then you may want to do the reverse. You may want to update your own template to 15 and then selectively incorporate parts of the public template, the one that is for download, and do it in reverse. So it depends. And I discuss that in detail in the upgrade notes. [0:15:27]

So these are your main support resources. Let's take a look at MasterTemplate itself. So I'm going to first to the ArchiCAD project file that was started in the standard U.S. version of ArchiCAD with a standard template. And I'm just going to compare this briefly to what you get in MasterTemplate. Now in the international version it will look a little different because the markers that we are seeing that create a little square or rectangle around the central blank area, they look different. These are the elevation markers that define views from all the different sides. In the international version they have a different graphic style but perform the same function. [0:16:21]

So in the standard template there are a couple of stories here. In the international version there are three and of course they are called ground floor and then first floor would be the next one up. Then I think it's called second floor for the top of the three stories. And you'll see the four elevations listed here, but nothing in the sections, nothing in the interior elevations, no worksheets or details. So basically you start out with a pretty empty file. Now in terms of the view map, this will also be different in the international version, but there are a few variations of plans and then basically elevations. And then what are called clone folders set up for the other types of views. [0:17:13]

This has changed a little bit over the years, and Graphisoft is starting to incorporate some of the automation tools like the clone folders more effectively in their own templates. But there's not a whole lot in the template, it's fairly empty. And if we look at the layout book and switch to that, there are just a handful of sheets and some empty subsets where you would potentially be creating your layout. Let's compare that to MasterTemplate. So here we have a MasterTemplate that has been downloaded and installed. And I'm basically just starting a project with the standard template. In fact let me show you how that works. [0:18:02]

We go to the File menu and say New, when you create a new project, you're going to choose between the standard templates that Graphisoft supplies for your version. I have both U.S. and international ones in case I need to work with them. And then the template that you last worked with or the ones that you have on your computer will be listed as well. The first time you work with it you are going to say

"Browse Template" and find the template in your files. So here is where I keep MasterTemplate 15, and here is where the template file is. [0:18:40]

When you're starting a project and you are saying select a template, it's only going to look for files that end in .tpl, the template file extension. So it won't highlight or allow you to choose .pln files or other types of files. And when I select this, it will pop this up into the menu right here and record it as a template you might want to use in future. I will say "New" and it will go ahead and read that again. And at first, it says "MasterTemplate" at the top and then after it completes it will say "Untitled" because it's going to be a copy of it waiting for new information. Now in the template as I said, there's just a whole lot more structure. I'm sure that you have seen some of that or worked with it already. I'm just going to give a very brief overview of what our approach is for those of you who are new to the template. [0:19:47]

The first time you install MasterTemplate, you will get some warnings. These are described on the download page to tell you what to do as well as in the manual. The first one says that some hotlinked modules are missing. This will be true in all versions of the template other than the ones for the Start Edition because the Start Edition does not have hotlinks as a function. So they won't get this message. Basically the hotlinked modules are external files that are used within the template. And the first time after you install the template it won't know where they are because it will be looking for them on another computer. For example, my computer where I develop it. [0:20:38]

So I can see this message. All we can do is click OK and later fix it; we can't fix it right now. Now there's also a warning that comes up about files that are missing. I will just open this up wider. Basically, these are ones that are in the template, but it doesn't know how to find them. These are, instead of hotlinks, these are using the drawing manager. Now these files are supplied with MasterTemplate in a folder called "MasterTemplate linked files". This varies a little bit in earlier versions of the template. So consult the manual for more information on that. [0:21:22]

I'm going to say "Read From". This allows me to look for a folder and find where these files might be. I'm going to go back to the MasterTemplate folder and here is the USA version that I'm working with. So I'm going to highlight MasterTemplate linked files. So that's the folder where these drawings will be found and I'll say "Choose". And as soon as I do that, goes onto the next step, and it fixes those links. So I just do this once. Now update drawings is a message that you will find on every ArchiCAD project whenever you open it. As long as you've done any work at all in it, you will see this. You can ignore it and say "Skip All", because unless you are about to print a set of drawings, these will all update when you need them. Whenever you bring up an elevation it will update, or whenever you bring up a layout, it will either automatically update or you can tell it to update. So, I always say "Skip All". [0:22:30]

Now if you don't like being annoyed with this, you can say, "Do not display this dialog next time." I leave it up so that for training purposes I can always refer to that. But I will say "Skip All". And in general, you can do that for all projects unless you are about to print, in which case you might say "Update All" before you print. I have fixed one error message which had to do with the missing files in the drawing manager,

and I am about to fix the other one which is under File menu, External Content, Hotlink Manager. Now sometimes I've noticed that it actually already has fixed the links, so these links here say OK. It gave me a warning message, but then it figured it out. But if it says "Missing", then it's important to relink this from a file. [0:23:35]

Now if you're in a version like ArchiCAD 10 or 11, this may have a slightly different button that may just say "Relink" and may not have a sub menu or File or Teamwork project. But just do "Relink", and then you need to go to here. I have my MasterTemplate folder and here is the MasterTemplate linked files. And within that you can see that it is offering me the possibility of linking to any of these files that are solid black. The very first one here you can see is "Legends" and that's the one I want to select. They are in alphabetical order, so if I go from the top and pick the first one, I will select it. And again I'll pick and relink each one but these to the correct one. [0:24:27]

And so I'm actually telling it to link it to a different one than it originally had. But this is what you do in where you placed MasterTemplate. And I'll say OK, it will then reload those files and update them if need be. So now I have MasterTemplate open, and I have cleaned up the basic error messages that were there. I'm going to clean up my palettes or let's say where the floor plan window is. Right now, because I've switched screens to a smaller screen than I normally work for purposes of presentation, I'm going to go and use the work environment. And in the Options menu, Work Environment, go to my Saved Palette Schemes for the presentations like this. And I will apply it. And what this will do is adjust where the windows are. You can see now the floor plan window is now nicely fit in between all of my palettes and when I say "Fit in Window" with the button, we are seeing everything properly. [0:25:44]

Now let's just take a look at a little bit of what is in MasterTemplate in a blank file, and then we'll take a look at the sample project and see how the template really fits together. So in the standard project or the empty project, there's a little bit of explanatory verbiage. In other words, there's something saying "Welcome" and it's telling you that there is a building here, a massing object. And there is some text that is intended for you to delete before you start work. If I go to 3D and bring up the 3D window here - let's see, I will need to bring the 3D window up into position again because I have the screen smaller than usual - you will see that there is initially a little massing building put on a platform. [0:26:47]

And it is intended that you would get rid of that and start your own work. Now, if you're curious, if I select this particular massing building, it's just an object in the library called "house model". It's in ArchiCAD version 15, so it has "Model 15". This is something that really doesn't need to be there, I'll just delete it. When I go back to the floor plan, you'll see that building has disappeared. So I can get rid of the other information by selecting them and deleting them. If I select one of them and I make sure that my groups are active, you can see I'm pointing at the "Suspend Groups" and making sure that it's not currently in effect. When I select one of them it selects all of the explanatory information and I can delete it. [0:27:41]

Notice that explanatory information has a yellow background. There will be text items in various places that will either be yellow or gray background to make it clear that this is something as a guide for you.

It's intended for you to either replace it or delete it. Now here you can see two rectangles which are the little platform that I have with some earth and paved surface. And behind it, you'll see this blue area that is the trace reference for one of the layout sheets. It's intended as a guide that you could use, you don't have to. I will turn off the trace reference. And you can see now by turning that off by using the "Trace" button in the toolbox, I now have a cleaner representation. [0:28:36]

Of course, when you are laying out a building at a certain scale, it is sometimes helpful to see how that plan for whichever drawing you're working on fits onto a sheet. So the trace reference is a nice option from time to time. Now you'll see that we actually have, in addition to the two floors that would be standard in the standard template, I have a top floor and a foundation. Now foundation is obvious. Most buildings will have a foundation structures, and putting it on a separate story has some advantages. It's not the only way to do it, but it is a useful way that we've found to make things give more control. Now the top plate could also be the roof story. And the reason why we are calling it this is if I go to any of the elevations - let's say here, let's go and I'll just open up an elevation here. [0:29:40]

Now the elevation for a moment had the little building and then it disappeared. But what you'll see is that on the sides, we have our standard story levels being displayed. They have the first floor and second floor. The international version would say ground floor and first floor. And then instead of saying "Roof" it says "Top Plate", because that's certainly a typical elevation reference that you might have for that structural element. So that's why we named the story top plate, although that's something that you could customize and change. [0:30:17]

Now the heights here are in feet and inches and of course the metric version they are in more metric standards. All of this is intended for you to change. Obviously each building will have different story heights and different numbers of stories. So you can add more stories to the file. So let's just look at the structure here. We have four different elevations that are called "CD". These are construction document elevations. And then we have four elevations with the letter "P" for presentation. These are ones that have shadows set up. And the reason why they have to be separate elevations is that they have a marker that defines where you are looking from that creates the elevation; it has a different setting. In other words, the setting for the marker determines whether the view has shadows or not. [0:31:13]

We will take a look at that in the sample project. You'll see there are some interior elevations already. Of course this is based on having ArchiCAD since they added the interior elevation tool, which I think might have been version 12. And then there are a bunch of worksheets. Now if I look at these worksheets, these are different types of resources. I'm going to expand this navigator a little bit because I would like to be able to explain it where you can see the names a little bit more easily. So when I'm looking at this, I'm in the project map. If I switch the view map, you will see that we can open up things like these worksheets in a clone folder here. [0:32:08]

The reason why I'm switching between the project map and the view map is that the view map allows me to, when I click on something, it remembers the scale and the layers and all the other settings related to that. In fact, generally once we get started in the project, we are going to spend our time in the view

map. So I won't go into all of these worksheets, but I'll just point out for example here is a kit of parts for doing details. So if you look, there are different types of connectors. And if I scroll over, insulation and masonry and some different types of line work and fills that you can eyedrop. And if I zoom out a little bit, you'll see that there are a whole lot of elements that you can work with. [0:32:56]

These come from the U.S. standard library, but they have been arrayed as a kit of parts or an interactive legend as I call them. We do supply a copy of these library parts for international users, because although their standard sizes are in feet and inches, you can customize them to the size you want and they are certainly useful for creating 2D drawings more quickly. Now as we go through these, we'll see others that are called "Interactive Legends". For example, this interactive legend is a set of elements and labels and a group of human figures that you could place into a section. A similar one is available for elevations. The basic idea here is that you can eyedrop any of these elements and then place something similar directly into your elevation or section. [0:33:54]

And these are part of our general group of what are called the interactive legends. In the template, the structure of the view map is set up as a hierarchy. And I'll just give you a very brief introduction to the concept. And then we will switch gears to look at the sample project so you have an idea of how these work. But basically, there are folders that group views and each one of them has a different function. And it should be fairly easy to understand by their names. So the imported reference documents are basically some folders where you can put in worksheets or create views of worksheets that maybe you have imported. [0:34:44]

So for example, when you import DWG files as a survey or other consultant information, you might put them into worksheets and then create views of those worksheets in each of these folders. So when you have a folder, you can always create a new view by just clicking on the "Save Current View", and then you start seeing some sub items underneath each folder. But in the standard template, we just have some placeholders. An in fact, an important part of the template concept is that you have a place to put things that is well organized and consistent from one project to another. And we don't necessarily have to put things in them right away, but when you need to file something or need to find something, there's a place. [0:35:33]

Now if I go to modeling for design here, and I go to say canvas limits, you'll see that I'm now looking at the plan. And you can see that we are looking out at the platform and we are seeing a bunch of little markers. Now you'll notice that there are two elevation markers in each of the directions. Basically the one for presentation has a P, and the one that is for construction documents has a CD. So we are seeing both sets of these, and we are seeing some markers off to the side. Now what are these? These are section markers. So you can see this one is set up initially as section "C". It could be renumbered or renamed. But basically the intention is after you build your building, it might fit perfectly within this rectangle, or you might need to expand it or change the layout to a different location on the plan, but you would move these sections into position. [0:36:35]

And you can see here's one; here is another one, and a third one that is going across. And then there is a presentation version one. You can see the color difference; it has a different indication visually. Now the idea here is that these are off in a holding area. If I zoom in, you can see there's a little explanatory graphic. It's intended that after you understand this that you can highlight it and delete it. So now I have all the markers there, but I got rid of the explanatory graphic. I'll just undo that and put it back into place. [0:37:13]

So the canvas limits allows us to basically zoom out to see everything that we have, how far it extends, including anything that has been drawn. But we are going to spend a lot of our time in the preliminary design. What is preliminary design? This is a view set up with a layer combination that turns on most layers in the layer dialog box. When I open up the layer dialog box - and I'll just hit Command+L or Ctrl+L to do that - you'll see that most of the layers as I scroll through this are turned on. There are some that are turned off, but basically all of the building elements and most of the annotation elements are turned on. [0:37:58]

What is the purpose for this preliminary design layer combination? When you first start designing your building, you may want to draw walls; you may want to put in furniture or roofs or site work, dimensions or subtext. So without restricting yourself, you are able to them place all of these types of components, whereas when we are focusing on creating a construction document like a floor plan, we are not going to have certain things turned on. For example, we are not going to have the furniture typically showing on the floor plan. If it's moveable, it's not part of the construction information. So basically, the layer combination for preliminary design is intended to give you the flexibility to work on whatever you want to focus on, but then as you focus or shift your focus to creating specific types of drawings like a floor plan or an electrical plan or others, the layers will start to shift. [0:39:03]

So in the preliminary design, we are basically going to be able to draw anything we want but periodically be able to refer to the interactive legends to pick up the settings. Now for some reason, this is not working. Let me see what is going on. I think when I did the hotlink manager all of these hotlinks for some reason had disappeared. So I'm not sure what I did wrong here earlier, but we'll switch gears to the sample project so we can see how this works. Just to explain the general concept, you're going to spend most of your time in the early project within the model design view area and switch between preliminary design and later on going to site design or building design or interior design depending upon your focus. Each of these changes your layer combination. [0:40:03]

There are some other resources within the design area, but later, you're going to spend your time mostly in the construction document views where we are going to pick a floor plan and be working on that with the layers that are appropriate for a floor plan. At one scale, in this case quarter inch, which would be 1:50, or one eighth inch, we have versions for each of these. These all can be opened and closed as you need to. I'm working on a very small screen so they look very cramped, but on a normal sized screen you would have much more space to work with. [0:40:44]

And if we want to shift the focus on reflected ceiling or structural or other types of plans, these will be available. They're all set up so that you have all of the typical types of drawings that you might need for the plan. And of course we have ones for sections and elevations. And since I already have those placeholder sections, the ones put off to the side in the project, there are already these sections that exist in the navigator. The reason why this is important is that in the layout book, we already have in the template - and I'll just close to the properties here to give you more of a view of this. [0:41:29]

We have two different sets of sheets to work with. So in some projects, it's appropriate to have a series of sheets numbered in a row and in a sequence. Here we have about 18 of them. And in other projects, we will want to have them organized into more of a hierarchical structure so that the A-200 series has certain things and the A-300 series has building plans. All of this can be customized, but basically we have two different systems ready to go. And feel free to change them and move things around. So if your office only does small projects and you never use the A-200/A-300 series idea, you could delete all of these from your template and not be bothered with them. [0:42:22]

On the other hand if you always do larger projects and you want to have this structure all the time, you could delete all of these sequential ones. And sometimes for some of you, you may go back and forth. Sometimes you want one type and sometimes you want a different type. That's why we have both, to make it easy and more universally applicable. But if I look at let's say the building elevations, it already has some drawings on the sheets. So if I look at building sections, it has some drawings on the sheets. The idea here is that after you start designing and move the sections into position, these drawings simply can be updated using the update button here on the screen on the right hand side. [0:43:11]

This allows the template to have more of the structure intact, meaning that you will have less work to do as you proceed along the project phasing. Now let me switch gears to the sample project, and just give you a sense of the structure of MasterTemplate there. So I'm going to go to canvas limits which I was talking about earlier in the model design views. And you can see here it's zooming out to show the extense of the project and the site and all of the elevation markers that are going to be giving us the views that we want. [0:43:56]

When I go to preliminary design, we are going to see a mess. Why? Because this project is well past preliminary design. It has not only walls and roofs, it has interior and ceilings and all sorts of things. So this gets to be a mess when you're working with it later. So that's why you use it early but not late. And when I go to the interactive legends here we see what I should have seen in the other part of the demonstration where we have this whole huge kit of parts. So I'm going to show you the very basics. The structure right now is intact in the sample project. Suppose we were working in preliminary design, and I'll just scroll over a little bit and zoom in on an area. And let's say that I wanted to put in a wall of a certain type. [0:44:54]

For now I will just draw a quick little box like this. So I have a box of walls. These walls are actually red. What type of wall are they? It may take a little while to figure out what type of wall we want. Let me undo this and go to the interactive legends and pick up a wall type. So if I go to the interactive legends

you'll see there's a lot of stuff here, but it's organized, and I can go for example and say let me look at the modeling advanced type 5. So this is a type of construction designation here in the U.S. for a certain type of wood frame construction. And when I zoom in on it, you can see there are many different wall types. [0:45:45]

So if I wanted to work with, let's say, exterior walls of a certain type, I will use the eyedropper. And I will pick up let's say this exterior wall that is a certain thickness stucco and plywood. So I've just eyedropped that. And I go back to preliminary design and draw the walls and place them. You can see now the walls are a certain style based on that. I will go back to the interactive legends and say I want to do an interior wall. So I'll scroll up here and pick a standard wall type here and eyedrop that. And I will go back to the preliminary design. You'll notice when I go back and forth between these two, it keeps my place. I don't have to zoom in and out. [0:46:37]

This is one of the improvements that we made in the template version 12.1. It wasn't in the first version of the template 11 or 12, but in the revised version 12.1 that we came up with this concept that works more simply. Even in the early versions we still had the legend and the idea of going and eyedropping it. Now I've just picked up the wall settings and I should be able to draw a single wall across here perhaps. And you can see here that this wall is a different type than the other wall. Let me switch to turn off the true line weight, and we can see how they are working. [0:47:21]

So if I go back to the interactive legends and say I'd like to switch to look at objects and lamps, and you can see this little saved views, it will jump me to a different area. And perhaps I might pick up - I'll just use the eyedropper and pick up the cabinet here and go back to the preliminary design and place a cabinet. And I can go back and forth and do this. You'll notice that this cabinet is actually on a certain layer. In this case it's on the plumbing fixtures layer, because in the legends, the kit of parts, it's already on the right layer. Let me go and put in a piece of furniture. We'll see if I go in here and eyedrop let's say this chair and go back to preliminary design and place the chair, this chair is on the layer for furniture. [0:48:23]

So what this means is that when I go later to do things like first floor plan, this first floor plan is basically a construction document plan. So it shows of course the walls and the fixtures but not the furniture. Whereas if later I want to a furniture plan, and I activate that, then it will change the style and we will see the furniture on there. So that is the very basic usage of these design views. There are some more demonstrations that you will see in the tutorial that is on starting a project that demonstrates this whole sequence for you in a very clear manner. [0:49:11]

Let's proceed. If we look at the layout book for this sample project, we will see some things have been filled in with useful information and some things that need more information. So I will just zoom in again. So there is a sheet index, and the index is reflecting particular sheets of this project set. And this is automatically updating as you would expect. ArchiCAD can keep track of all the sheets you do. Some of the information here, you can see it has some funny symbols. It's saying the architect's name has the

name "Company" and it has three asterisks or ***. Anywhere you see these things with the three asterisks; this information will be filled in when you work with the project info. [0:50:20]

So one of the conveniences in MasterTemplate is that you can fill in information - for example, in one place like the File menu, Info, Project Info. And if I open this and change the name of the zoning, this would be one here, building zoning. So let's say this is residential, or it has a code name or whatever. I click in here and I say OK. You can see that the text has been updated in the preset field. So you would go into the File menu, Info, Project Info and fill in a lot of this information either at the beginning of the project or whenever it's convenient, and all this will fill in. [0:51:23]

The three asterisks here will give you a clue that these have not been filled in and you should either fill in the information or possibly delete or hide it until you have that information. You'll notice here is some gray text. This is intended for you to put in the legal description. This is basically just text that you can edit. So any field or text that has a gray background like this indicates that this is something that is in the template, and you should put whatever you need in here. So it's a visual indication. After you actually put in some text, then you can change the background to be clear. [0:52:11]

The first customization that you need to do in the template of course is to take our information about the template and put in your company information. You are going to need to customize that. I'll scroll down in the layout book to the masters, and we'll see that the master that is currently in use is this one. It has the little turned over icon indicating that it's the default master. And when I double click on this, we will see that the company information here is just a graphic. So I can delete this logo and bring in another one, or I can potentially go and say "Link this drawing to", and go find a graphic that is of similar proportion that will fit into this area. [0:53:09]

And then basically any page or sheet that uses this master will have the correct information. In fact, we can go into the drawing manager and do the same thing. So if I go to the drawing manager and we scroll down, you can see I didn't update the connections in this sample project. So this is the one we are looking at. And I can actually link all of these logos. I can use the "Link to" here and link them all to a new file. So that will change all of the logos on all of the masters, because you can see we have layout sheets for different sizes. So in terms of customization, I think this is giving you a little taste. [0:54:00]

Let's look at the file structure of MasterTemplate as part of our conclusion here. MasterTemplate, when you download it from the website, will be a zip file. So here I have "AMT15USA.zip". And if you're using the international version, you would have "INT". And if you're using another version of MasterTemplate it would have a different number. But basically you're going to expand it and then create a folder. So here's what you get in the current version of MasterTemplate. You get the template file and a folder with some linked files. And you can see the logo that was being used and three sets of legends which are the kit of parts that I was starting to refer to. And then also a template for creating specifications or general notes in Word or a program that works similar to Word, like Apple's Pages. And then a PDF. [0:55:05]

So these linked files all are used within the template. And you will need to make sure the first time that all the links are updated. This version of the template is raw; it came directly from the website. But

typically what you would want to do after you have started some customization and cleaned up links is to save a copy with a slightly different name. Something like "MasterTemplate BCG", I appended my company name "Bobrow Consulting Group". So you can put it that way and then you can differentiate from the one that is downloaded from the website and the unmodified one for your company. [0:55:47]

Now the supplemental files that I talked about, those were a separate download from the download page. They included the sample project that we're looking at right now. And it includes what is called the New Project folder. So this is something that you can duplicate when you start a new project. If I open it up, you can see that there are some sub folders within here. And the idea is that when you start a project you're going to be making a copy of this folder and giving it a name like "Smith House" or a numeric code designation for it. And within here, this is where you're going to be putting all of your information. So when you create renderings, you're going to put them into this folder here. [0:56:40]

When you are importing DWGs, you will have a place to put them. So these are all pretty much empty folders, and the idea is simply that there is a place for this particular project for where to put everything. So you're going to duplicate that when you start a new project. You don't have to leave it exactly like it was set up here. This as a starting point for you, and you can certainly feel free to modify it. But basically do use this idea of starting with a project folder that is a template, and then use the template file itself to create the ArchiCAD file as well. [0:57:25]

So that's what we have in terms of the download. I think we're at the one hour mark, and while there is a lot more to cover, as I said we have two additional sessions coming up. So I'll quickly review what I've covered and see if there's anything else I really want to fit in today. We looked briefly at the website and how you login and how you get access to various tutorials. And also if we go to the member homepage, this is where you'll find all of your links for downloading the template. And do remember that the support forum is available for you to post in. If you haven't worked with forums they are generally pretty easy. In addition to browsing through or searching them, you can go to the question and answer one. When we open it up, there's an option here to add a new topic. You can see that. That allows you to create a new post and ask your questions. And you can attach graphics and images to show that you are having a problem with something. [0:58:51]

So we took a look at the website and the downloads. We looked a little bit at the file structure of MasterTemplate and what you get supplied. And then we looked of course in the sample project here. Let's go to a floor plan view so we can see. Here's a sample project. And what you'll find is that as you browse through the sample project and you look at all the views, you will see how we have set up to achieve certain effects. Now in ArchiCAD 15, we had to do some reworking of the way that we handled remodels or renovations, because version 15 has a whole new system for that. So you can see this area in red in the front, this is an addition to that particular project. And it's highlighted in a way to make it stand out. [0:59:52]

So for example in ArchiCAD 15, the sample project has things like views to show different variations of the project. You can see as I double click on this - and I will just zoom in on this a little bit - you can see

we're going from the existing to demo, where we can see certain elements being removed. And here is the new version where we can see information there. Or actually the final version here. So the sample project will help you to not only understand and see the results that you have, but you can then look at how the layers or the model views are set up. So the sample project is definitely to spend some time and study. [1:00:47]

I would never claim that this is perfect and I would certainly never claim that this is exceptional architecture. But it is a teaching tool, and you can learn quite a bit from how we have things set up, and it will help you to take advantage of the template's structure. I was showing you earlier the generic template or the blank template. And as I mentioned, you may sometimes go out to look at the canvas limits to see how far everything is drawn. You'll spend a lot of time in the preliminary design area where you can create your project. You will switch to the interactive legend worksheet where you can pick up the settings of the components. And then we do have some preset 3D views as well as some other basic design views. [1:01:41]

In terms of design, if I open up the layer settings, we have some special purpose layer combinations here that are at the top with an asterisk so they sort alphabetically up above. So for example, block and hide all layers or show and unlock all layers. These are special purpose; you wouldn't use them for most of your work. But occasionally you may want to use that. Then we have all these construction document layer combinations that have the prefix "Con Doc". These are for working drawings. We have some special purpose ones for working on a detail drawings, detailers is what they are called. Some special purpose ones for working on layouts. And then lower down we have some for working on the model. [1:02:32]

Why do we have some views for working on the model separate from working on the construction document? Because when we're working on the model we may want to see different combinations of information than you would ever print. For example, when you're working on the building as a whole, you will want to see the walls, roofs, floors and maybe depending on your needs, structural elements, beams, framing, etc. If you were to print out a drawing, a plan drawing, it would get to be a mess because you would have all these things stacked. So you wouldn't use a layer combination for that, but you would use it for building and modeling information. [1:03:17]

Sometimes you want this site; sometimes you want the building only. SEO stands for solid element operations. These are your tools for carving out things and making things fit into each other. So sometimes there are some special elements you use to create an effect, and sometimes you need to see then and sometimes you need to turn them off. So there are all these different purposes. And then there's some very special purpose ones for seeing through roofs or walls. These are presentation images. You can experiment with them and look in the sample project. You will see some of these demonstrated. [1:03:56]

Finally we have some presentation layer combinations for special setups for making a drawing that you're going to show typically to clients or prospects. So there is a whole lot to understand that I can

explain about layers. I will just say that we worked the layer system in a way that we feel is easier to understand. But if you need to work with some standard layering system, like the U.S. AIA layer system, we have a way that you can swap that back in. But in general we have names that are much longer, more explanatory, and hopefully easier to understand their purpose. And combined with the manual reference to the layers, you should be able to understand what they're for. [1:04:51]

I think I'll finish with one last thing about the layers before I go and that is a concept that we developed that is not built into the standard ArchiCAD layer system is the idea of a set of layers that are uniquely used for a particular purpose. So for example, in the ceiling plan - and most projects will have a reflected ceiling plan - there is going to be some information that will never be seen on any other drawing. For example, you may have notes just for the ceiling plan. You may have dimensions for the ceiling plan. You may have labels. You may possibly put your ceiling lights or soffits or other structural components in there. Anything that you only want to show on the ceiling plan you can put on this layer, regardless of whether it's text or labels, dimensions or even objects or other elements. [1:05:50]

Anything that is put onto this layer will only be seen on the reflected ceiling plan. You can see that has the eyeball there. Whereas if we scroll down here, anything that is on the landscape, the U drawing unique for landscape, will only be seen on the landscape layer combination. So this concept simplifies things. You don't need to have separate layers for text, dimensions and labels for landscape. You can just put any of those on there. So this is a concept that simplifies some of the management of layers that we feel has been very productive for ArchiCAD users. [1:06:39]

So I'm going to finish up. I look forward to getting your comments and follow-up questions. We will have two more sessions coming up in the next couple of weeks, and I will record them. I really appreciate your business and the opportunity to work with you. I want to make sure that you are successful with ArchiCAD in general and of course with MasterTemplate since you made that investment. I look forward to developing this further and making sure you get all the help you need. So thanks again, I'll be in touch and see you next time.

[END OF AUDIO 1:07:22]