

## AutoLINE 2009 (First Look Review)

This complex linetype management add-on is a must-have application for AutoCAD users.

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Among the most popular and needed add-on applications for AutoCAD are utilities for managing and creating linetypes that add to the selection and capabilities of those afforded by native AutoCAD. AutoLINE from Autodsys has proved to be a flexible and useful application for those who need more complex linetypes.

With AutoLINE, users can easily create parallel lines, include blocks in linetypes, and add LISP expressions in the actual linetype definition, which allows a much broader variety of linetypes than out-of-the-box AutoCAD.

After a quick and easy installation, a toolbar appears on the next AutoCAD startup, as does a dialog box offering to begin a 30-day trial of the software or to accept a license code. AutoLINE includes a linetype manager that makes it easy to create and modify new linetypes, and it includes more than 100 custom linetypes that can either be modified or used as is. By allowing blocks in linetypes instead of shapes, the lines have the advantage of being able to be placed on different layers; for example, lines can be on one layer and blocks on another (and the blocks can include multiple layers). Another advantage of this approach is that blocks can have solid fills, unlike shapes. Creating shapes also is easy, because AutoLINE can convert all blocks into shapes that can be included in AutoCAD-style linetypes.

**AutoLINE 2009**

**Linetype Management Add-On**

**Pros:** Extremely useful utility; flexible; well designed; moderately priced.

**Cons:** None significant.

**Price:** \$99; upgrade, \$75

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AutoLINE 2009

Creating and modifying linetypes in AutoLINE is as easy as pointing and clicking. Actually, AutoLINE creates two kinds of linetypes: the classic AutoCAD linetypes and its own special-format AutoLINE linetypes. Although the AutoLINE linetypes are much more flexible than the AutoCAD linetypes, you can use both or either, and you can manage them easily with AutoLINE.

With AutoLINE, users can have text, a block, or a negative dash placed first in the linetype definition — AutoCAD-style linetypes must include a positive, non-zero dash first. With AutoLINE, if a block is first in the linetype definition, it will be placed exactly on the vertex. You can also specify polyline width (PlineWid) and polyline linetype generation (PlineGen) as part of the linetype definition in AutoLINE.

Flexibility is a big part of what AutoLINE has to offer, and the clean and easy-to-understand interface helps. The moveable and dockable toolbar provides access to all AutoLINE functions. Overall, you get a lot for the price, and there's little wonder that AutoLINE has been called a must-have application for those who work with CAD.



AutoLINE toolbar and sample linetypes are shown here running in AcceliCAD 2008, although Autodsys IntelliCAD and AutoCAD 2004–2009 are supported.

AutoLINE 2009 is priced at \$99 for new licenses with upgrades from previous versions available for \$75. This new version supports AcceliCAD, Autodsys IntelliCAD, and AutoCAD versions 2004 through 2009. For this review, I evaluated AutoLINE in both AutoCAD 2008 and 2009, running under Microsoft Windows XP Professional. For additional information about AutoLINE, as well as other products, visit the Autodsys Web site, where you also can download a 30-day trial version of AutoLINE.

AutoLINE is extremely useful, easy to use, and flexible, making it a deservedly popular utility. This new release adds even more depth to an already excellent and well-established product. Highly Recommended.