

# There's Always Something New in the Year

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by Michael Beall

None of us knows what's in store for 2013, but one thing we **do** know, is that there's always something new to learn about. I hope this finds you all well and looking forward to the new things that lie ahead in your respective areas of expertise.

## Offset with the Layer Option

They added this a while back, but until my customer in DC asked me about it, I had forgotten all about it.

### How to Offset Objects to the Current Layer

1. Set a layer to be current that will receive the offset objects.
2. Launch the Offset command [**Home tab** ► **Modify panel**] and you see the following prompt:

```
Current settings: Erase source=No Layer=Source  
OFFSETGAPTYPE=0  
Specify offset distance or [Through/Erase/Layer] <0'-6">:
```

3. Enter **L** for the *Layer* option, then enter **C** for the *Current* layer option.
4. Specify the offset distance. In this exercise, I'm offsetting a wall line **12"** to the Floor\_Covering layer.
5. Click on the object to offset, then move your cursor to one side or the other to get the preview(!) of the distance and the resulting layer.
6. Click to complete the offset for that object, then continue to make additional offsets as needed. The command does not terminate until you press [Enter] or click Exit (in AutoCAD 2013).

**Note:** The object being offset must have its Color property set to ByLayer, otherwise you will not notice if the Layer option is being implemented.

## AutoCAD 2013 ~~Strikethrough~~ Character

I was covering the features of Mtext not long ago, and discovered a new option on the Formatting panel of the contextual Text Editor tab when adding Mtext: **Strikethrough**.

Being a proponent of both single as well as multiline text — use the appropriate tool for the job — I was wondering if you have that option when editing single line text. The answer is 'Yes', but let me show you how I found it.

### The Logic

- A. By default, when editing single line text, a 'frameless' editor is displayed, but the right-click menu has no option for Strikethrough.
- B. If you use the Strikethrough on Mtext, then Explode it, you still have the Strikethrough characters for the single line text object.
- C. Set the variable **DTEXTED** to <1> for the legacy Edit Text dialog box for editing single line text.
- D. Double-click the single line text with the Strikethrough characters, and you see your answer: %%K

As my buddy Hugh Bathurst always said, "Job done!"

## Quick Access to your Layout Tabs

Back in March 2010, I covered how to make a button on the Tool Palette to automatically launch the dialog box containing your favorite layout tabs.

Now I'm on a crusade to see how many cool things we can put on the Quick Access Toolbar [QAT]. Admittedly, you won't want everything up there, but your favorite Layout Tabs — A-Portrait, A-Landscape, etc. — would be nice to have.

**Prerequisite:** A drawing (.DWG or .DWT) with the layouts configured for the desired sheet sizes with their associated title blocks.

**Need-To-Know:** The path and filename of this drawing (needed for step 8, below).

### How to Configure the QAT to Access Your Layout Tabs

1. Launch the **CUI**, then expand *Quick Access Toolbars*, then *Quick Access Toolbars 1* to display the current content of the QAT.
2. Under the Command List, navigate to *Layout, Layout From Template*, then drag

it up and release it in the list of QAT commands.

3. Now click on the command in the list to display the Properties in the lower right area of the CUI.
4. In the Macro, click at the end of the existing string, and use Backspace to eliminate the space that follows the word 'template'.
5. After the word 'template', add a semi-colon, this equates to 'press [Enter]'. Then in quotes, add the name of the .DWG or .DWT containing your layout tabs.

What you add should look similar to the text in red where your filename (with the proper extension) is in quotes:

```
^C^C^R_layout _template;"MY TITLEBLOCKS.DWG"
```

6. Click *OK*, to save your edits and close the CUI.
7. Now, right-click in the Command line, then click *Options* to open the Options dialog box.
8. On the Files tab, expand the node for *Support File Search Path*.
9. If the path to the location of your .DWG or .DWT containing the layout tabs is **not** on the list, click *Add*, then *Browse* to add it [per the Prerequisite and Need-To-Know, above]. Click *OK* to close Options.

Ready? Go!