



Editorial

>> Marc Cheves, LS

THE American Surveyor

A FOOT IN THE PAST... AN EYE TO THE FUTURE

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The Wow Factor

I recently attended a reception hosted by Loyola Spatial Systems at the annual Virginia Association of Surveyors' conference. Loyola is a great example of a well-run entrepreneurial company that has capitalized on the RTN boom [see "RTK-Net Entrepreneurs" in our June 2007 issue]. At the reception, Loyola unveiled a new web app they developed that will allow asset owners to see exactly where their GPS rovers are operating. While folks in the field may feel as if someone is looking over their shoulders, it's not unreasonable for company owners to keep an eye out on how and where their investments are being used. The app uses Google Maps to display historical log files and is being developed to work in real time. Upon seeing it in use, my immediate reaction was "Wow!"

Since nearly every successful manufacturer and developer has one or more software apps or equipment features that cause potential users to sit up and take note, we have created a special page for them. Starting with this issue, we are introducing a new department called "The Wow Factor." These one-pagers will highlight an outstanding feature of software/hardware technology that allows surveyors to be more productive, to deliver higher quality work, or even have more fun. Because much of the work we do is routine, anything that can be done to make the work more exciting is certainly worth consideration!

Taking it to the Streets

"Rapid Surveyor," by Dr. Anthony Denniss of Infoterra in the UK, features new Optech technology that has been three years in the making. I last visited Optech in 2002, and my oh my, what a difference six years have made! They recently built a gigantic building several miles west of their old location in Toronto, and they've more than doubled their number of employees, now at more than 250. Optech's gear has been sent into space, so they are truly a "universal" player when it comes to laser ranging. The new LYNX Mobile Mapper described in Denniss's article can gather incredibly detailed information ±5cm accuracy at 1cm resolution-all while driving at speeds up to 60mph. Once the 3D info is onscreen, it's simply amazing what can be done with it.

Go with the Flow-Digitally

Are you looking for new ways to manage your workflow more productively and profitably? Joe Bell provides a review of Prefiniti software, another new development that comes to us from Center Line Services in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The system allows company owners and clients to use digital communications such as the Internet and cell phones to order and track surveys, manage time sheets, and more on a project-by-project basis. It, too, uses Google Maps to create routing info for the crew, and will send e-mail or cell phone alerts automatically when needed. In my opinion, Prefiniti also exhibits Wow Factor elements.

Also in This Issue

Columnist Wendy Lathrop offers some sage advice on good business practices, and Gary Kent shares some of the humorous language that has appeared in survey documents he has encountered throughout his many years in practice.

Of course, from beginning to end, we're certain you'll find much more to enjoy in this issue! We have a rich supply of great material for future issues, and we sincerely appreciate those of you who continue to send good stuff our way. Keep it up! 