



Editorial

>> Marc Cheves, LS

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Maps as a Metaphor

I know this world is ruled by infinite intelligence. Everything that surrounds us—everything that exists—proves that there are infinite laws behind it. There can be no denying this fact. It is mathematical in its precision.” There are many surveyors and mappers and members of the precision community who concur with these words of Thomas Edison.

Economy, too, hangs on infinite laws. One of the positive outcomes of the extended economic downturn is that budgets are being scrutinized, streamlined, and reorganized as families and businesses seek more creative ways to stretch their dollars. In one example of corporations doing their part, ACSM Executive Director Curt Sumner announced at the Esri Surveying and Engineering Summit & User Conference in San Diego that the two organizations have entered into a three-year agreement to hold the annual ACSM conference in conjunction with the annual Esri Survey Summit. The synergy between these two organizations will undoubtedly be beneficial for both events.

As in years past, Esri’s Marketing Manager for Survey, Engineering and Cadastre Brent Jones presented several enlightening facts that surveyors can relate to: 85% of data in modern organizations is unstructured, and 40–60 percent of time is spent locating and validating relevant information. Because of these time-wasters, 30 percent of the project cost is wasted, and finally, a 14 percent savings can be realized from proper data management. Surveyors, with all of our data, have a vital role in information management and supply. Brent summed it up by saying “Maps are a metaphor for organizing spatial data.”

One of the highlights of the Esri UC was the opportunity to interview Esri president Jack Dangermond. I last interviewed Jack 10 years ago, and because so much has happened since then, was eager to get his latest take. An ongoing outreach from Esri to our community is geo-design. Dangermond feels that there’s a major disconnect between how we design nowadays and what’s going to be needed in the future for sustainability. I’ll write about the interview in a future issue. You can see our flickr pics of both the Summit and the UC by going to our website.

As part of its drive for accuracy in GIS, Esri has heavily promoted the understanding of datums and coordinate systems, and the need for surveyor involvement. As I have written many times, the GIS community is reaching out to our community because it realizes that without accuracy, its maps do not have as much value. Whether organizing spatial data on a map, or reorganizing the way we do business, function will follow form. The more precise the form, the better the function.

Leica Geosystems Solutions Center

Shortly after returning home from the User Conference we drove to Atlanta for the grand opening of the first Leica Geosystems Solutions Center. This event marked another milestone for Leica. The addition of the solutions center to the Allen Precision Equipment facility marks the first of nine of these centers that Leica has planned across North America. According to Ken Mooyman, Leica Geosystems President, “The Leica Geosystems Solutions Center concept was created with the local customer’s needs in mind. These nine new brick and mortar Solutions Center locations will combine with our independent Leica Geosystems distributors and direct sales people to cover most major local markets and surrounding areas. The Allen Precision Equipment catalog will continue to reach thousands of customers across America who may not have a local distributor nearby.”