

From Pinpoint to Endpoint

You must have noticed: this issue of GIM International looks completely different from every other. You may even wonder, is this really GIM? It is. If you've been a faithful reader from the first, you may not even have noticed the gradual evolution in layout, but it has been underway nevertheless. Up until Volume 22 the changes were mere face-lifts: minor adjustments to developments in printing technology and layout trends. But over the past year Reed Business Geo has been hard at work to give the journal a real makeover. Rigorous re-styling, don't you think?

Established in 1987, GIM International has now reached full maturity. For half its existence I have been privileged to serve the journal, first as technical editor, and since 2002 as editor-in-chief. Private circumstances, in particular too many other commitments, have since forced me to retrench, but I promised publisher Durk Haarsma not to disappear entirely, stay tuned and contribute on a regular basis as senior editor.

So my final Pinpoint column appeared in December 2008. For nine years, starting in 2000, I reflected in around 850 words each month (a total of 90,000 words!) on technological developments and social issues relating to geomatics, star gazed and tried to discern new horizons for our profession. An anthology of these columns, Geo-information Engineering: Changing Technology in a Changing Society is still available. And as I have said, I'm not vanishing completely.

A regular contribution will be this monthly culminating column, so that the pages of GIM will be literally embedded between an 'Editorial' in which the editor-in-chief introduces your contributions and an 'Endpoint' in which a former editor-in-chief reflects upon content. A sandwich, so to speak, alpha to omega. You may rest assured that 'Endpoint' in no way reflects my own position as an individual, only that of the column in GIM International.

In the meanwhile we have been confronted with a massive credit crunch, affecting business all around the globe. And it's certain the geomatics industry will not escape unscathed. 'Investment engineers' thought they had invented a money machine, but it was no more than a chimera, a whole lot of hot air. And then the balloon went pop. Let's focus on engineering the real world. Let's look out for what we can feel, touch and taste. Let's care about human beings. Let's think sustainable. Keep me posted.