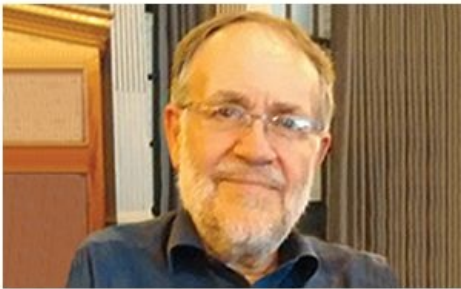


# Geomatics Can Lead to Opportunities Beyond the Built Environment



A close look at where geomatics skills could take you are examined through the experiences of two surveyors. The latest developments in technology too are covered. But beware the dumb disrupters!

How often during your career have you taken time out for reflection and thought: I like surveying but I'm stuck in field survey and it's not very well paid? What else could I do with my qualifications and skillset? In this issue, we provide some alternative ideas to where you could apply your skills and professionalism learnt in geomatics.

Professor Ian Dowman has been looking at the insurance industry, including the reinsurance market, where the more enlightened are already using GIS on a daily basis.

Mapping and catastrophe modelling teams include personnel with analytical and geomatics skills who understand the power of geodata in driving location awareness.

Meanwhile, Keith Nurse and Martin Hedley both offer informative insights into how those critical analytical survey skills, which all geomatics surveyors should have, can be applied across a wide swathe of industry. Keith has managed to stay with one employer but rise from site survey into emergency planning and frontline incident management, whereas Martin's career has taken him into industries as diverse as airlines and banking. Today he describes himself as a 'global business' executive.

## Staying on the Technology Pace

For those keen to stay up with the latest technology, Adam Spring reports from the Autodesk Academy event in Las Vegas where along with 10,000 other delegates he discovered synthetic biology, Project Cyborg and how Lego blocks are informing the analysis of BIM in cities. Otto Ballintijn explains the application of inertial based gyro-mapping systems for pipelines. And Hugh Anderson, once Leica Geosystems' 'go-to' person to resolve a technology problem, provides an intriguing example of how he has recently utilised current cutting-edge technology – laser scanner and 360° panoramic camera – with very traditional survey tools including, and it will be a joy for many older surveyors to read this name again, the use of a Kern DKM2-A 1" theodolite, once regarded as state of the art. Our interview with Mark Concannon, Leica's EMEA Director also reveals some of the emerging trends in technology, now dominated by software and UAVs.

## Print and Digital

For some considerable time and for obvious reasons, I have been carefully following the progress of print versus digital. Amid the plethora of online news websites and e-readers, pundits have been predicting the end of print for more than a decade. Nevertheless, newspaper sales remain buoyant (the UK's very successful 'i' newspaper was launched only four years ago) as do printed books and magazines, the latter especially with almost every conceivable interest imaginable catered for.

If the shocking massacre in Paris in January proved anything it was that printed magazines can still attract a lot of interest. While a terrible price to pay for a five million print run, the reason it happened, as one media commentator has pointed out, "was because of the power we still subconsciously ascribe to a pre-electrical, pre-digital technology pioneered by Gutenberg in the 15th century. Print and paper." Long may they survive in a world where social media drives the thoughtless unchecked and unedited soundbite.

Printed map sales too, against the pundits' predictions, are up report Ordnance Survey. New products like print on demand and weatherproof materials have helped. This is good news. The digital technology companies have become far too arrogant in believing the world entirely belongs to them.

Eric Schmidt, CEO of Google, was upset recently when someone described his employees as "knowledge workers", they're much better than that declared Schmidt, they're "Smart Creatives". So damn smart they couldn't foresee all the obvious problems that would come from their development of the now parked Google Glass. And don't get me started on Google's Android operating system, where pointless updates change the interface of my phone. These people are not as smart as they think they are. Smart Creatives? In my book too many of them are dumb disrupters!

Enjoy the issue. We will be back for May/June and a preview of the 2015 GEO Business conference and exhibition.

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