Rapidlasso Launches LASzip Compatibility Mode for LAS 1.4

In the same week that Intergeo 2014 was held in Berlin, rapidlasso completed the first prototype that extends the LASzip Lidar compressor to the new point types 6 to 10 introduced with the LAS 1.4 specification. Sponsored in part by NOAA, this upgrade introduces a new 'Compatibility Mode' for LAS 1.4 that deploys a clever point re-coding strategy so that legacy Lidar software â€“ without LAS 1.4 support â€“ can readily read the new point types as well.

The new "Compatibility Mode" is realised by re-coding the new point types 6 to 10 of the LAS 1.4 specification into corresponding older point types 1, 3, 4 or 5 of the LAS 1.3 specification and by storing all new attributes (e.g. more classifications, higher-resolution scan angles, wider return counters, ...) as "extra bytes". This results in a lossless and forward-compatible format that has several advantages:

(1) existing legacy software can readily read the re-encoded LAS 1.4 files,

(2) the popular LASzip compressor can trivially compress and decompress re-encoded LAS 1.4 content,

(3) easier adaptation of the new LAS 1.4 point types by mitigating their impact on existing LAS 1.3 workflows, and

(4) extra time gives geospatial players the opportunity to jointly develop the final native LAS 1.4 compressor and avoid fragmenting compressed Lidar into incompatible formats.

About LASzip

The LASzip compressor is the de-facto industry standard for compressed Lidar and supported by numerous software packages (see http://laszip.org). This open source (LGPL) compression scheme achieves lossless compression ratios from 1:5 to 1:12 and processes several million points per seconds making it winner of the Geospatial World Award for Lidar Processing in 2012 and runner up for most innovative product at the Wichmann Intergeo 2012 Awards.

About rapidlasso

Technology start-up rapidlasso GmbH specialises in efficient Lidar processing tools that are widely known for their high productivity. They combine robust algorithms with efficient I/O and clever memory management to achieve high throughput for datasets containing billions of points. The company's flagship product – the LAStools software suite – has deep market penetration and is heavily used in industry, government agencies, research labs, and educational institutions. Visit http://rapidlasso.com for more information.

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