

Newsletter



ATLAS

*ATLAS Technology is a member
of the Scion group of companies*

www.atlastech.co.nz

July 2007

Providing integrated forest management and modelling software for the forestry industry

A word from our Manager...

Well, I am coming to the end of my first year at ATLAS Technology which has just flown by! It has been an exciting yet busy year with a number of changes including FPC WA coming on board, and new projects and developments on the go.

Considerable progress has been made by the software development team since the last newsletter. We released the 4th iteration of ATLAS Roding Manager late in June, leaving 3 iterations before the software can be used to manage your road assets.

Work has continued with ATLAS GeoMaster Mobile, and we hope you enjoyed the demonstration that was given at the GeoMaster User Group meeting. It was nice to see so many of you attend. For the first time we trialled telephone conferencing into the meeting. This worked reasonably well and we may explore this option further in the future.

In this issue we are looking at the latest version of ATLAS FieldMan which now addresses many of the outstanding issues. I know that both Brian and Marika are happy with the end product, and we have received excellent feedback from some of the end users.

We hope you enjoy this latest newsletter with all the tips and information. If there is anything else that you would like to see appear in the newsletter we would love to hear from you, your feedback is always welcomed.

Until next time,
Sarah Heine
General Manager



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- What's new with ATLAS GeoMaster
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New Release of ATLAS FieldMan

We recently released version 2.2 of ATLAS FieldMan – our product for the collection and management of Cruiser and SilvQC data. This new version brings significant improvements in the validation of Cruiser data, during both the data measurement and capture phase, and when preparing a job for submission back to Cruiser. These improvements mean that any inconsistencies or omissions in your data are signalled early in the data collection process, ensuring data integrity, and minimising possible costly re-work.

A Reminder: when we release a new version, the changes it includes are documented in the Release Notes, which are accessible on the FieldMan support page on our website www.atlastech.co.nz. Take some time to look through these notes to familiarise yourself with what new features the new release brings you, and the problems that have been addressed.

Development of the next release has begun. We plan to further improve FieldMan's speed, and to introduce new features such as the ability to specify a name when creating a new plot in the field. There will also be an update of deployed and on-line resource materials.

We welcome your feedback on suggestions for improvements to FieldMan. For example, would you find additional training or reference resources helpful? If so, what would be the most useful format – PDF documents, Windows-style Help, video tutorials?

We look forward to hearing from you.



What's new with GeoMaster

A productive User Meeting held in June helped set the direction for product development for up-coming releases. In particular there was a high level of interest in a proposed module for managing information about risks. This module would enable you to record areas of risk or sensitivity in GIS (e.g. physical hazards, trials, archaeological sites etc), it would enable documents to be linked with risk features, and the information would be represented in the GeoMaster data, so that you would be made aware of risks in an area even if you weren't using GIS.

The concept of taking GeoMaster out into the field is becoming more of a reality. GeoMaster Mobile enables you to download selected areas of a forest onto a mobile windows device (e.g. a laptop or tablet) and to add information about stands and operations in the field. Along with adding comments you can also add spatial data eg sketches or GPS lines to identify the extent of whatever you are describing.

We welcome the most recent adopters of GeoMaster, Ernslaw One, to the user

community. With the growth in numbers of users comes the demand for increased flexibility. This was evidenced by the interest shown in adding support for Stored Procedures for custom reporting, and in extending the capability of Client Fields. These are fields that users can add to GeoMaster tables for their own purposes, and are a lot more flexible than the user-defined fields that have always been part of GeoMaster. You can expect progress on these features and many more in GeoMaster v1.10 which is now under development.



Marika's Musings

Sending screenshots with your error messages

I've noticed that when we receive error messages with screenshots, most of the time the screenshots have been copy-pasted directly into the email.

When we receive this email at our end it is sometimes not possible to view the screenshot. It may then take quite some time to make it visible, or if this doesn't work we may need to ask you to send the screenshot again.

I thought it might be helpful to give you some suggestions on how to make this procedure faster and effective:

1. If you only intend to send just the window containing the error message, and not the whole screen, click on the error message, then press Ctrl + Alt + PrtScn.

Then either:

- open the Paint program, press Ctrl + V (or right-click Paste) and save the screenshot as a .jpg (not as a .bmp, as this will increase the size of your attachment significantly), or
- paste the screenshot into a Microsoft Word document, if you find this easier.

2. If you intend to send the error message plus the screen in the background, which is sometimes useful (e.g. for GeoMaster), then press Ctrl + PrtScn and paste it into Paint or a Word document.

Attach the whole thing to your email and send it to us.

This will not only make it easier and faster for us to see your error message, but in many cases it will also decrease the size of your email.

Email address

All ATLAS users, please make sure that the email address you have for ATLAS Technology is the following: software.support@atlastech.co.nz

Scion will soon cut the support for the old email address and we would like to make sure that everyone is using the correct one.

Thanks.

Happy computing,

Marika



Looking back at ANZIF Conference

Marika and Sarah spent an interesting few days in Coff's Harbour attending the ANZIF Conference, both in a sponsorship role and listening to some fascinating presentations. Following on from the initial keynote speakers, there were some 61 different speakers over the remaining day and a half. This involved three sessions running concurrently with up to five speakers per session. Careful planning was required to target specific areas of interest. There was a good range of topics, including tree breeding, carbon accounting, fire management, spatial and remote sensing tools, the forest / community interface and resource security, to name a few. This was followed by a full day field trip. All in all, a lot of information and a very worthwhile trip.



Cruiser / TIMBRs Project Update:

ATLAS and Ensis have been collaborating on a project to look at the use of remote sensing / automated image segmentation in conjunction with forest assessment software to potentially improve the efficiency of commercial forest inventory. The availability of accurate stand stocking information may alter the sample size required for an inventory to obtain statistically viable assessments of a stand. Comparisons are being done of information gained through using different sampling methods with the traditional bounded plot information. While we have found some interesting results, more work is being done in this area, both to assess the viability of collection methods in a commercial sense and to compare outputs from different methods.

Value Chain Optimisation 2007

Value Chain Optimisation 2007 is a conference series being run by Innovatek Ltd in Melbourne on 13-14 September and again in Rotorua on 18-19 September 2007. The conference will provide practical updates on innovations being used by forest products companies and leading technology providers. Ensis is a major partner to this series. ATLAS Technology will be presenting, and will also be a sponsor of the Australasian series. Strategies and technologies that have been adopted to improve planning, logistics and operations within the sector will be outlined and include:

- Analysis of successful international models for supply chain optimisation
- Remote sensing and real-time tracking of logs and wood products
- Innovative systems that integrate planning, operations, harvesting and sales
- Materials handling, packaging, freight forwarding and distribution developments
- Key issues facing the freight, shipping and transport industries
- The latest international trends in logistics and supply chain management

For more information on Value Chain Optimisation contact Brent Apthorp on Ph: +64 3 470 1902 or visit www.innovatek.co.nz or www.ensisjv.com/events



Upcoming Forecaster Release

Version 1.3 of Forecaster is about to be released and will include:

- The EARLY growth model
- A new density model called "WQIBasicDensity1" together with a stiffness model called "WQIStiffness"

To learn more about ATLAS products

www.atlastech.co.nz

Our products apply to key areas of the forestry value chain, enhancing the management information available to provide value-added decision support:

- Forest and land information (ATLAS GeoMaster®)
- Forest resource assessment (ATLAS Cruiser®)
- Forest management DSS (ATLAS Forecaster®)
- Quality assurance (ATLAS SilviQC)
- Forest estate planning (FOLPI),
- Data collection (ATLAS FieldMan)
- Harvest planning (ATLAS Harvest Manager)
- Harvest scheduling and log allocation (ATLAS Market Supply/ATLAS Yield Table Manager).
- Document management (ATLAS Document Manager)
- Map production (ATLAS GeoMapper)



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ATLAS Technology is a unit within the Crown Research Institute, Scion.

