

Newsletter



ATLAS

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

www.atlastech.co.nz

December 2006

Providing integrated forest management and modelling software for the forestry industry

A word from our Manager...

It has been a busy couple of months with some great highlights. The first of these has been the arrival of Marika Fritzsche, who has joined us as software support engineer. Marika has been learning and discovering the world of ATLAS software, giving us the valuable perspective of a new user. We trust that her notes in this newsletter will provide you with useful tips.

Another highlight was the annual GeoMaster User Group meeting held in early October. This was a great success with new version releases. Most importantly it gave me the opportunity to meet and spend time with some of you and better understand your business needs.

The ATLAS team has recently moved and is now located in the main Scion building at 49 Sala Street, Rotorua. All of our other contact details remain the same. Moving to the main building brings us much closer to our parent company, allowing for easier communication and access to other facilities. If you are passing through Rotorua, call in and see our new premises. You'll be greeted with a smile from Marie or Joanne at Scion's reception.

As another busy year draws to an end, the team and I wish you all a happy Christmas, and a relaxing break.

Sarah Heine



A new way of looking at worker safety

The ATLAS team has been involved in an exciting development project which has taken them outside their normal work. A new system, known as "Terraloc", is aimed at improving site safety for hauler crews by allowing the hauler operator to know the whereabouts of crew members, even when they are not in view.

The operator marks the position of the hauler and its lines on a map displayed on a PC in his cab. The position of each breaker-out is also displayed, and these positions are continually updated from GPS transmitters worn by each.

The software allows a "safety zone" to be drawn around the hauler ropes at a designated distance, and a warning is given when any person moves within the zone. This allows the operator to be sure that no-one is at risk prior to moving the ropes.

The project's hardware is being developed by RuralCom Electronics Limited, a Nelson-based communications company. Luke Bettis from ATLAS is developing the software.

Also in this issue:

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- Marika's Musings
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ATLAS Roothing Manager

ATLAS presented the latest iteration of Roothing Manager during the recent GeoMaster user group meeting. This is the first release that members of the development group can install and experiment with.

Roothing Manager is a management tool for your rooding network, just as GeoMaster is for your forest estate. Roothing Manager provides a centralised system for managing road information and making it available to the whole organisation.

Like GeoMaster, Roothing Manager can be used on its own or from within ArcGIS, and it has a similar architecture with separated spatial and attribute data. The new product does not include GeoMaster's temporal capability, meaning that the clock cannot be wound forward or back.

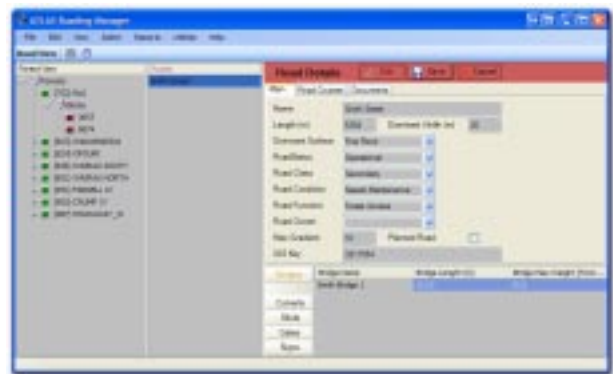
Roothing Manager can be used to manage key aspects of rooding such as class, construction, drainage, bridges, gates and signs. The software will integrate with GeoMaster, Harvest Manager and the upcoming Contracts Manager.

This road management tool puts a high emphasis on financial aspects such as budgeting and forecasting. Coupled with Contracts Manager, it will be able to track actual costs against budget.


The event model in GeoMaster has been superseded in Roothing Manager with a project-based model, where projects comprise one or more tasks. Each

task may have several components such as material, labour and equipment, each with its own cost information. Projects could be used for road construction, maintenance, upgrade or inspection. They can be prioritised, and their progress can be tracked.

Planned features include the ability to simulate various budget scenarios before submitting a final budget for the upcoming year, and the ability to collect rooding information in the field on mobile devices. This will enable in-field updating and deleting of road features, as well as creating, updating and re-scheduling projects.



ATLAS website - what is RSS and what is it useful for?

When you have been browsing the ATLAS Technology website, have you noticed pages with  displayed on them?

Websites are used by companies to publish news, product information, and expert opinion (usually published in the form of a blog). The content on these sites often changes, and checking your favourite websites regularly for these changes can be very tiresome.

Using email to get notification of changes was an early solution to help alleviate this problem. After subscribing to a few notifications, however, it doesn't take long before you are swamped with multiple emails from different websites that are presented differently, are disorganised, and look like spam.

RSS is a better way to be notified of new and updated content in a well-organised and reliable fashion. To read an RSS newsfeed, you will need to install a news aggregator.

A number of free news aggregators are available on the internet:

<http://www.rssreader.com/> (uses .Net framework)

<http://www.sharpreader.net/> (simple & basic)

<http://www.feedreader.com/> (like SharpReader but not updated as often)

<http://www.newsgator.com/> (aggregates into Microsoft Outlook)

To be notified of a change to a page with an embedded RSS feed icon, right-click on the RSS button and select "Copy link location" (for Firefox) or "Copy shortcut" (for Internet Explorer) on the context menu. Open your RSS feed aggregator (newsreader) and add this link to the feeds being monitored.

Your RSS reader will now access the monitored websites and notify you of any changes in content in a reliable, consistent manner. You can subscribe to the ATLAS Technology news on <http://www.atlastech.co.nz/atlas+news.aspx>

New face on the Help Desk

Marika Fritzsche is ATLAS Technology's new Software Support Engineer. A recent immigrant from Germany, Marika has a Bachelor of Science Certificate ("International Forest Ecosystem Management") from the University of Applied Sciences Eberswalde, Germany.

Prior to starting work with ATLAS, Marika completed one semester at the University of Canterbury in 2006, where her interest in forestry software was



sparked. Marika also served two internships at Scion during the past two years before finally immigrating to New Zealand in September 2006.

Marika is available to help you out with software queries. She will also be involved in training and software testing. If you have not spoken with Marika yet, feel free to call and introduce yourself.

Marika's Musings

After spending a fair bit of time exploring the exciting world of GeoMaster during the last couple of months, I made some interesting discoveries that make working with the software much easier.

Christian showed me a new feature in GeoMaster v1.8 that records frequently accessed Stands and Harvest Areas in a 'Favourites' list to provide easier access. This list is specific to each user/PC, and items can be added by right-clicking on the item in the treeview and selecting 'Add to Favourites'.

Alternatively you can also highlight the item and select 'View|Favourites|Add to Favourites' from the Main menu.

To access your favourite Stand or Harvest Area select 'View|Favourites|<item name>', and to remove an item, right-click on it in the tree view and select 'Remove From Favourites'. The 'View|Favourites' menu enables the whole list to be cleared, or the highlighted item to be removed.

What's new with GeoMaster

The User Meeting held during October provided a good opportunity for GeoMaster users to catch up with each other and the ATLAS team. Apart from distant colleagues in Fiji and Western Australia, all GeoMaster clients were represented.

The meeting included a range of presentations by Scion scientists, such as the release of a weevil to help combat buddleia. Being a User Meeting, it was good to have presentations by some of the clients, in particular Weyerhaeuser, who put forward proposals for a Risk Management capability, and better reporting of chemical application to stands.

GeoMaster v1.8 was released following the User Meeting. The new version includes a wide range of enhancements such as a tool for moving patches from one compartment to another, and an expanded



event report that lists all information pertaining to a selected event.

Work has commenced on the next

GeoMaster release, and this will include the ability to track when area-changing activities (eg. adding a patch to a stand, or a planting event) were entered in the system to support area change auditing.

Technical note:

In the past when areas were exported to Excel from GeoMaster reports, the exported area had the same precision as the displayed report (typically accurate to one decimal place). Subsequent calculations on these areas would only be accurate to one decimal place.

Within GeoMaster, areas are typically stored and processed at two decimal places (as defined in the configuration). Consequently areas summed within GeoMaster could differ significantly from summed exported areas due to an accumulated rounding effect.

With v1.8, areas are exported to File/Excel at the same precision as they are stored in GeoMaster, so the totals should match, irrespective of the configured display precision.

Scion CEO Tom Richardson welcomes GeoMaster users, assuring them of Scion's commitment to the ATLAS unit. He sees ATLAS as a critical part of Scion's strategy of bringing science to the market.

Upcoming Conferences

Proudly sponsored by ATLAS Technology

Forest-TECH 2007 Conference
Tuesday 13 March - Wednesday 14 March 2007
Rotorua, New Zealand

Forest-TECH 2007 is the beginning of an exciting new series of technology programmes designed for New Zealand forestry managers, owners and consultants.

The event will cover new tools, technologies and recent developments which can be adopted by New Zealand companies in forest silviculture, site preparation, fertilising, the application of herbicides, forest mapping, inventory and data collection and log quality assessments.

Full details on this new programme can be found by contacting Brent Apthorp, Innovatek Ltd on 03 470 1902 or brent.apthorp@innovatek.co.nz

ANZIF Conference
Sunday 3rd June 2007 – Thursday 7th June 2007
Coffs Harbour, NSW Australia

The Institute of Foresters of Australia and the New Zealand Institute of Forestry are holding their National Conferences jointly at Coffs Harbour in 2007.

The conference is aimed at enhancing forest management in both countries, and to foster networking among forest professionals. Subjects and themes covered in the conference will include:

- Challenges in regulating and managing native forests
- The growth of forest plantation managed investment schemes
- Changing expectations of communities from forests
- The role of foresters in forest conservation, wildlife and biodiversity
- Climate change
- Soil and water conservation
- Future markets and products from trees, including energy
- People in forestry - future directions in education and research

A Moment of Zen:

"Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it."

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.

