

# Hereâ€™s to a Sustained and Positive 2017!



Last year was memorable for many different reasons. The development and acceptance by the government in the UK of a Survey Apprenticeship was great news after many years of effort. On the more general topic of the Geomatics division name we had a really interesting series of responses, but not nearly enough to represent a decision to change. In any event, the comments and responses were of a varied nature and I thank all of you who contributed. So as a timely reminder, if you do wish to comment or raise an issue with the Geomatics Professional Group, then the choices are either to contact RICS HQ through traditional means, visit the website at [www.rics.org/us/about-rics/professional-groups/rics-geomatics-professionalgroup](http://www.rics.org/us/about-rics/professional-groups/rics-geomatics-professionalgroup) or via the social media channels. If not already signed up you may wish to join these to keep informed.

For 2017 we are going to see an improvement in many of the sectors of our industry. Infrastructure programmes are beginning to award contracts here in the UK and generally, around the globe, the price of resources, natural and manmade, are and will continue to rise. This creates opportunities for surveyors and geospatial professionals to engage and support these activities in order to enable efficient, cost-effective and sustainable development. Sustaining something can be more of a challenge than the initial push to create and develop it; convincing our clients that good coordinates lead to good developments so efficient and cost-effective long-term results are key.

This edition of *Geomatics World* includes a number of articles relating to some of the big technology providers. Technology continues to dominate and influence our profession. The Internet of Things for us is a real opportunity, or the Internet of Spatial Things as I term it. I believe it will be a massive change in how our futures develop. We should all be active and get involved in assessing how to engage with the users who will require new ideas from us on creating the future products and services.

## A Key Competency

I consider the collection of appropriate quality data, a key competency. It's apparent that the potential for rapid data availability and the distribution of related products, puts pressure on traditional data delivery mechanisms. The ever larger data volumes may not always be accompanied by clear quality indicators or useful quality related metadata and so our role may become more focused on quality control and checking of data than on the initial use of sensors and survey tools for its collection. To step too far in that direction would be a mistake as it's the initial data collection that often determines its usefulness – and it's not often possible to improve it after capture.

Once collected, more and more of the data is likely to be shared and distributed quickly such that the traditional requirements of map users has gone, to be replaced with an expanded and diversified consumer base with a similar diversity of uses. Mapping agencies think of data as a service now, rather than the physical map as the end product. Planning and recognition of such trends in the collection of data, the use of new and developing data services and their wider distribution, will remain critical components for us to develop and sustain influence.

As mentioned, managing the expectation and demands of our clients may require us to gain new knowledge and new areas of competency such as understanding the rights to access and the rules on data use and sharing. So looking forward, in the world of robotics, automation, data visualisation and the Internet of (Spatial) Things, we too will have to continue to develop as professionals. Our work, our standards and continuing professional development will help us maintain relevance and have a sustained positive impact. Here's to 2017!

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