



2016: Harbinger of Great Things to Come For LiDAR, Laser Scanning and Reality Capture!

Welcome to the first edition of LiDAR Magazine, Volume 6, Number 1 for 2016. This beautiful, glossy, full color, hard copy magazine is the showcase of the LiDAR industry.

There is something very satisfying when visiting LiDAR folks around the world and on their desks, lobby coffee tables, literature racks and on the table in the lunch room ... LiDAR Magazine is seen, shared and read from person to person, room to room, building to building and country to country ... it's the great tactile experience of a real magazine or physical book that has yet to be undone by the digital revolution.

2016 will be the harbinger of great things to come for the LiDAR, Laser Scanning and Reality Capture industries. This could well be the breakout year with the advent of drones making new markets and applications practically and economically feasible.

The primary benefit of drones is that they can go places where humans, or manned vehicles, cannot or should not go such as oil refineries to inspect flare stacks or buildings, towns or neighborhoods that have been hit by storms, flooding and fires. The bottom line is that drones are ideal for tasks that are too difficult or dangerous for humans, or can be done more cheaply and accurately by a robotic vehicle.

Stimulus initiatives such as the Highway Bill, NERC Reliability Standard FAC-003-3 and USGS 3DEP all hold tremendous promise for the LiDAR industry. Terrestrial, mobile and Laser scanning to BIM have been booming and have truly unlimited upside potential. However, the aerial LiDAR sector has not had much to cheer about the last few years however the NERC Reliability Standard FAC-003-3 to manage vegetation in and around power lines and the USGS 3DEP program provides reason for optimism. Tremendous interest surrounds two new forms of LiDAR being evaluated to determine if single photon LiDAR (SPL) and Geiger mode LiDAR (GML) can satisfy USGS LiDAR Base Specification version 1.2 for quality level (QL2) LiDAR with two points per square meter (pts/m²) and vertical RMSE ≤ 10 cm for use in the USGS 3D Elevation Program (3DEP).

The LiDAR industry has the greatest professional community and LiDAR Magazine is the beneficiary with the finest, most intelligent and insightful writers and contributors who help to make this the outstanding publication that it has grown to be. Please let me know of any article ideas and remember you can choose to receive either a digital or hard copy of LiDAR Magazine on the website and encourage your colleagues to sign up for our eNewsletter for free. Thank you for supporting LiDAR Magazine and making 2015 the best year yet! And, here's to making 2016 even better!

— Roland Mangold // editor@lidarmag.com

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