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Getmapping Launches Pre-Built 3D Terrain Models

Hartley Wintney, September 10th 2008 - Getmapping has launched 'Pre-Built 3D Terrain Models' of the UK, which are available for immediate download from Getmapping.com. The product enables users to go online and order a viewable, editable, digital 3D model of a selected area in a single downloadable file, removing the requirement for expensive specialist software and the time necessary to create the model. Pre-Built 3D Terrain Models are expected to be of interest to a wide variety of planning and development professionals.

The Pre-Built 3D Terrain Models are the result of Getmapping's access to a wide variety of digital data, slick online workflow and a partnership with 3D specialists Virtual Outlooks who provide the viewing and editing software. While it has been possible for some time to create 3D environments by combining vertical aerial photography and height data it required time, specialist software and training. Pre-built 3D Terrain Models, removes the pain from the process making it simple for almost any competent computer user to create basic models that can be explored and edited within the included software package.

Two types of model are available from Getmapping.com. Firstly a 'basic' 3D model created by draping Getmapping aerial photography over Intermap's NEXTMap Britain Digital Terrain Model. Secondly the 'enhanced' 3D model which has added OS MasterMap® building footprints with buildings extruded to a common height. The combined models result in single file downloads which can be opened by Virtual Outlooks' Environ Communicator Lite software, which is included in the package.

The software is easy to use enabling fly through navigation with recordable viewpoints, a terrain sculptor to change a terrain surface such as a potential building plot and a host of additional tools. These include the ability to create, insert, edit, move and delete buildings, trees and in fact any 3D object and add photographic façades to extruded buildings. The building models can be exported in standard 3D modelling file formats for further development in hi-end modelling packages if required.

“Creating 3D models was always a time consuming business and a luxury few could afford but now we have removed much of the pain from this

process by combining the data in a single file and then providing easy to use software that is accessible to any competent computer user,” said Tristram Cary Managing Director of Getmapping. “All you have to do is select the area of interest, download the file and the software and then open the file. This puts 3D modelling in the hands of the many rather than the few and at reasonable cost,” continued Cary.

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