



Report calls for open standard for 3D applications in mining industry

User interviews and analysis highlight common challenges

Wednesday, 15 November 2017

According to a new report released by the Global Mining Standards and Guideline Group (GMSG), a survey of more than 18 3D software applications shows that users experience significant difficulties and delays working with the software, collaborating with peers, and learning multiple proprietary programs. An open mining format (OMF) that encompasses a set of guidelines and recommended steps would solve these difficulties.

Currently, mining companies use multiple applications to manage and manipulate their 3D models. Many job functions, including those of surveyors, geologists, mine engineers, and managers, need to be able to move from one 3D data application to another with consistency and relative ease in order to manipulate 3D projects while collaborating with clients and colleagues. This is where issues arise, as many of these applications and software packages do not allow for easy, clean, and accurate movement of 3D information. 'If you're importing a model from one software to another and not double-checking that the variables are imported correctly, you could totally [mess up] pit operations,' says one report interviewee.

Using multiple applications creates common technical and process challenges that can result in significant setbacks. Some technical challenges are more common than others. These issues revolve around scripts, ASCII, flat files, name conventions, rotation of 3D images, validity, colour models, managing coordinate systems, and file size, while the significant process challenges are loss of time, reverse engineering, restricted use of available technology, additional costs, and increased risk.

The report says an OMF is a better solution to transferring, managing, and manipulating 3D information and would improve the compatibility of mining software packages, resulting in fewer issues with manipulating 3D information.

The report is based on interviews of five representatives from the mining industry and two additional interviews with industry stakeholders. Some of the representatives included were from industry leaders such as Teck, Barrick Gold, and Newmont. These interviews discussed the current state of interoperability in 3D application technology.

The complete report is available at <http://www.globalminingstandards.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/GMSG-3D-Data-Exchange-Report.pdf>

About GMSG

The Global Mining Standards and Guidelines Group (GMSG) is a non-profit organization established to oversee the development of guidelines designed to be supported and used by mining stakeholders to improve safety, operational, environmental, and financial performance of the mining industry. Through our Future Mining Forum series and hands-on workshops, GMSG facilitates open collaboration between mining industry leaders to create solutions for common industry problems.

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