

Sick and alone



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Last issue I wrote a serious article about cloud storage, the future of storage for oil and gas data, and the death of tape.

Since then I have been neck deep in thought about what this all means. Not just thought, but modelling, examination, and theory testing. I have the bug, and this bug is not something you just take a tablet for and have a good sleep. This bug is nasty. It comes with breathing difficulties, sleep deprivation, itchy scalp, heart palpitations, difficulties concentrating, stress-related skin irritation, and bowel dysfunction. Significantly increased caffeine intake

seems to be the only thing that holds it at bay, and even that is only temporary.

It is so odd to be witnessing something so rare, important, and life changing, when everyone around me is just going about their usual business – no skin irritation or bowel dysfunction to report, happy to go about doing it the way they have always done it. Tape zombies, tape drones, tape followers, tape cronies, tape users, tape addicts not looking for a better high, tape status quo junkies, same-same tape jockeys, essentially tape losers.

The fact that I was the only one who seemed to care about this ‘cloud thing’ was emphasised last week at 3 am when I was sitting in my front garden quietly thinking through the implications of the cloud. Thinking about its many manifestations and uses, its many paths (short cuts) to glory, and its many irritatingly simple efficiencies when compared to tape, when my neighbour apparently thought that taking out his garbage was a good idea.

The rabble of the bin wheels along the footpath distracted me from my storage panacea. I was enraged (not so much because of the interruption, but mainly because it was also a recycling day and my son only put out one of the bins).

But did my neighbour have any idea what was going on inside my head at that moment? Did he know that the interruption of my thought process could well be the reason that the future of storage never unfolds, never delivers on its many promises, and never really arrives in any way shape or form for anyone, ever? Okay, that may be a little dramatic, but what was he thinking? How is a man to concentrate with all of these bins rolling up and down the street?

Despite all the negatives of the bin incident, there was also one significant positive. That positive was that I saw in that very moment, while my neighbour was struggling to rotate the bin to face the right direction in the thick uncut grass of his lawn, that I was very much alone in my thinking. And that aloneness made me feel special. I was the only one who knew, who understood, and who cared about the single most important event to occur in my generation – the death of tape and the birth of its prodigal son – the cloud.

Like the assassination of Kennedy or the attack on Pearl Harbour, I will always remember where I was the day tape died. I was in my front garden, it was the second Tuesday of the month, it was 3 am in the morning, a recycling day, a day just like any other – with the exception of one thing – I knew something no one else did.

Seismic window



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Line location look back and more

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all well in 2014. After a year of writing Seismic Windows articles I have finally got some feedback, which I'll share later, but first I'd like to follow up last year's articles. The first article looked into the 'funny methods' side of oil exploration and generated some interest in paranormal exploration and dowsing. Unfortunately, during the year the 'most positive CSEM anomaly I have seen' was drilled and failed to find hydrocarbons. This was obviously a disappointment to the exploration company involved.

Not much else raised any comments during the year apart from the Talgeberry article, which was published in the conference issue of *Preview*. I attended the Melbourne conference and several people used this article to commence robust discussions. The seismic polarity standard is still confusing for many geophysicists and there does not appear to be any concerted movement to adopt a standard 'standard'. However, it is pleasing to see copies of the polarity article pinned above desks in various offices. It is even more pleasing to see copies that have not been defaced or graffitied.

But the last article on seismic line locations prompted a string of emails. First Keith Woollard of Geocom wrote to me describing his software that correlates traces on intersecting lines to

find the best intersection point (and hence coordinate assuming you know one real line location). Keith also highlighted the issue of the coordinate reference point, which is often not the actual trace location. But most pleasing was the response I received from Mike Sexton of Geoscience Australia. He's from the government and he really is here to help. He's taken on the task of sorting out the location data held by GA. This is a huge job.

Here is some of what Mike had to say:

When GA purchased SNIP, it was to help with finding surveys that could be included in the Acreage Release packages.

At the time I was working on compilations of bathymetric data that GA had acquired and I noticed that the SNIP data had also captured bathymetric data. As a result I decided to take a closer look and realised that for the modern 3-D surveys the bathymetry wasn't bad...I decided to investigate further.

This was my big mistake. It turned out that the problem was more involved than I thought. GA's databases were worse than a 'dog's breakfast'. We had errors, duplications and omissions. SNIP also had problems. Some surveys were incomplete (missing lines, shortened lines, additional (non-existent) lines). The metadata was also very sparse.

For internal reasons I decided to look at ALL offshore surveys in the Australian Region. These comprised GA's own marine surveys (since about 1966) – 340 of them, geophysical research cruises – about 800 of them, CSIRO surveys – about 200, Antarctic Division surveys – about 200, various university surveys – about 50, various Pacific Island surveys (aid projects) – about 50, and petroleum industry surveys lodged with GA under the PSLA Act – about 2000. All up about 3800 surveys.

Each survey got a unique number starting at 0001. I called the number GAMS (Geoscience Australia Marine Survey Index) to distinguish it from the plethora of other numbers in existence at GA.

After I started I have had assistance from 2 others to search out reports, harvest metadata and check the navigation. When in doubt we always put in 'Original datum assumed to be AGD66' or something like that.... For many surveys we have used the SNIP file as the basis for our file. For these ones we usually say something like 'Data sourced from SNIP1234' – 'No transformations made at GA'. If SNIP didn't exist or we had an issue with it we created our own but always said what we did (mainly because we know the potential for error is large and we want to be able to backtrack and fix them if problems are found). My overall aim was to make SNIP obsolete and have GAMS take over. I deliberately didn't edit SNIP or try and build on its numbering system as it would have been impossible.

So that's the history. What would Mike like from us?

He wants us to tell him if we find errors or discrepancies in the databases so he can fix them and save all our efforts being duplicated around the country.

One of Mike's aims is to stop data managers spending several months cleaning up their data. As he pointed out in his note to me, 'Your data manager has done this for one project. I hate to think what is happening in all the projects of all the companies'.

So let's try to be more efficient. If you find something wrong with your seismic location data just ring or email mike. sexton@ga.gov.au and he'll have a look at the problem.

Finally, I'd like to mention that the GA repository has made major strides in data management over the past few years and now has a world class system in place.

Call for speakers for <Insert Conference Name Here>

or

Invitation to submit an article to <Journal you've never heard of>

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Have you ever received an email from a conference organiser inviting you to either submit a paper, or chair a session, for a conference of which you've never heard? You're not alone. If you decide to register for one of these conferences, don't be surprised if the conference is cancelled, and you can't get your money back.

Perhaps you've received an email from a new open access journal, inviting you to submit a paper? If you choose to submit something, you might find your paper gets accepted within a timeframe suggestive of a somewhat rapid peer-review process, and then you receive invoices for processing charges. Do you pay? There are many legitimate open access journals, and there are others. The websites appear official, the correspondence is real enough, so how do you tell if someone is trying to scam you?

The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) - an independent Commonwealth statutory authority - operates a website called SCAMwatch. SCAMwatch is an online resource that teaches consumers and small businesses how to recognise, avoid, and report scams. Other government websites contain information and reporting options for scams, including the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), the Australian Tax Office (ATO) and the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). State government websites also contain information.

However, these websites don't contain information on the types of scams mentioned above, although they do give information on what to be aware of in emails, facsimiles, phone calls and text messages.

Conferences

For example, in the case of emails inviting you to a conference, do you know who sent the email? Do you know of the conference? Are there obvious spelling mistakes or poor grammar?

Usually it's obvious. The ASEG has sister societies: The Korean Society of Exploration Geophysics (KSEG), the Society of Exploration Geophysics Japan (SEGJ) and the Brazilian Geophysical Society (SBGf). These societies have arrangements to advertise each other's conferences, so any invitations to these conferences will come from the ASEG. If you're a member of the EAGE or SEG you'll receive notification from them regarding their events.

Sometimes it's not so obvious. I recently received an email inviting me to the '1st Annual World Congress of Geophysics (WCG-2014)' in Taiyuan, China. I don't know the person who sent me the email, or how they got my email address, but their email address ended @gphys2014.com which sounds legitimate. The email included a list of 12 Symposia to be held at the conference. Each symposium has a theme, nicely covering all aspects of Geophysics. I was specifically invited to present in Sym 304: 'Global Earth Observation System of Systems'. There was a blurb about the host city and professional looking contact information. The English was fine, but the email began 'Dear Dr. philip.heath' (period inclusive), which rang alarm bells. None-the-less I decided to risk looking at the website.

According to the website, the operating organisations are BIT Congress Inc., Foreign Experts Databank of SAFEA-Dalian Biotechnological and Medical Experts Subdivision. As I'm not sure what these organisations have to do with geophysics I've undertaken a Google search for BIT Congress. They supposedly organise a range of conferences covering numerous professions (for example the BIT World Cancer Congress and the World Congress of Agricultural Biotechnology).

There is no evidence that these conferences are being organised and run by professionals in their field. Further, there are numerous articles regarding people who have been invited speakers to the conference, but still had to pay for registration. The conference is subsequently cancelled (perhaps due to 'political action') and the invited speaker cannot get a refund.

Publications

Open access journals offer a platform for academics to publish their work for a wide audience to read. With today's 'publish or perish' attitude to academic research, these journals can help an author to increase their citation rate.

Some authors have jumped on the opportunity to publish a large number of papers, most of them referencing their own and their colleague's papers. One author clocked up 512 citations in 169 articles (Masterson 2013). The journal was published by a Nigerian open access group named Academic Journals. The Essential Science Indicators database by Thomson Reuters removed all references to the author in their database.

Some publishers simply don't exist. Once your paper is accepted - possibly without any reviewer's comments - you receive an invoice for processing fees or printing costs, and should you pay it you won't see your article in print, or your money again.

Jeffrey Beall is librarian and associate professor at the University of Colorado Denver and has been investigating the issues around invitations to publish in open access journals (Butler 2013). Ultimately he has formed a list of independent and questionable journals (Beall 2012). The 225 publishers and 126 journals on the 2013 list serve as a useful starting point when receiving questionable emails from publishers. The 2012 list contained 23 publishers, so the list is growing.

Other scams

If your company has a website, you may receive an email from a domain broker to let you know that a .com site has become available with a name similar to your (say) .com.au site. In some instances they come with claims that someone else is applying for it and want to get your permission. Or perhaps they'll simply be looking for a renewal fee for your domain. If they're not the entity that holds your domain registration then you can safely ignore it.

Phishing scams are common: emails asking you to update passwords or

bank details. All these emails should be marked as spam and deleted, and in the case of emails from banks, the ACCC asks that you contact the bank directly – by calling them on the phone number on the back of your card – to let them know. You can also report it on the SCAMwatch website.

The ACCC SCAMwatch website contains excellent advice for how to avoid scams: do your homework. For us in the ASEG community, if you are suspicious of an email inviting you to speak at a conference of which you've never heard, or inviting you to submit a paper to an obscure journal, perhaps contact your local branch committee and see if anyone else has reported it. And if nothing else, research online to see who is organising it at the other end.

References

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- Masterson, A. 2013, Academic publishing tainted by scams, <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20131126130946215>, accessed January, 2014.

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Call for assistant book reviewers

Books. A dying breed? A valuable commodity? Or perhaps simply a traditional product in transition to the electronic world? In whatever form and regardless of whether we manage to read them from cover to cover (or first e-page to last e-page), books are undoubtedly a valuable resource to the geophysical profession.

There are a number of new geophysical books published in any given year – in my field of potential-field geophysics, I've been surprised to see at least four new books focused on gravity and magnetic methods published in the past year or so. I don't recall that many new specialist books on the topic since the time that I wandered into the field around (gulp) two decades ago! But if I decide to buy one or more of these books, which one(s) would I choose, how would I decide which of these books suit my purpose? There is arguably a role for publications like *Preview* to help members decide whether a particular book is suitable, relevant, accurate, up-to-date and good value. Hence the Book Reviews section.

In a moment of inspiration shortly after being asked to take on the role of coordinating Book Reviews, I fired off

quick emails to several publishers of geophysical books. The SEG, EAGE and Cambridge all responded quickly and indicated a willingness to provide complementary copies of their new geophysical books for review by ASEG members. I have already received two of the abovementioned potential-field textbooks from Cambridge for review. The SEG has also offered eBooks for review by interested members (i.e. take your pick) and the EAGE are planning to send copies of new books as they are published.

I think it's sensible to limit reviews to books published in the past year or so and I suggest that we aim for reviews that give us an impression of the breadth and depth of the book's content. Comments on readability, accuracy, etc. are also important considerations for potential purchasers.

If you are interested in reviewing books, have suggestions for other publishers to contact or ideas for specific new books to review, please get in touch. Note that you would normally get to keep a copy of the book after you review it. In the meantime, why not peruse the 'new books' pages for some of the publishers

below – is there anything there that you'd like to review?

There are certainly a number of other publishers of quality geophysical books and this piece will hopefully stimulate further suggestions and offers to review.

Suggested publishers offering books for review:

- SEG: <http://www.seg.org/resources/publications/books/pubsnewbooks#!>;
- EAGE: http://bookshop.eage.org/CMS/structure_page.aspx?UsCode=NEWBOOKS&UsList=NEWBOOKSd; and
- Cambridge University Press: <http://www.cambridge.org/au/academic/subjects/earth-and-environmental-science/solid-earth-geophysics/>.



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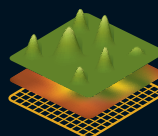
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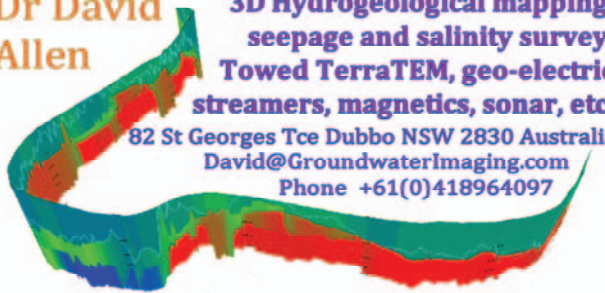
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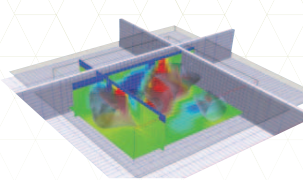
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March			2014
16–20	SAGEEP 2014 (The Symposium on the Application of Geophysics to Engineering and Environmental Problems) https://www.eegs.org/AnnualMeetingSAGEEP/SAGEEP2014.aspx	Boston, MA	USA
April			2014
7–10	The 6th Saint Petersburg International Conference and Exhibition http://www.eage.org/index.php?evp=1979	Saint Petersburg	Russia
21–24	CPS/SEG 2014 Conference: Advancing Geophysical Innovation http://member.seg.org/Default.aspx?TabId=319	Beijing	China
May			2014
28–30	130th SEGJ Conference http://www.segj.org	Tokyo	Japan
June			2014
16–19	76th EAGE Conference and Exhibition incorporating SPE EUROPEC 2014 http://www.eage.org	Amsterdam	The Netherlands
20–23	6th International Conference on Environmental and Engineering Geophysics (ICEEG2014) http://tdem.org/iceeg2014/	Xi'an	China
September			2014
15–17	EAGE Near Surface Geoscience 2014 20th European Meeting of Environmental and Engineering Geophysics of the Near Surface Geoscience Division of the EAGE http://www.eage.org	Athens	Greece
28 Sep–2 Oct	2014 Canadian Geotechnical Conference <i>Conference website pending; please email cgs@cgs.ca for additional information or visit the CGS website (www.cgs.ca)</i>	Regina	Canada (Saskatchewan)
October			2014
26–31	SEG International Exhibition and 84th Annual Meeting http://www.seg.org	Denver, CO	USA
December			2014
10–12	The 8th International Petroleum Technology Conference (IPTC) http://www.iptcnet.org	Doha	Qatar
January			2015
11–14	3rd South Asian Geosciences Conference and Exhibition http://geo-india.com/	New Delhi	India
February			2015
15–18	ASEG-PESA 2015: Geophysics and Geology together for Discover 24th International Geophysical Conference and Exhibition http://www.conference.aseg.org.au/	Perth	Australia
June			2015
1–4	77th Conference and Exhibition http://eage.org	Madrid	Spain
October			2015
18–23	SEG International Exhibition and 85th Annual Meeting http://www.seg.org	New Orleans	USA
December			2015
7–9	The 9th International Petroleum Technology Conference (IPTC) http://www.iptcnet.org	Doha	Qatar
October			2016
16–21	SEG International Exhibition and 86th Annual Meeting http://www.seg.org	Dallas	USA

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section of the *Preview* website at: www.publish.csiro.au/journals/pv.

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