



excellence in asset management

RAMM LATEST NEWS

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The Smiles Said It All

RAMM users from all over Australasia gathered recently at the Hotel Novotel Auckland Airport to celebrate the success of RAMM and in particular to discuss what the future of RAMM should look like. The 2012 RAMM User Group Conference was a fantastic success. Over 160 RAMM users and RAMM Software Ltd (RSL) staff took part. The outcomes were overwhelmingly positive. Stacey Verner's smile at the end of the day (right) says it all.



You Can Do This with RAMM

The RAMM users were first treated to an entertaining and informative series of presentations from RSL staff. Everyone in the room will have learned a great deal. Most will have been inspired to try something new when they returned to the office.

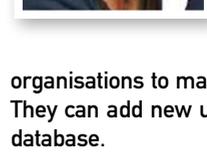


Stacey Verner presented RAMM GIS. He demonstrated how useful it is and how it is constantly being enhanced. He also presented RAMM 2011 and demonstrated Localites, Centre Line editing made easy, sharing Filters, Layouts and Add to Map Settings, and the ability to import shape files into RAMM.



Charmaine Okros presented RAMM Applications. She showed what you'll find if you have never logged in to it. If you are not using RAMM Applications to log in to RAMM, you are missing out on all the new applications.

Larry Chi presented CAR Manager. This is such a great application because before any development took place, a group of Corridor Access Request (CAR) managers came to Auckland and outlined what the software would have to do to be truly effective.



Campbell Newman presented Hosting Administration. This new application enables organisations to manage user access to their own RAMM database. They can add new users and determine their level of access to the database.



Mark Corkhill (our RAMM person on the back page) presented RAMM Contractor. Assessment functions are now available from RAMM Contractor which means contractors can now enter Assessment data. The treatment of Maintenance Costs in Dispatches has become more flexible. Contracts in RAMM Contractor can now take Cost Escalation into account.



Nigel Lynton presented the Agile software development methodology. RSL now uses this to deliver you higher quality software. Users are integral to the Agile process. So we need your assistance. Contact Nigel if you want to play your part.

RAMM SPOTLIGHT

Beta Testing

At RAMM Software Ltd (RSL) we are constantly striving to improve the quality of the software that we release to you. In the last 12 months RSL has hired a second full-time tester, Shane Tamatoa to complement the work of Andrew McGuinness. In the Waterfall Software Development Methodology, which we previously used, development and testing staff tested the unreleased software towards the end of the development cycle. The Agile Software Development Methodology, which we have adopted, requires continuous testing throughout the Sprint. So, on any given day, RSL has 19 staff testing unreleased software at every stage of its development, rather than waiting until the end of the cycle.

There is another group who test the software prior to its release - the users. There is a group of RAMM users who perform beta testing for us.

Beta testing is a form of external user testing. Versions of the RAMM software, known as beta versions, are released to a limited audience outside of the programming team. These users have the opportunity to test the Build, prior to its release and to provide feedback.

Become a Beta Tester

If you want to be involved in beta testing contact Charmaine Okros on (NZ) 0800 256 832 or (AUS) 1800 196 213 to discuss what is involved.



SIGN OF THE TIMES



Graeme Norman presented RAMM Support. He introduced each member of the Support team and clarified their role. He outlined support trends and explained the escalation process for customer issues raised.

Glen Nalepa presented RAMM Training. He outlined the complete redesign of the training course structure. There is now a clear pathway from RAMM Beginner to RAMM Champion. Now that RSL has its own training room, you can train: at the 102 Rosedale Road RSL offices, onsite at your place, and online with the videos.



Grant Mackenzie presented the Training Videos. Did you know that you can set up RAMM Patrol yourself after watching the setup videos? Also, now, when a new application is developed, the user assistance is from videos rather than manuals.

Richard Gale finished the session with a rousing "RAMM Patrol - This Is Your Life" in which he charted the progress of RAMM Patrol from its infancy to the truly useful software it has become today. He highlighted the changes resulting from user suggestions.



The slides from these presentations are available from the RSL web site.



RAMM Has Helped Our Business

The second session was a series of case studies presented by RAMM users.

Catherine Hoeberechts presented a highly amusing tale of how she ended up as RAMM database manager for the Waikato District Council. She outlined the challenges she faced and her pathway forward. Data integrity is the key.

Binaya Sharma presented a touching overview of the aftermath of the Christchurch earthquakes. He outlined the usefulness to the Christchurch City Council of the Emergency Information System which is used to create an openly available online map displaying road and bridge closures as well as preferred route information.

Barry Williams outlined the Auckland Transport experience with the CAR Manager. They have been using CAR Manager for over a year now. Barry is very happy with the software and with the service he has received from (RSL). He didn't need a PowerPoint presentation. So no slides of this session are available.

Phillipa Chase from Downer NZ gave a compelling presentation on Downer's use of mapping in RAMM. They combine the current and historical faults, the reseals and the rehab sites with the Forward Work Programme to ensure that their maintenance programme is the most efficient possible. Again, the integrity of the data is key.

John Ryan from Sigma Consultants gave a potted history of the use of RAMM and RAMM Contractor by the Rotorua District Council and its contractors. He was very keen that we bring back the snail trail. What's the bet it doesn't take long.

Mark Hollows showed the myriad ways that the Nelson District Council is using RAMM GIS. They use it for everything from road closures to Bus Routes, HPMV routes, street light pole ages and everything you ever wanted to know about footpaths but were too afraid to ask. Take a look and be surprised.

Kacha Vuletich delivered a positive verdict on RAMM Patrol on behalf of Fulton Hogan NZ. His presentation slides are not available as his presentation was not a PowerPoint. However there is a link to his presentation on the RSL web site. If you have never experienced a Prezi presentation you will be impressed by it.

The slides from most of the other presentations are also available from the RSL web site.

What Is Important to You

The afternoon session was the chance for RAMM users to say what was important to them in the RAMM suite of products. It was an opportunity to influence the future direction of RAMM.

Prior to the conference RSL had asked users to send in strategic suggestions for improvements to the RAMM suite. The conference attendees broke out into groups - one for each strategic suggestion. They were tasked to consider whether the suggestion had merit and to give an indication of its priority. Each group had a facilitator to drive the discussions and an RSL employee to answer questions of a technical nature if they arose.

The groups were also asked to consider three or four other topics and to give a verbal report on these as well. This was interesting from a variety of perspectives.

The result was that there was at least one statement of the merit of each strategic suggestion. There were also second opinions from other groups which considered the suggestion. By summing the number of times a strategic suggestion was chosen for discussion, a rough hierarchy emerged. For instance, if there was a topic which only the designated group discussed and nobody else was interested in considering, the inference was that the suggestion was low priority. Whereas topics which virtually all groups considered were clearly high priority.

Where to from Here

The facilitators for each group took notes of the discussions and the resulting requests. The RSL staff member for each group also took down notes and questions for clarification when back in the office. Nigel Lynton, the RSL Software Development Manager has collated the 300 + suggestions and requests which the users made. When the duplicates are removed, each suggestion and request will be turned into a user story and added to the Product Backlog. This way, they will all become integrated into the Agile Development cycle.

Some suggestions will be acted on promptly influenced by the priority level indicated at the conference. A conference report will be circulated. At the time of writing the format of that report had yet to be finalised.

Traditional Hospitality

The final session was for the RAMM users to sample the traditional RAMM hospitality. They'd earned it.

Thanks

RAMM Software Limited thanks all the RAMM users who travelled to Auckland to take part. In particular thanks are owed to the presenters of the case studies and those who agreed to be group facilitators.

The Next Conference

RSL will be asking the conference attendees for feedback on aspects of the conference. In particular, how often these should take place. So watch this space for developments and news of when we might meet again.

RAMM GIS HEAT MAP LAYERS

You use Heat Map Layers to quickly visualise your network attributes or your asset distribution. You have very fine-grained control over the display so that you can see patterns emerging with surprising clarity. So what is a Heat Map and How does it work?

How Does It Work?

When you observe a naked flame you can see that where there is no flame colour, there is no heat. The flame colours change from Blue at the bottom to red to yellow and the centre part of a flame is white hot.

And so it is with Heat Maps. Where there is no colour, there is no data. Where it is blue there is some data, red, there's more, yellow still more and the white areas represent the highest concentration of data.

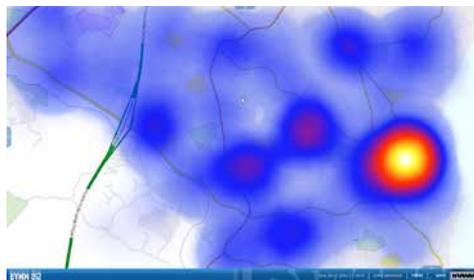
What Are You Seeing?

Heat Maps either display their different colours based on an attribute of an item (such as Roughness), or the number of items in an area (such as potholes on a Treatment Length) or an attribute combined with the number of items (such as Age of Signs), or the number of items with a particular attribute (such as Signs replaced in the last 10 years).

Field Selection and Filter

Where you are creating a Heat Map display for an attribute combined with the number of items (such as Age of Signs), you would select the single attribute which by the way, must be a numerical attribute, such as Sign Age.

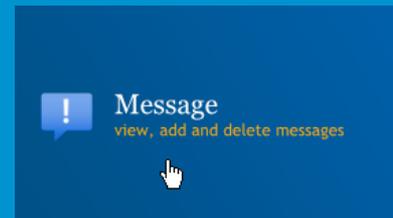
You can also create Heat Map Layers with Filters.



RAMM TIP

Messages

Have you ever wanted to send a message to other RAMM users? Well, now you can. When you log in to Hosting Administration, you click on the Message tile.



This option allows you to send messages to another RAMM user, to everyone in an organisation and even to all RAMM users on your database. You can even choose the time when it will be sent.

You are also able to check whether the message has been read by the recipient. How good is that? Log in to Hosting Administration through RAMM Applications and check it out.

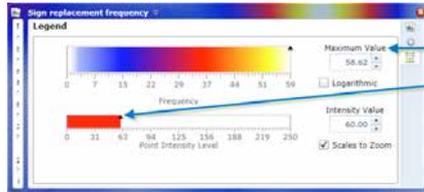


LATEST RCI VALUES

Please find the latest RCI values. These have already been applied to all New Zealand databases on the RAMM Hosting Service.

30/06/2010	1659
30/09/2010	1659
31/12/2010	1671
31/03/2011	1718
30/06/2011	1742
30/09/2011	1738
30/06/2012	1773

RAMM GIS HEAT MAP LAYERS Continued



You adjust the **Frequency Maximum Value** and the **Point Intensity Level** until the values which you want to investigate are most obvious

Adjust What you are Seeing

When you look at a Heat Map display, the values in which you are most interested may not be clearly differentiated. You can use the Analysis panel to adjust the display until the values which you want to investigate are most obvious on the map.

Intensity Value

The Point Intensity Level in the graphic above is set at 60. This means that a circle of 60 pixel radius around each item is used in the calculations for creating the Heat Map. So if you set a smaller value, the White areas representing the maximum concentrations, will be smaller because fewer items will be combined to form the maximum. Similarly, if you set the radius to the highest value, they will be larger because more items will be grouped together to form the maximum value.

Note that as the Point intensity level is changed, the Maximum Value in the Frequency scale is reset to match.

Maximum Value

You drag the Maximum Value slider along the Frequency scale to alter the colour of the intensity values to mask out areas of intense value or outliers within the Point intensity level setting (here it is 60). So if you move it to the left, fewer items are needed to generate the white hot colour. If you move it to the right more items are required in the 60 pixel radius to generate the white hot colour. So - move the slider to the left, the white area increases in size - move it back the white areas reduce in size.

You would do this when you wanted to highlight intermediate and lower values so that they are differentiated.

Example

Let's consider an example of when Heat Maps might be useful to you.

If you turn on the Forward Work Layer to see where you are spending your money in the next few years and then overlay this with the Roughness Heat map it is like a sanity check to make sure that your spending is in the correct areas. So where there is a disconnect between the Layers (that is there is a Roughness hot spot but no Forward Work planned for the road) you know that you will need to check the road to see if it is a data issue or if you need to alter your Forward Work Programme.

RAMM PEOPLE - MARK CORKHILL

Mark first joined RAMM Software Ltd (formerly CJN) in January 2008. He became the Business Analyst for RAMM Contractor and Pocket RAMM. Mark has spent the last 16 years working in IT having graduated from the University of Central Lancashire, England after studying Software Engineering. He has recently married and has one son Tate.



Mark has a Purple Belt in Brazilian Jui Jitsu and also a Black Belt in Freestyle Karate. He currently teaches Brazilian Jui Jitsu and Mixed Martial Arts with his training partner at their Takapuna gym. Mark also has a passion for Crossfit, which is always pushing the boundaries of his fitness.

In his spare time he likes nothing more than paddling out on his kayak for a spot of fishing. Failing that, a weekend away snowboarding. Failing that a good beer and a weekend of DIY, just not necessarily in that order.

His favourite quote has to be: "If at first you don't succeed, you're not Chuck Norris." Always gets a laugh.

TRAINING COURSES

RAMM 101 Fundamentals of RAMM

1st October, 29th October

RAMM 202 Network Manager

2nd October, 30th October

RAMM 204 Asset Valuation

15th October, 12th November

RAMM 205 Forward Work Programme

16th October, 13th November



Trained



Did not train

If you have a query or a problem that you would like to talk to us about, feel free to contact us on:

New Zealand 0800 256 832

Australia 1800 196 213

For more information or to arrange a demonstration contact:

David Newman

P +64 9 475 0513

E david.newman@ramm.co.nz

RAMM Software Ltd

P O Box 302 278

North Harbour

Auckland

New Zealand

ramm.co.nz