

Bluesky Launches MetroVista 3D City Mapping Service in US

Massachusetts, 03 December 2019 – Aerial mapping company Bluesky International has launched a new 3D data capture programme in the US. The MetroVista product suite sees high resolution imagery, both vertical and oblique, captured simultaneously with high accuracy, wide scale 3D data using an advanced Leica camera. Described as the world's first hybrid sensor, Bluesky has been operating the Leica CityMapper camera commercially for two flying seasons in Europe.

Bluesky was the first aerial survey operator in Europe to deploy the new camera and has already captured MetroVista data for cities across the UK including London, Manchester, Newcastle and Bristol. The CityMapper sensor will be based at Bluesky's American headquarters in North Adams, Massachusetts and will be available for deployment across the north eastern United States.

"There is a growing demand around the world for data for smart city modelling, infrastructure and building planning, risk assessment and environmental modelling, and using our CityMapper sensor, we are ideally placed to fulfil this," commented Rachel Tidmarsh, Managing Director of Bluesky International.

"We have already proven the capability of the technology and the eagerness of the market for competitively priced, highly detailed and high accuracy, 3D citywide visualisations," she continued. "So it's hugely exciting to bring this experience and expertise to our US clients – both existing and potential."

Bluesky's CityMapper, used to produce the MetroVista data, includes a traditional vertical camera as well as survey-grade oblique cameras. Specially designed for 3D city modelling and urban mapping, the sensor also includes high performance LiDAR technology to accurately collect elevation data even into the shadows, which are common in urban environments and make photo-based data collection difficult. The CityMapper sensor also collects colour infrared data, which can be used to aid greenspace mapping and vegetation studies.

This announcement builds on a period of significant expansion by Bluesky, whose international network includes offices in England, the Republic of Ireland (EIRE) and the US, production facilities in the UK and India and flying bases in the UK, Ireland and America. Bluesky, originally established in 1996, has captured millions of square kilometres of aerial survey data in more than 15 countries.

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Editor's Notes:

Bluesky acquired Massachusetts-based aerial survey company Col-East in 2017. Col-East has been aerial mapping in the Northeast States for more than 65 years and has a long-established reputation for very high-quality topographic mapping with particular expertise in specialized aerial surveys such as high precision aeronautical mapping requiring highly skilled analysis.

As well as topographical mapping and aeronautical work, Col-East offered a range of aerial imaging services such as the production of terrain models, orthophotos and volumetrics, providing cost-effective mapping solutions from estates to development sites and complex transportation corridors. Col-East also owned a huge archive of aerial photography that had been captured over many years and dates to 1946.

Bluesky is one of the leading and most successful aerial survey and geographic data companies in the UK producing and maintaining seamless digital aerial photography and height data on a national scale in both Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Bluesky operates the worlds most advanced airborne sensor, which comprises vertical and oblique cameras as well as a LiDAR, to create accurate and detailed virtual cities. Bluesky also operates the only LiDAR system in the world that incorporates a thermal sensor and survey grade camera. These combined with other systems puts Bluesky in the enviable position of being able to provide customers with unique and cost-effective geospatial solutions.

As well as being an established and respected aerial survey company Bluesky is also highly innovative and continually strives to develop new products and services by embracing new technology and methods. This has resulted in the development of some unique products such as the National Tree Map (NTM) and the MetroVista city mapping service.

These datasets underpin long term contracts with local and central governments and many major blue-chip companies from a range of market sectors including financial services, utilities, telecoms, web portals, construction and environment.

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