

## All Inclusive

Those of you who call our support line from your mobile phone on contract probably have a number of inclusive minutes. Some may even have 'unlimited' inclusive calls.



However, in most cases these 'free' calls don't include what are termed 'Non-Geographic' phone numbers such as our 08456 number. If this is the case then please update your contacts list with our main number which is 01452 864244 and which will be classified as an 'inclusive' number. For those calling from landlines, the 08456 444244 number should be a bit cheaper to call than our main one.

## An ear full

We came across a great bit of software some time ago and we thought you'd like to know about it. At the end of last year Nigel had a demo to do which involved showing the prospective client 3D fly-throughs for an area covered by 100 high resolution aerial photographs. The 12.5cm resolution images were just too big to use in 3D view. Not doing the demo was never an option and as 3D views were to become a vital part of the client's work, an alternative approach was required.

After a bit of 'Googling' we found a product called Irfanview (pronounced Ear Fan). It's a powerful image editor, slideshow producer and multimedia player. It has a batch mode, so resampling the 100 images down to 0.5m resolution was a really quick and easy exercise.

The software will even rotate images which will please some users who have been asking to do this in LSS for some time. While the software is free for personal use it costs 10 Euros or 12 US Dollars per copy if you want to use it professionally. Check it out at [www.irfanview.net](http://www.irfanview.net).

## Bespoke Training

One type of course we do a lot of is our 'Bespoke course'. A bit like a made to measure suit, our Bespoke course is tailored to your individual needs. You can come to us with a list of things you want to learn about and we'll write a course around it. We can accommodate up to six trainees in a group and the cost is £500+VAT per day, plus travelling expenses and subsistence if we come to you. And if your office doesn't have the facilities to host a training session we can even book a hotel meeting room close-by. Call Duane to discuss your requirements and leave the rest to us.

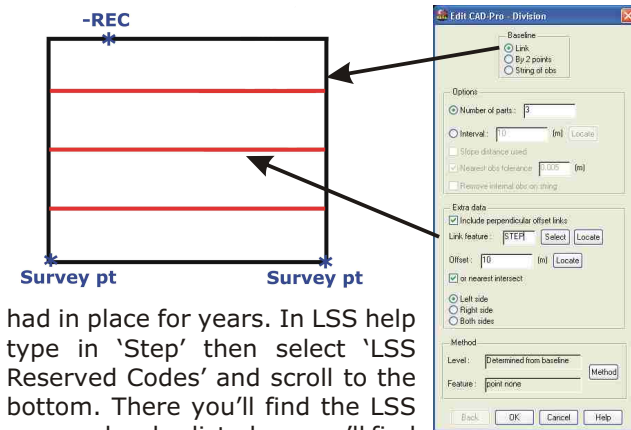
## Step this way

A number of our users regularly survey steps and stairs and have found the various LSS reserved codes invaluable in reducing the amount of post-processing required to produce the finished product for their client. However, some surveyors maybe don't need to produce 3-dimensional steps and a simple 2-D representation would suffice. Maybe then the following solution would be of interest.

Let's take a look at a simple rectangular stairway. Survey the rectangle forming the stairs (using -REC for the 3rd point). If you need to note down the number of risers then enter a 'note' at the time of survey (LSS will automatically centre this on the point coded '-REC'). Once processed in LSS you'll have a rectangle. Now to



add the steps. Using CAD-Pro / Division, choose one side as the baseline, type in the number of parts you want to enter (the number of risers), the feature code you want to use and, voila, LSS will generate the steps as a series of parallel lines from top to bottom. Of course, this will also work for curved stairways and we'll be hoping to add this type of scenario to the 'How to' tutorials if not now, then in the near future. Those who wish to can continue to use the range of reserved survey codes we have



Survey pt Survey pt

Survey pt Survey pt

## Get yourself known

When we first went online in the mid 1990's little did we all know how much a part of everyone's life emails and the internet would be. Now, if you don't have a presence then you can virtually say goodbye to any business you thought you might win from new customers. A website is the first place people look and usually it isn't yours, it's a search engine. If your company or product doesn't appear in the first couple of pages of a Google search then you can be sure you're missing out on some business opportunity. However, it's one thing if your customers know your company name, but what if they know you by some other name. Take us, for instance. To many we aren't McCarthy Taylor Systems Ltd, we're LSS. Of course, if you can remember our company name then you'll have no trouble finding us on Google, but the real test is knowing the product, but nothing else.

Some companies spend thousands if not millions of pounds on web advertising in an attempt to be at the top of the search listings, but if you are in a relatively niche market such as us, by rights, it should be easier to find us. We thought we'd experiment to find out how we do by entering 'lss' into a variety of search engines, with the following results...

Search Engine	Position	Comment
Google.com	1	
Google.co.uk	1	
Yahoo.com	1	
Ask.com	1	
Altavista.com	4	Behind an LSS user in posn.1
Websearch.com	0	No website hits for LSS at all
Webcrawler.com	0	Only finds domain names with the letters lss in the name.

Of course, there's more to it than this and if you can add some product keywords into your homepage then potential customers will find you even more easily.

# LSS Training and Workshop Booking Form

You can book online at [dtmsoftware.com](http://dtmsoftware.com), or complete this form and either fax to 01452 864194 or post to McCarthy Taylor Systems Ltd, Aerial View, Acorn House, Shab Hill, Birdlip, Glos. GL4 8JX

## Birdlip, Gloucestershire, Oct '08 - May '09

Course	Cost	Please circle the date(s) you wish to book										Names of attendees
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May			
LSS Introduction	£150	7 21	4 18	2 16	1 20	3 17	3 17	7 21	5 19			
LSS for Land Surveyors & Engineers	£150	8	5	3	2	4	4	8	6			
LSS Intermediate	£150	9 22	6 19	4 17	3 21	5 18	5 18	9 22	7 20			
LSS Advanced	£150		23	20	18	22	19	19	23	21		
Leica 1200 Workshop	£150					24	25	28	27			
Trimble Workshop	£150						27	30	29			
Topcon Workshop	£150							15				

At time of printing, all dates in blue to be confirmed

## Other locations

Course	Cost	Other locations							Names of attendees
		Wakefield	Scotland	Chesterfield	Scotland	Wakefield	NE England		
LSS Introduction	£150	14	11	10	10	12	9		
LSS for Land Surveyors & Engineers	£150	15	12	11	11	13	10		
LSS Intermediate	£150	16	13	12	12	14	11		
LSS Advanced	£150	17	14	13	13	15	12		
Leica 1200 Workshop	£150	17		12	12	14			
Trimble Workshop	£150				13	15			

## Discount structure

Discounts are available on bookings made for any standard £150 a day course. Discounts are applied by adding up the total number of training places booked on a single order. They do not have to be for just one person or for just one course. Please note that unused training places cannot be carried over.

2 days	£280	3 days	£400	4 days	£500	>4 days	£120 per day
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## Bespoke training

If none of the above standard courses prove suitable, either in content, location or date please contact us for details of our Bespoke courses. These are charged per group of up to five per day and cost from £500+expenses.

## Contact details

Name	Organisation
Telephone	Fax or email
Notes, instructions and/or Order Number	
If you have any training vouchers, enter their numbers here	

**Terms and Conditions. You will receive confirmation of your booking(s) within 2 working days of our receipt of this form and detailed joining instructions will be sent by 1st Class Post or email no later than 2 weeks before the respective event. By returning this form you are entering into a formal contract. We are unable to give refunds for non-attendance on a course. All events are subject to availability. Prices exclude VAT**  
© September 2008, McCarthy Taylor Systems Ltd, Aerial View, Acorn House, Shab Hill, Birdlip, Glos. GL4 8JX UK Tel 08456 444 244 International Tel +44 1452 864244 Fax +44 (0) 1452 864194 sales@dtmsoftware.com www.dtmsoftware.com Company Reg No. 2339960 VAT No. GB 490 5915 25 All Trademarks acknowledged



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# Version 9.70 Release Edition

(No.56)



## Making a splash with LSS

We are proud to include for all LSS users a copy of the latest LSS program CD. We urge every user to update to this version as soon as possible and we will explain, in the next few pages, exactly why you should do so.

## Release of LSS version 9.70

As you know, the LSS licence fee includes not only technical support, but software updates. This time there's something for everyone with this release of LSS. If you are an experienced user there are loads of new commands for you to get your teeth into. If you're a new user then the improved interface and movie-style tutorials will be a great help and if you're somewhere in between then we hope you'll enjoy the new look program, help and tutorials.

## Passing the baton

First it was Bill Gates, then Alan Sugar and now Bryan Taylor. All three have had a huge influence in their respective IT fields, though not necessarily in the public eye.

After 23 years of Olympian effort creating, programming and honing the ubiquitous terrain modelling software which has come to be known as LSS, Bryan is awarding himself a gold medal and withdrawing from the day to day cut and thrust of running a very successful software company. He is passing the mantle on to our Sales Development Manager, Nigel Lorrinan, who will become



General Manager responsible to the Directors for the continued smooth operation of McCarthy Taylor Systems. Both Bryan Taylor and Shaun McCarthy will continue their association with the company by acting as consultants as and when required.

Nigel takes over at an opportune time as the company has just completed another record financial year which will provide a sound foundation for the re-organisation necessary to face the challenging environment that is on the horizon for all of us. Reviews are in hand to better match existing staff to the ever-changing demands of customers and to recruit new staff where they can contribute specific expertise. Initially, we will appoint another trainer / support person followed by others as the demands of the business dictate.

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Despite these major changes, we would like to assure our many users that it will be very much business as usual as far as our renowned training and support is concerned but look out for innovative new features, mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, which should make getting to grips with the many facets of LSS a quicker and more rewarding experience.

Bryan and Shaun would like to thank all their clients and staff for their continued support and hope that the changes now in train will see the company becoming even more successful over the next 23 years!

## GeoWorld 8 Roadshows

As those land surveyors amongst you will be aware, we at McCarthy Taylor work closely with survey equipment manufacturers and distributors. In fact, by keeping our finger on the pulse of technological developments we are able to provide a higher level of support for those using even the most

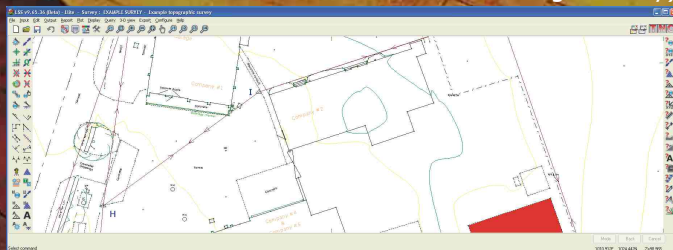
complicated survey instruments. One of the companies we work with is Leica Geosystems and they are running a series of roadshows this October. We have taken exhibition space at the first six as follows:- Tue 7<sup>th</sup>, Hopetoun House, South Queensferry, West Lothian; Thu 9<sup>th</sup>, Magna Science Park, Rotherham; Fri 10<sup>th</sup>, City of Manchester Stadium; Tue 14<sup>th</sup>, Royal Ascot, Berkshire; Wed 15<sup>th</sup>, Hinxton Hall, Cambridgeshire; Fri 17<sup>th</sup>, Ashton Court Mansion, Bristol. If you would like to attend any of these events please register at [www.geoworldroadshow.co.uk](http://www.geoworldroadshow.co.uk)

**dtmsoftware.com**

## More about LSS v9.70

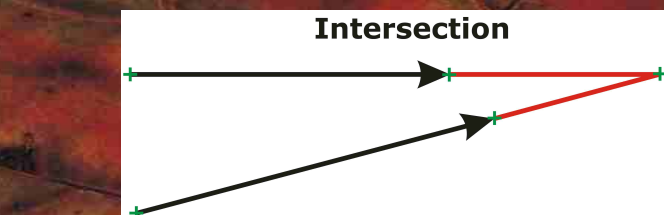
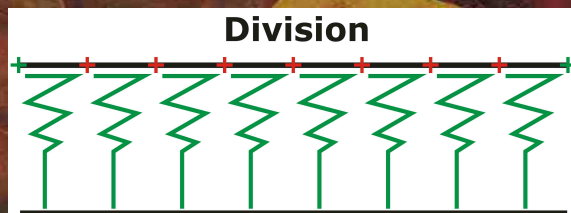
### Screen resize

Not what you'd call earth shattering, but nevertheless important for some, so we've added the ability to resize the LSS program screen just as you would expect from any Windows program. Drag and drop onto a second monitor or even run two copies of the program side by side (if you're running the LSS dongle locally).



### CAD-Pro

Great for editing surveys and tidying them up, CAD-Pro is primarily an editing tool, but because it is quality assured, it should prove to be more useful than third party CAD drawing programs for survey editing.



The commands are as follows

- 1) Distance** and offset (tape and offset command)
- 2) Intersect** where two links can be extended until they join, or one line extended until it hits the nearest line
- 3) Offset** point and line
- 4) Distance** (extend or shorten a line)
- 5) Move** Obs. perpendicular
- 6) Square** link (used for squaring-off features such as buildings)
- 7) Division** - this will insert points at a regular interval or divide a link into equal parts. It's also useful for automating the addition of tadpoles between a top and bottom of bank
- 8) Best fit** from a baseline (straighten links and points)
- 9) Best fit offset** from a baseline (as above, but maintaining a fixed offset from the baseline)

Then, not technically a CAD-Pro command, but nevertheless useful, we have '**Edit Mean Obs**' which will

allow you to select observations and mean their position. Great for joining together links which should meet at a single point but don't and getting the average position for repeated readings to the same point.

### Iconography

The first thing that users will notice with the new program will be the new program icons. In order to accommodate the extra edit commands we have added a second column of them and modernised the complete set. They look a bit odd when they are not active (solid grey blobs to be precise), but they are designed to be more descriptive of the command they represent, which should help new users get to grips with the system more quickly. Well, that's the aim anyway.

### Plane speaking

3D views are one of the fun aspects of the LSS system. Whenever we demonstrate them to potential users they always comment on how simple our approach is when compared to most other systems. Yet, when we see some of the work undertaken by our users, we are always amazed by their ingenuity and dedication. We've seen some impressive presentations and their clients have commented on how useful they find the fly-throughs and screenshots.

We didn't want to rest on our laurels, so over the past few months we have added quite a lot of new functionality which includes, though is not limited to, the following items:

**Earth curvature** and refraction adjustment - the view is curved to more accurately replicate real world conditions.

The **batch capture** of large bitmaps from named viewpoints - we believe that only a few users have really got involved in creating large and panoramic bitmaps, even though they are an invaluable tool when showing a client a design or proposal. When they are used they have received universal acceptance and one user in particular relies on them for most of his visualisation projects. However, the capture process can take several minutes and if there are 20 or more to create, time can be saved by processing them in a batch and just leaving the computer to work away.

**Face the camera** - arguably the enhancement which will have most impact on users is the ability, in the legend, to define how many planes a point feature will have when displayed in 3D view. Up until now, all point features such as trees have been drawn in a cross fashion. This has worked very well, but there are occasions when close to a feature you're looking at an edge and your eyes are drawn



away from the 3D nature of the object. By defining the feature as a single plane it will always point to face the eye in 3D view, which

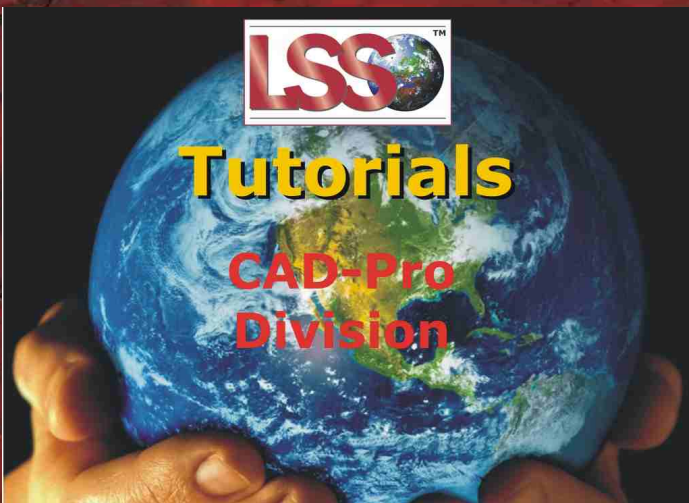
turbines or banners. By choosing 2 to 8 planes you can make a feature look more solid (use this to make a tree look bushier).



In order to benefit from these enhancements in LSS3DVantage you will need to make sure you are running the latest version, so when you have installed the v9.70 LSS program, delete all old versions of Vantage and copy the one in your LSS program installation folder.

Also, if you are dealing with wind turbines and want the blades to rotate and haven't yet worked out how this can be achieved, use one of the textures in the standard LSS list, such as R\_Turbine2 to R\_Turbine7. When the 3D view is saved as an LVM and played back in LSS3DVantage the blades will rotate (it's the 'R\_' filename prefix which determines if a texture will rotate or not). Maybe you'd like to try some other special effects. Any texture can be made to rotate simply by adding 'R\_' to the filename. Wheels on conveyors, moving water, falling gravel, fans etc. The choice is yours.

### The LSS Learning Network

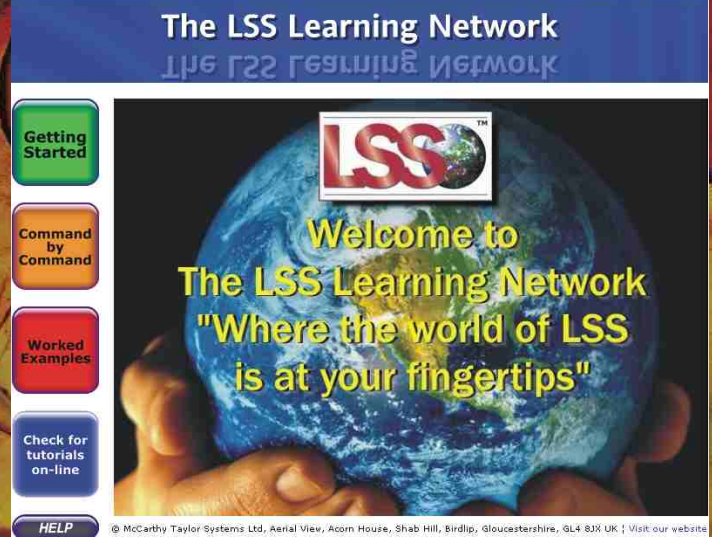


We tried this a few years ago and some of you may remember. We produced a series of screen capture movies we called tutorials and they were designed to help LSS users get to grips with the system. Unfortunately, as now, the program was developing at quite a pace and we couldn't keep up. And because they took an inordinate amount of time to produce they were never updated. That's why we went over to text-based tutorials which, while they have been useful, never recaptured the hands-on feel of watching someone using the software.

Now we've found a new product called Adobe Captivate which allows us to capture entire LSS sessions and distribute them as HTML pages with Flash movies attached. The system can annotate the presentation automatically and we can pause, edit and re-master as we go.

So, on the CD you'll see a set of 'Getting Started' Tutorials together with a 'Command by Command' section which covers every single LSS command, most of which use our standard set of 'Testdata' which we also use on our training courses.

As new tutorials are produced you can hit the web link and



see any new material we have produced since the CD was issued. You will need sound on your computer and apologies in advance that we couldn't stretch to Joanna Lumley or George Clooney for the narration. That really would have blown the development budget! You'll have to put up with the voice of the person they call in our office 'Victor' (Meldrew).

When you install the LSS program from this CD you will have a choice of whether to install the tutorials on your PC or to access them via the internet. Then, to run them from within LSS, select 'Help / Tutorials' and a Browser window will appear from which you can choose the tutorials you wish to view.

### Automatic updates

We were only discussing this in our office the other week. In a moment of nostalgia we remembered the days when an LSS program update involved everyone in the company duplicating floppy disks which we then sent out in padded envelopes. It used to take a couple of days and wasn't the most reliable method of distributing software. Our last investment was a robotic CD duplicator / printer which is capable of producing 60 CDs an hour. Even so, a full run takes almost 40 hours and at least one sleepless night. What we've done now is activated automatic software updates, so once the program on this CD is installed it will check for updates every day (or any other user-defined interval) and offer to download any new files as and when they are available. If you don't have a permanent Internet connection you can check for updates when you are connected or even download the full program manually from our website as so many currently do. Essentially, what this means is that no one should ever be using out-of-date software again.

### Licence updates

As you know, the LSS dongle is time-limited and needs an annual update code in order to keep on running. Until now, the delivery of the annual code has been by phone or email. However, with this update to the program it is

possible to get your update code 24/7 by clicking the 'Configure Licence / Update by Internet' command.

That's not to say we don't like to hear from users who prefer to call us, but the new method is just another, simpler way to get the update. Please be aware though that the checking of the licence across the internet can take up to a minute, during which time you might think your software has hung. Please be patient as our server is being contacted. Those users who have high levels of security or have a proxy server on-site may not be able to use this service. If this is the case an appropriate warning will appear.

### Small but perfectly formed

We have had USB and PC-card dongles for a few years now and over that time we've had few problems with either. Both have proven to be reliable and quite robust. However, like any device, the current USB dongle is susceptible to damage if it isn't looked after reasonably carefully and we've had a few

returned which have been trodden on or driven over. To be fair to the manufacturers, they have done their best by providing a tight fitting case and key ring, but when the dongle is attached to the computer it is somewhat vulnerable. Well, they have just announced that they will be shipping new compact and more robust dongles in the next couple of months so in future we should see fewer snapped connections, but standing on or driving over them is still not recommended.

And for those using newer laptops with Express card slots instead of the previous generation of PCMCIA card ports, you may be interested in the Express Card dongle. More expensive than the USB dongles, (£25 more to be precise) they are ideal for users who always work on laptops and don't want the hassle of remembering to pack their USB dongle whenever they work away from home.



The cost of upgrading from the old parallel port or old style USB dongle to the new compact USB is £50+VAT per dongle. It will cost £75+VAT to upgrade to a new Express Card dongle. Of course, any new licences or copies on existing licences will be supplied with the compact dongle as soon as they are available and an extra £25 for the Express Card.

### XCES April 2009

York Racecourse is the place to be on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 when the inaugural XCES exhibition will be held. Organised by the Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors, this exhibition will be of interest to anyone involved in land, engineering and hydrographic surveying, photogrammetry, GIS and visualisation. Of course, we'll be there, so please look out for more details closer to the time. Full details will be in our next Newsletter. Over the past few years we have supported the World of Geomatics / Geo8 conferences and exhibitions, but because the numbers of



visitors per exhibitor has dropped considerably over the past few years and the organisers have refused to move it around the country to allow different people to visit, we have decided to give it a miss this coming year. We hope that our regular visitors will come to XCES in York instead. All the usual exhibitors will be there and we hope the change of venue will allow more people to visit. The organisers of XCES 2009 have promised to move the show each year.

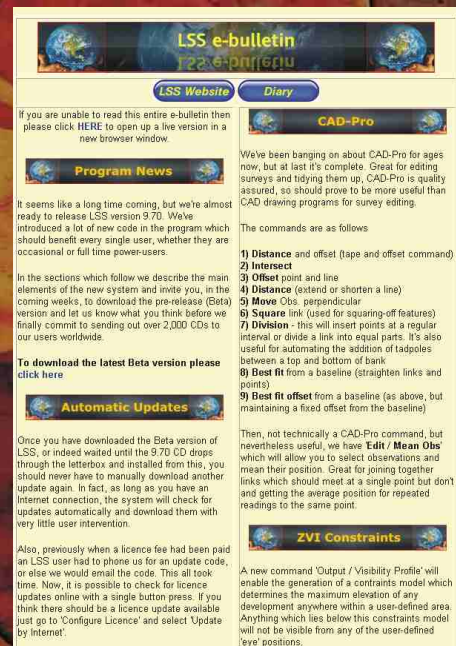
### Easy payment



Increasingly, our customers are expecting to pay for licence fees and training either on-line or over the phone with a debit or credit card. While we can accept payment by cheque or BACS we haven't yet implemented a card payment service, but are planning to do so in the next few months. There will be an update in our next Newsletter. We are also hoping to offer an online training booking and payment service in the future, though nothing has yet been finalised.

### e-bulletins

In an attempt to keep everyone informed of developments here at McCarthy Taylor Systems, we have for the past 18 months been sending out regular e-bulletins. These are electronic newsletters which are delivered direct to your email in-tray and contain bang up the minute news about program developments, training courses, exhibitions, industry gossip and anything else which takes our fancy. With a distribution in excess of 2,300 we think that these are a great way to keep everyone informed. However, every time we send these out there is a large number of what are termed 'hard bounces'. These are where the recipient's ISP has incorrectly identified the e-bulletin as SPAM or where an IT department has prevented them from being passed onto the intended recipient, or even where the email address we have is no longer valid.



If you have not received an e-bulletin from us for a while (the last one was sent out on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008 and of the 2,396 sent

there were 136 hard bounces) and you suspect that your ISP might be blocking these emails please add dtmssoftware.com to your trusted domain list or bulletin@dtmssoftware.com to your trusted email list. If you wish to subscribe to the e-bulletins you can do so by visiting www.dtmssoftware.com, click on 'e-bulletins' then 'Register'. You can also view archive bulletins in the same menu.

If you'd like us to publicise any of your work in a future Newsletter please let us know. The next issue is likely to go to print at the end of December 2008. Email nigel@dtmssoftware.com or call and ask for Nigel.

