December 2020

Attendance Triples for Chesapeake's Virtual SonarWiz Training Event in 2020

Chesapeake Technology Inc (CTI) held its annual SonarWiz training workshop virtually for the first time this year. The workshop was held via GoToWebinar on December 15, 16 and 17 for eight full hours each day. Attendance was up 300% over our in person training at last years' event. One on one Zoom meetings sign ups were available throughout the event, to dive deeper into topics and most slots were used. All sessions were recorded and broken into separate recordings and made available to attendees shortly following the event. PowerPoint slide PDFs, Quick Start Guides, new Sample Data Sets and two-week evaluation licenses of SonarWiz 7.7 were provided.

The workshop covered theory and hands-on use of SonarWiz 7.7 with focus on sidescan, sub-bottom and multibeam bathymetry. Other topics were magnetometer, real time collection and seabed classification. Traditional in person training includes on board boat demos of data acquisition, but we could not replicate that experience virtually. However, several of our guest speakers demonstrated live data collection including Saildrone, Seahorse Geomatics and Norbit.

Here is just one of the many nice comments from attendees: *"The training last week was nice and focused. It presented the standard step by step procedures for handling the survey methods and data types. The one-to-one session I had was comprehensive and my special thanks go to Chris and Jonathan for the one and a half hour we had diving into Seabed Classification based on my data from previous projects."*

Twenty-five industry partners attended the event and several of CTI's guest speakers presented during breaks between training sessions, including manufacturers and industry. These included Acoustic Imaging-Innomar, EdgeTech, GeoAcoustics, Klein, Kongsberg, Mesotech, NORBIT, Saildrone and Teledyne Marine. A program booklet with detailed information on each partner was provided to all attendees.

Polls held at the start of the class found that a majority were fairly new to SonarWiz, with 63% reporting little or no experience and only 16% self-reporting as advanced users. Industry coverage was broad, with the following breakdown: Commercial Surveying 40%, Government 24%, Education 16%, Oil & Gas 14%, Search & Rescue 5%. Most users were interested in all module types and a surprising number - 29% - using forward looking sonar. Chesapeake has recently begun adding support for FLS sonar file formats from a range of manufacturers including Mesotech M3, with Oculus and Tritech coming soon.

Harold Orlinsky, GM, closed the event with a look ahead to future developments planned for SonarWiz. Minor updates come every two to four weeks, major updates are released once or twice a year with 7.8 or later planned for next year's training. Chesapeake will be localizing the interface into 12 languages; adding directory monitoring and automated processing for Bathymetry and sub-bottom; updating import menu and other UI; improving performance on AWS and adding Azure support; more FLS support; new real time servers for more sonars (PulSAR, GeoAcoustic Compact); improved Mag and Sub-bottom modules; and much more.

Chesapeake Technology, Inc., makers of SonarWiz software, is a privately held company based in Mountain View, California. SonarWiz is used by thousands worldwide, representing clients from government and private industries, leading academic institutions, and many of the world's navies.

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Chesapeake Technology, Inc.
4906 El Camino Real, Suite 206
Los Altos, CA 94022

phone: (650) 967-2045
fax: (650) 903-4500
www.chesapeaketech.com