Bluesky and Esri UK Partnership Supports 5G and Full Fibre Networks

Bluesky, an aerial mapping company, and Esri, a global leader in spatial analytics, have come together to offer a range of software, services and data to help telecoms companies roll out the next generation of mobile and broadband services. A package of ArcGIS software, Esri UK services and high-resolution aerial photography and data from Bluesky will help the industry design and plan 5G and fibre-to-the-premise (FTTP) networks more quickly and cost effectively.

“Demand for wireless coverage and faster broadband connectivity is increasing exponentially in the UK and telecoms companies are investing billions of pounds in the installation of new wireless and fibre communication networks,” commented James Harvey, partner and alliances manager, Esri UK. “By partnering with Bluesky for the provision of the most up-to-date and accurate geographic data we can help the industry make informed decisions, improving service levels and achieving cost savings.”

“As the telecoms industry moves into a new phase it is critical that it can identify and understand the opportunities and threats presented by the natural and built environment,” added Rachel Tidmarsh, managing director of Bluesky. “The use of powerful spatial analytics, as offered by ArcGIS, to support marketing, engineering and service delivery will continue to improve performance for consumers and offer a substantial return on investment for operators.”

Aerial imagery and height models

By using ArcGIS to analyse existing network data, alongside high resolution aerial imagery, height models and other datasets such as the National Tree Map from Bluesky, telecoms companies can easily identity prime sites for new masts and the optimal routes for fibre cables.

The powerful combination of spatial data analytics technology and highly accurate and up-to-date representations of topography, land use and land cover, allow network planners to take into consideration the location and height of potential obstacles such as building, trees and street furniture. Prime mast locations can be determined and fibre infrastructure investments prioritised with fewer site visits; saving time, reducing CO_2 emissions and creating substantial cost savings.

Wireless network operators can also undertake ArcGIS analysis with the Bluesky data to identify other issues that may impact mobile signal strength, such as stone buildings and trees near masts. This deeper insight into the spatial context of a mobile network can be used to inform decisions relating to signal strength potentially improving the service for mobile phone users.