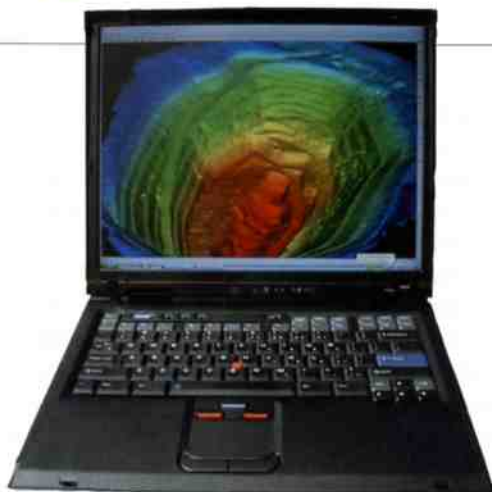


Softly smartly



The Editor looks at some of the latest developments from the software providers

Our industry has available an abundant supply of software technology, Datamine is working with its customers to help them implement and use its technology to its full potential in a standardized way across the organization. The increased need to formalize mining system implementations is driven by factors such as:

Increased turnover of operations' staff; lack of qualified personnel entering the industry in some countries; increased number of fly in fly out operations; increased complexity of technical systems available.

The reasons cited for ineffective use of technical planning and design software have traditionally focused on the software itself, rather than identifying other issues such as defining processes and rigorous systems implementation etc. This attitude is in contrast to other industries that use complex software. In many cases software suppliers have been responsible for this software-focused attitude, at least as much as the customers. This has further added

complexity to systems without really addressing the issue of how to get systems uniformly used across an organization. Mining companies are continuing to consolidate, which further drives the need for standardization of systems and consistent process. In addition the supply of technical software systems to the industry is itself highly fragmented.

Datamine's response to this change in the environment has been to develop its Enterprise system. Enterprise is not simply more software; it provides a framework, an overall methodology and an application delivery system. Datamine uses Enterprise within its overall implementation methodology and it is about specifying the mining process, documenting that process using formal methods and embodying that in the software. Datamine's software, and in particular its main product Studio, lends itself particularly well to implementation in such a formal and deployable manner. Studio is comprised of a rich toolset that

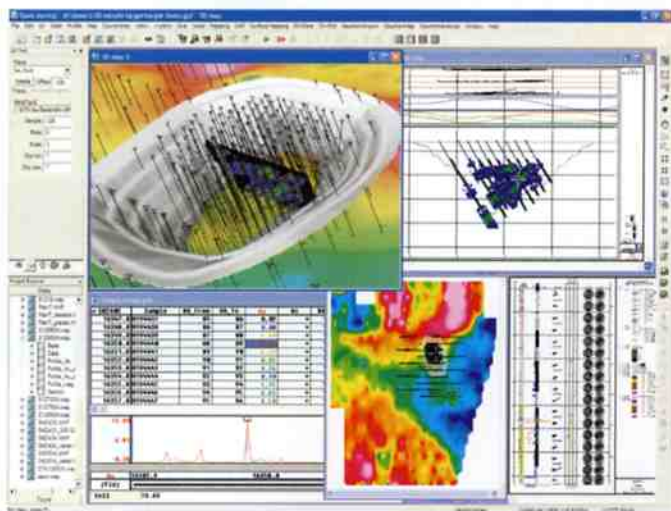
can be automated in many ways for many different operations. Examples of the extent to which the Studio tools can be used are Datamine's Mine2-4D scheduling product (developed in partnership between Datamine and AST Mining) and Datamine's grade control system Ore Controller.

Enterprise brings rigour to how mining software implementations can be carried out across an organization. The Enterprise process descriptions provide a living and dynamic specification of the software delivered to operating mines.

Mintec recently released MineSight® 3-D v3.50-01, an update to Mintec's complete geologic modelling and mine planning software which includes MineSight Operations. MineSight Operations is used for ore control and tracking the related operational data performing a critical function in mine operations. Mintec is continuing to install and successfully support MineSight Operations at large open pit mines. Currently 45 mines use MineSight Operations, which interfaces with all available sources of operational data, uses acQuire™ for blasthole data management, and produces daily plans using MineSight Interactive Planner. Not only does MineSight Operations provide tools for reconciliation, it also provides open access to operational data for Enterprise Computing applications, Mintec reports.

Geosoft innovations

Geosoft has added a new, interactive map template creation tool to streamline and simplify map making within Oasis montaj. Users can now interactively create customized map templates for use within Oasis montaj. The template can be used to



Geosoft screen capture showing a 3D representation of drillhole integrated with geochemical and geophysical data.