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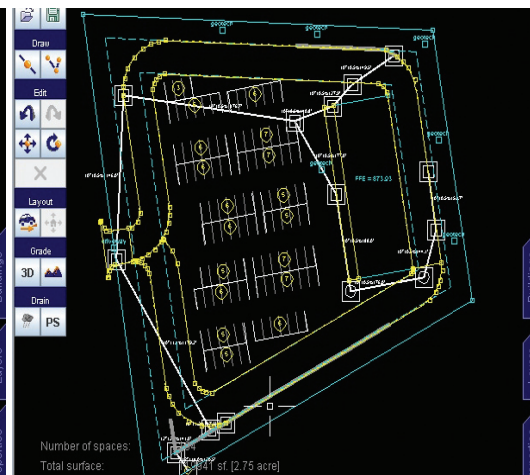
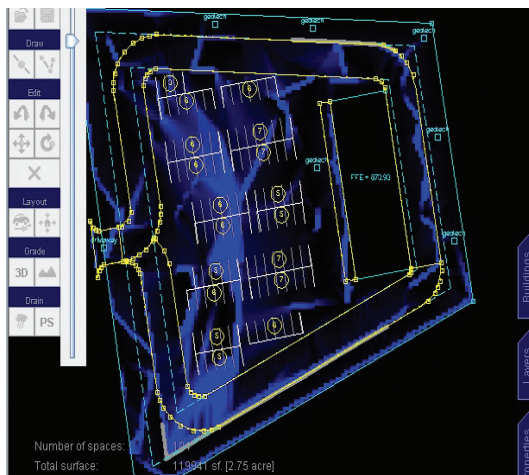
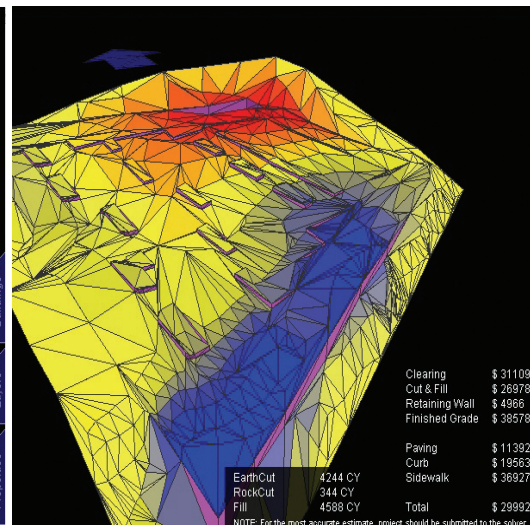
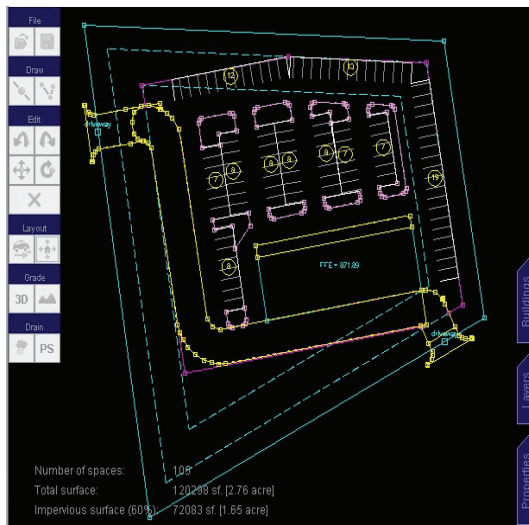
SITE DEVELOPMENT

New Analysis Tool Zips Through Site Development Alternatives

By Tom Sawyer

Like a spy-gadget that speeds through thousands of electronic code combinations before triumphantly unlocking a door, new software and services review tens of thousands of site planning options to recommend a handful of optimal solutions in a relative flash.

SITEOPS, from BLUERIDGE Analytics, Charlotte, N.C., hit the market on May 16, just in time to debut at the International Council of Shopping Centers annual trade show in Las Vegas. It is a combination of CAD-conversant input software and a hosted, computational processing service that throws heavy-weight horsepower into analyzing the site layout, grading and



▲ Layout, Grading & Stormwater Drainage Optimizers

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drainage alternatives after subscribers have specified what they desire.

“It tries a lot of stuff until it comes up with something good,” says Mike Detwiler, BLUERIDGE president and CEO. He likens SITEOPS to computer chess in the way the software analyzes masses of variables and prunes the less desirable options away to winnow down to the best.

The input side of the process is an online tool for importing site data and describing the development parameters you need to meet and the project you hope to achieve. Then the data is checked in to BLUERIDGE’S service for processing, which runs through thousands and thousands of combinations of alternatives over the course of six to 24 hours, returning its best recommendations for efficient site development. The current release analyzes single pad developments and considers excavation loading, access roads and parking lots, retention ponds and stormwater drainage.

“That’s part of the beauty of the system,” says J. Dan Pardue, who retired a year ago as vice president of engineering and construction for Lowe’s



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▲ Bad grading decisions can lock in undesirable consequences.

Cos. Inc., North Wilkesboro, N.C. “It allows you to do a quick assessment of a project and get it into the decision process faster.”

He says he first heard of the concept for the product about three years ago when the founders of BLUERIDGE Analytics asked to meet with him. They described what they wanted to create and asked if the retailer would work as a beta tester to help guide development. “We weren’t

sure they would ever be back,” the now-retired Pardue says. Lowe’s uses the system now.

BLUERIDGE is offering a free trial at its Website, <http://www.siteops.com>. Introductory pricing starts at \$995 per project, until June 30. Subscriptions are based on the number of submissions and acreage. Future product releases will include multi-pad site plans and residential developments.



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