

GIS Tips & Tricks

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Tired of Looking at Tiny Icons in TerraScan? Here's a Solution...

Sometimes small improvements and useful tips pay off big in terms of time and convenience, especially when using geospatial software in a production mode. Small icons, crowded onto toolbars, can confuse new users and infuriate long-time users. Then, some software products require the user to hold down multiple keyboard keys and/or a combination of mouse buttons to navigate the interface. This is the case with the Terrascan MDL (MicroStation Development Library) application that runs within MicroStation. While Terrascan MDL with MicroStation is the “industry standard” for lidar editing, here is a tip to update Terrascan MDL user interface.

When loading the Terrascan MDL Application into MicroStation you have a small docked Window with 16 icons to choose tools from. The standard method requires a combination of (1) continuous firm pressure (push down/click) with the left mouse button each icon, to (2) activate all the sub tools that can be opened. Then, (3) you have to move your cursor down the row of tools, making sure not to let up with the left mouse hold to select the tool you want to use, as in the “standard” sequence, Figures 1-4. Throughout this process, a user may need to search through several options to find the desired toolbar.

This Terrasolid “active workflow ribbon” library allows the Terrasolid toolbar to be viewed in the typical MicroStation/ CAD ribbon format rather than the “standard” Terrascan mode. The new active workflow ribbon has condensed the tools into fewer tabs (9 for Terrascan), and with each tab you now can see the tools across the ribbon, as in the ribbon sequence, Figures 5-8. Each tool is clearly described and the

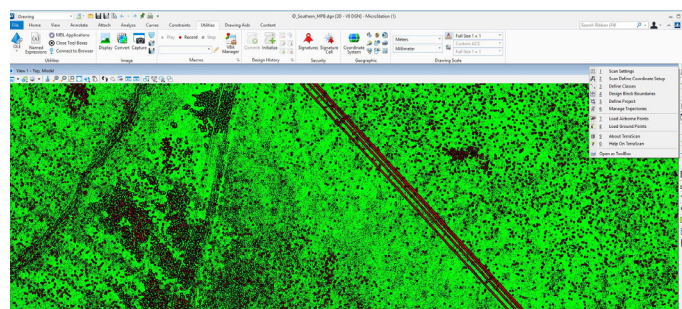


Figure 2: Step 2—Standard TerraScan interface- Mouse-click to open panel of icons.

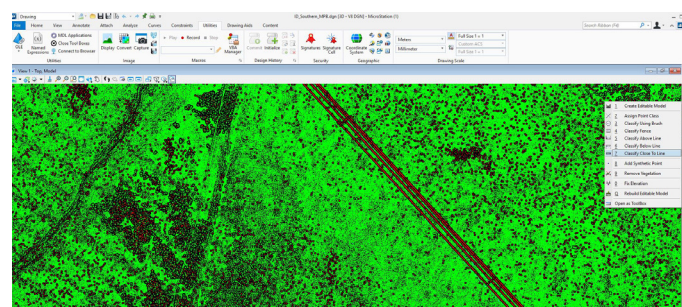


Figure 4: Step 4—Standard TerraScan interface-After dragging the mouse through the interface, the selected tool activates.

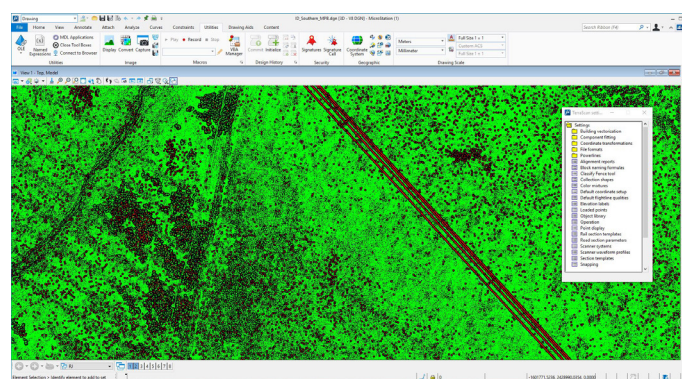


Figure 3: Step 3—Standard TerraScan interface- Tool panel opens after additional mouse-click; two clicks deep into interface.

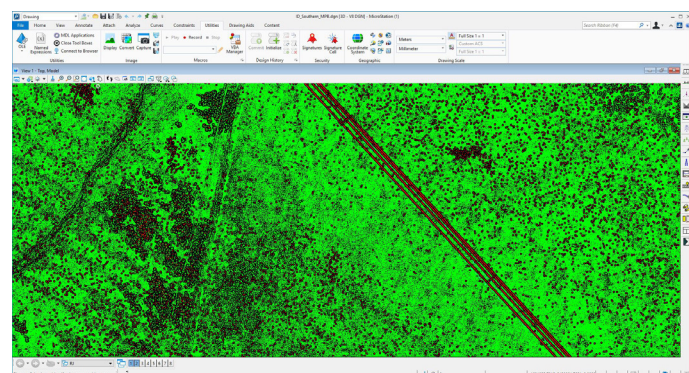


Figure 1: Step 1— Standard TerraScan interface – no ribbon.

Photogrammetric Engineering & Remote Sensing
Vol. 87, No. 3, March 2021, pp. 153–154.
0099-1112/21/153–154

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and Remote Sensing
doi: 10.14358/PERS.87.3.153

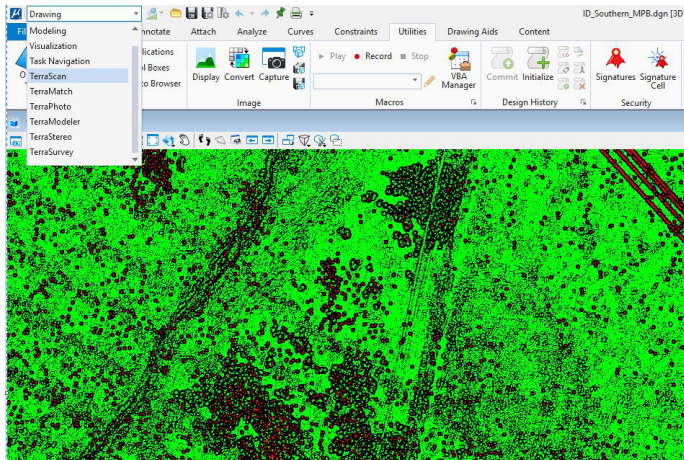


Figure 5: Step 1—The Active Workflow Ribbon – once design library has been installed, all available Terrasolid ribbons are visible.

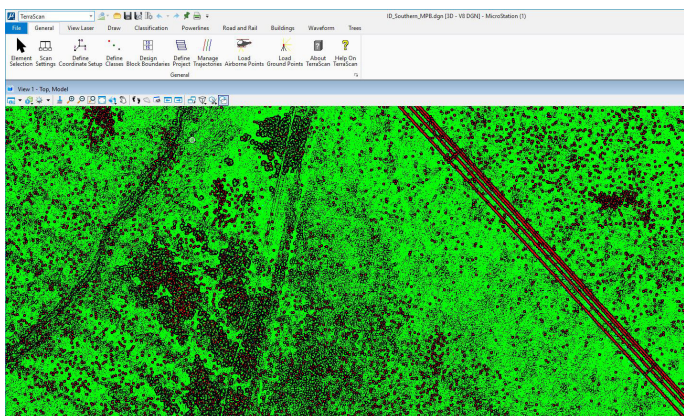


Figure 6: Step 2—The Active Workflow Ribbon – after selecting the Terrascan Tools workflow ribbon, the 16 subgroups are now displayed as 9 tabs on the ribbon

icon symbol ready for you to click and open the tool. This streamlining results in fewer click and drags, and eliminates searching through multiple levels of interface. The active workflow ribbon library does not replace the “standard” interface, so if you still prefer the standard interface, both options are available on-screen.

For additional installation instructions, Geocue has a support document at: <https://support.geocue.com/terrasolid-design-library/>.

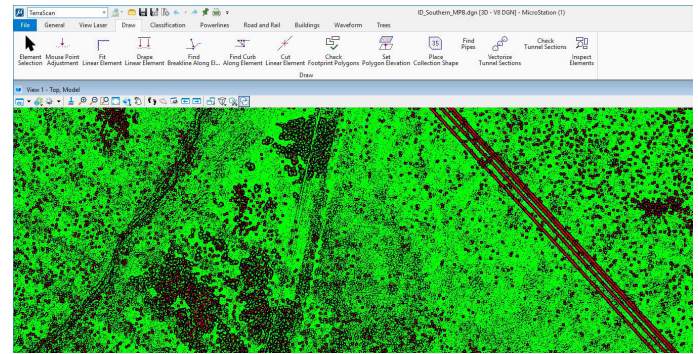


Figure 7: Step 3—The Active Workflow Ribbon – Example of all available Draw Tab tools with descriptions of each written out below the icon.

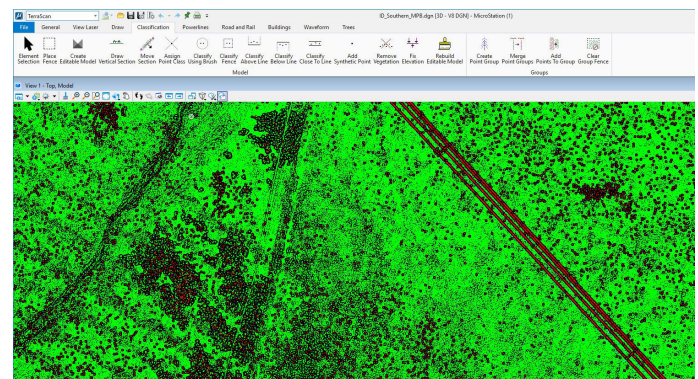


Figure 8: Step 4—The Active Workflow Ribbon – all classification sub-tools now can be found under a single tab.

And it is that easy to update the Terrascan interface!

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