

# Connecting

‘Connecting hydrography’ is a theme that is likely to become significant in the coming years and I would like to briefly explore why it is important to stay abreast. I put connecting hydrography in brackets because it could have two, three or even more meanings.

The first way of looking at connecting hydrography could be as a glue between different, adjacent fields: offshore oil & gas, geophysics, engineering, e-navigation and shipping. ‘Connecting hydrography’ is then seen as a concept that is in the middle of all kinds of maritime techniques, with a small contribution to all techniques making it necessary in all of them.

Secondly, I would like to explore the connection between hydrography and real-time information, for instance, on currents or weather data on board of a ship – or think ahead with me – near real-time hydrography through satellite imagery? Let’s also think about connecting hydrography across borders, between maritime states, for instance, or to the surveyors on land.

The last two ‘connections’ are particularly interesting, but still need to take place within the profession, within the boundaries of the field and probably also within the boundaries of knowledge. The first concept explores a more hypothetical, hitherto unknown situation, which could bring opportunities that we have as yet not thought of. Such a concept would be good for the business and the profession: it places the hydrographic surveyor in the middle of many processes in the maritime environment and yes, the blue economy. Therefore, I think it is vital to search for the potential to connect with hydrography. Without this potential the whole concept is deemed to fail. It requires an open mind from both hydrographic surveyors and companies alike. It requires a pioneering attitude in times when work is sometimes scarce and jobs are no longer for life. It requires business leaders who dare to steer away from the vision. Over the years I’ve met a lot of these open-minded, pioneering and inquisitive hydrographic professionals – stand alone or those searching for new ventures for their companies. But there are also many professionals out there who are happy just doing what they have done for years: it is safe, there will always be a need for hydrographic data and why change things if they are working as they are? But remember it is vital to develop a vision and think across borders to ensure that the field of hydrography is kept alive and that it counts as the bridging technique: once again as the connection!

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<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/article/connecting>

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