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New low cost GPS simulator packs a powerful punch

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Racelogic's new simulator LabSat – set to revolutionise GPS development

As in-car navigation and GPS mobile phones become more widespread, Racelogic's new GPS simulator, LabSat, released this week, is set to transform the way manufacturers test and develop navigation devices.

With its ability to record and replay real-world data, the new product answers the demand for efficient and accurate testing of the increasing numbers of professional and consumer GPS featured products in the market.

One of the problems with conventional GPS simulation until now has been the inability to reproduce real world conditions accurately. The need to understand the effects of phenomena such as multipath reflections, atmospheric effects, and dropouts on devices has therefore meant that products must be taken out into the field and laboriously tested. Because conditions are always changing, there is little consistency between tests.

The capacity of LabSat to record and replay real-world data means that common conditions can be repeatedly reproduced on the bench, cutting development times as manufacturers no longer need to undertake multiple, often unreliable physical tests in the field. Using a computer with a USB 2.0 connection, it records raw signals from a GPS antenna directly to hard disk, with no limitations on the number of satellites being tracked or the length of the recording. When the data is replayed, the GPS engine under test will re-create all the movement and satellite reception encountered, including all original multipath and atmospheric effects.

Alternatively, for data without artefacts, it can simulate dynamic scenarios anywhere in the world using the optional SatGen software. External modules allow additional signals to be recorded, such as inertial, serial or CAN data, and replayed at the same time, perfectly synchronised with GPS.

Incorporating all these features into a product the size of a paperback book, LabSat is highly portable. For use out of the box, it comes bundled with a 250 GB USB drive with pre-loaded recordings included. And with prices starting from £5,950, LabSat is a worthy competitor to larger, more expensive systems. For more info, go to www.labsat.co.uk

Racelogic design and manufacture innovative electronic systems for the GPS industry. Based in the UK, they have developed GPS data-loggers, Video-overlay systems, and GPS Simulators since 1992.

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