

9 January 2009

By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor



WorldWide Telescope
Microsoft

[WorldWide Telescope Solstice Borealis Beta](#)

Version 2.2.41.1

Back in May 2008, Microsoft was unveiling a service designed to deliver a new perspective on the universe. Almost a year after the initial introduction of the first [WorldWide Telescope](#), Microsoft has kicked up a notch its desktop-centric sky observatory. On January 7, 2009, the Microsoft Research team building WorldWide Telescope introduced version 2.2.41.1, an update codenamed "Solstice Borealis." The new release of the WorldWide Telescope, and the first consistent upgrade since the service was introduced, brings to the table a range of improvements and new features.

[Chris Pendleton](#), Virtual Earth tech evangelist, revealed that users would concurrently be able to find information in the National Virtual Observatory Cone Registry. "Search through the United States NVO registry to find information about astronomical bodies. You'll find this under Search, then VO Cone Search / Registry Lookup. Once the screen comes up, you can enter anything into the NVO Registry Title Like box, then click the NVO Registry Search button," he stated.

According to Pendleton, the new search features will make it easy to access data related to the base URL of a specific document, along with a variety of information on the items queried, including "RA - right-ascension in the J2000 coordinate system (decimal degrees); Dec - declination in the J2000 coordinate system (decimal degrees); Search Radius - search radius in decimal degrees; Verbosity - specifies how many columns are to be returned in the resulting table, with low meaning the bare minimum and high being the full width of the resulting table, which may be hundreds of columns," Pendleton added.

The new WorldWide Telescope 2.2.41.1 codename Solstice Borealis also brings to the table Stereo 3D Views. Pendleton explained that the updated WWT supported, at the same time, Anaglyph 3D view. Users can take advantage of the stereoscopic view, which is able to blend and support normal and anaglyph views via a split screen. In addition, WWT Solstice Borealis offers Image Alignment - "super-easy pivot align feature. Just load any image, align one correspond star, right click on star centroid, and dragging any other star allows you to scale and rotate the view to exactly match the background. Map Cruncher for the universe? Use CTRL+E," Pendleton described.

WorldWide Telescope Beta is available for download [here](#).