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PETROG release 4.0.1.0 is available to download

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## **PETROG Newsletter July 2017**

### **Contents**

1. PETROG v4.0.1.0 release.
2. Licencing
3. What's New

### **PETROG v4.0.1.0 release**

*N.B. A new licence code will be required for v4. Please see 'Licencing' below.*

Version 1 of PETROG was released for the Windows 95 operating system. It supported analogue cameras through a custom frame grabber card and communicated with the stepping stage via a serial ("null modem") cable. The database management system was one originally released on floppy disc. Since then we have maintained support for successive Microsoft operating systems, changed the communications to USB as serial ports were phased out, and we now support cameras through Firewire (A and B) and USB (2.0 and 3.0). The database management is now generic SQL, with the PostgreSQL software ("The world's most advanced open source database") supplied as standard but others supported.

In parallel with our support for ever-changing third party software and hardware, the functionality offered by PETROG has continued to grow, keeping us at the forefront of digital petrography. When we introduced the stitched photo-montage, or mosaic, in order to be able to see objects or features larger than a single view of view, we had to explain what we meant, whereas now the technology is widely available and widely used, but we still think that having it embedded within a petrographic data management system offers enormous advantages.

We are now releasing version 4, and again the choice of a major revision number, calling it version 4, instead of v3.8, is because of new technology. Version 4 will support Android and Apple devices for the first time, allowing data entry via adaptive softkeys displayed on tablets.

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Keeping up to date with the changing hardware and software environment in which we all work requires a considerable recurring effort on our part. Adding new features is also considerable effort and, even though each individual user is unlikely to use anywhere near all of them, the overall improvement to the working environment of cumulative small improvements is noticeable. We would therefore ask you all to check that your software maintenance is up to date and to check how to pay if not. We appreciate that paying relatively small amounts of money can be an onerous task, dealing with accounting procedures in large organisations, finding appropriate budgets to bill to, etc., and we are happy to look at specific solutions for each user organisation. We also now accept PayPal payments.

## Licencing

Your purchase of PETROG includes a perpetual licence to use the software (technically, on one computer, but we adopt the generally accepted definition of 'reasonable use'). We also include all updates during the first year. After that, we restrict availability of software updates to those with a current maintenance agreement. This is enacted in two ways: through a licence key, supplied by us, which is identified by the stepping stage control box, and by a password on the download site. An out-of-date maintenance agreement does not in any way interfere with the operation of PETROG, it simply restricts downloading newer versions.

If you already have a v3 licence key and a username and password for the v3 download area of our website, these will continue to be usable indefinitely. If you have a current maintenance agreement, then your username and password will automatically be extended to include the v4 download area but you will need to enter a new licence key. We will send this to the e-mail address or addresses we have on file. If you are not sure of your maintenance status, please e-mail [support@petrog.com](mailto:support@petrog.com)

The licence key is entered once only (it has to be entered whilst running 'As Administrator', so it can be written to the computer's registry).

If you need to re-install the software, for instance onto a new computer or after a disk failure, then the username and password will enable you to download a complete installation. Entering the licence key will enable it to run. If your maintenance agreement is not up to date, you will only be able to download the last version before it expired.

If you receive notification of an update, you will be able to download using your username and password, provided your password is still valid (i.e. your maintenance agreement is up to date).

## What's New

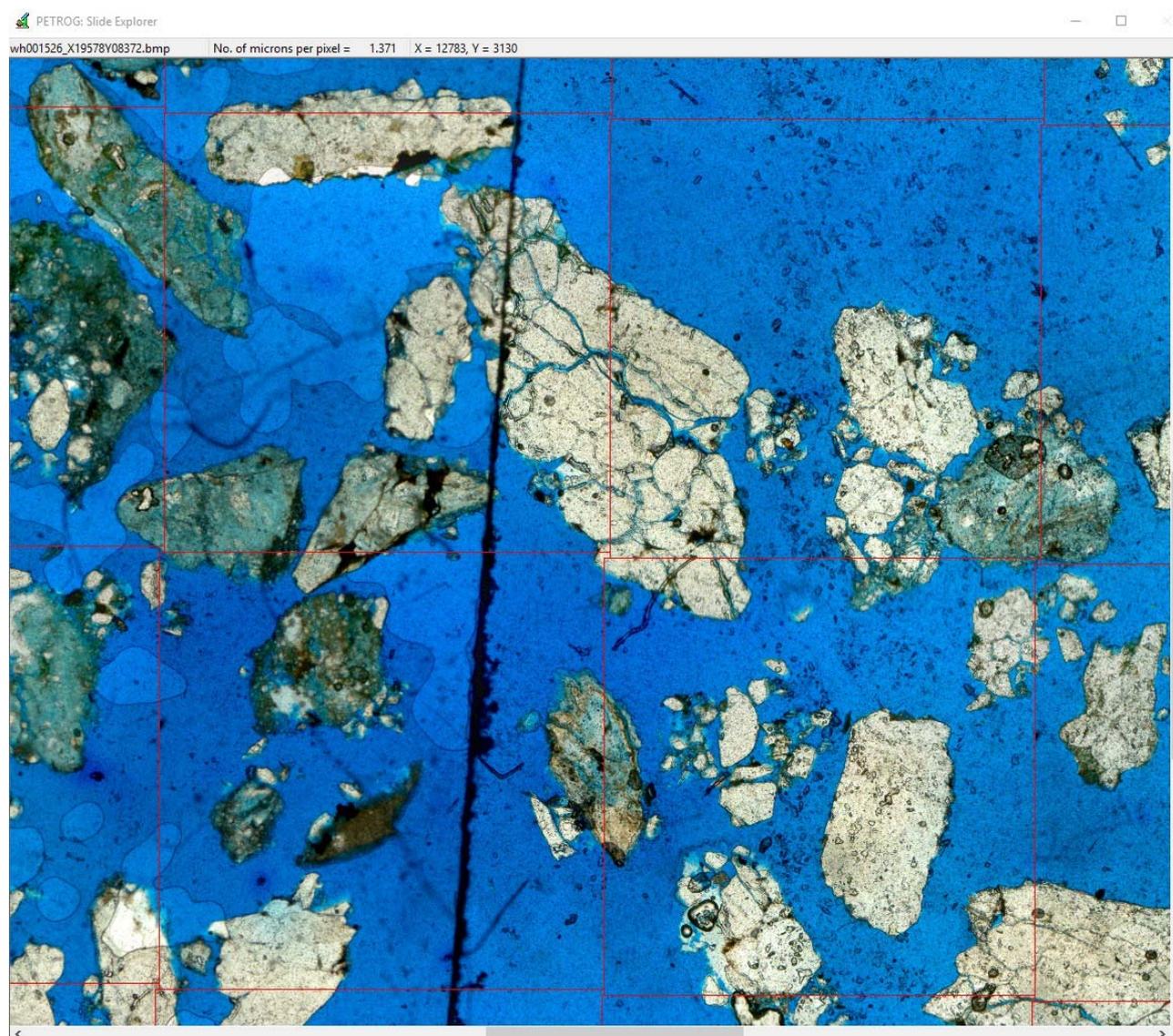
What is new in this version? Not everything will be ready at once, some features are in final testing, but the major technology changes are:

"ScreenCaster" - Targeted at educational users, this allows a whole class to see the image from the microscope on their own tablet device via wireless simultaneous broadcast.

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tap of the keyboard, without losing the additional data essential for full petrographic analysis. Available also for PetrogLite, the communication between Android or Apple tablet and Windows computer is wireless.

Improved stitching - Since introducing stitching for viewing large features and objects, we have incrementally expanded its capabilities and added specific features to make it easier to create and manage entire slide images, either as backups or archives for the glass slide or polished block or for sharing the slide with a remote location.



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HDRI and easier control over camera settings - We introduced 'pre-sets' in v3, to store specific camera settings as an entire set of light and image parameters, for each objective and each light conditions (e.g. XPL, PPL), so that the camera settings can be changed simply by noting that the objective or filter has changed. The peculiar demands of imaging rocks and other petrographic materials, particularly under crossed polars, mean that it is difficult to create settings that allow detail to be seen in both nearly transparent and nearly opaque materials, both under the same settings. HDRI (for High Dynamic Range Imaging) is shorthand for a technique in which more than one image is captured over the field of view and combined to use each where it is giving the best image. PETROG's pre-sets allow it perform these tasks with imperceptible delay.

Software improvements include:

Greatly expanded data import capabilities for transferring data from other systems and spreadsheets;  
Better locale-dependence and checks for mismatches from PostgreSQL to Microsoft and inconsistencies in Microsoft's;

Windows remembering the last position in which they were displayed, to make it easier to create custom layouts, was causing a problem when hardware changed (especially if downsizing from two monitors to one). New checks for hardware make it easier to recover. More windows and dialogs have been added to the list of those saved (if we have missed some that you particularly want to be remembered, please let us know) and layouts, which are already user-dependent rather than database-dependent, will soon allow a new user to adopt saved settings from an existing user as part of an overall updating of the hierarchy of default settings;

More options on grain size histograms, including better control of which grain types to include (available only when concurrent textural and compositional logging has been performed, of course);

New petrographic data "styles". Originally only targeted at sedimentary petrography, there are now application-specific versions of PETROG for coal petrography, ceramic archaeology, concrete petrography, cement clinker and metamorphic / igneous petrography. All installations have the

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being added.

Regards

The PETROG team

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