

Date

Tuesday 17 July 2007

Title of session

Plenary: New Technologies - Disruptive or Enabling?

Name of presenter/chair

Chair: Brendan Boyle, Chief Executive, Land Information New Zealand

Rapporteurs

Colin Henderson, Ordnance Survey and Selena Patton, Defence Geographic Centre

Presentation title: The times they are a-changing

An opening video clip from the 1936 Charlie Chaplin classic 'Modern Times' gave the audience something to think about in terms of the rapidly changing world of technology. It serves to remind us that the challenges of dealing with disruption are still the same – understanding the power and promise of the technology, and most crucially, managing the human effects.

Brendan explained how modern technologies can be deemed as disruptive when they disrupt the customer base of established companies. Examples of this have been internet shopping impacting on the business of high street shops, and classified ads in local papers being overtaken by internet auction sites such as e-bay.

New entrants saw new types of customers for their technologies. Open source software was initially dismissed by traditional software firms enabling start-ups to capture the market and mind share. Most traditional software firms now embrace open source. Online retailers stole market share from traditional shops that were afraid to cannibalise their storefront channels.

Disruptive technologies are initially immature compared to traditional technologies and are unable to service the needs of mainstream customers. They target the low end of the conventional market or completely new market places. Over time disruptive technologies mature enabling them to compete with and usually better conventional technologies on price, convenience and performance. This happens across the market except at the highest end. History shows us that the fall in market share is rapid and dramatic, decades of hard work winning market share can disappear over a period of months.

The biggest disruption in the Geospatial world is likely to come from synergies between technologies. For instance, wireless networks, GPS and RFID feeding information into data

warehouses. The resultant datasets then being used in real-time advertising, market analysis, and criminal investigation with location based intelligence at the core.

While new technologies can be disruptive, they also have tremendous potential in re-shaping the geospatial industry in innovative and exciting ways.

Questions	Answers