

Date

Thursday 19 July 2007

Title of session

Plenary 2: Beyond Mapping - Geo-enabling Government and the Citizen

Name of presenter/chair

Chair: Karen Siderelis, Associate Director for GEOSPATIAL Information, United States Geological Survey

Presenter: David Maguire, Director of Products and International, ESRI

Rapporteurs

Nicholas Hutchings, Defence Geographic centre and Jenny Harding, Ordnance Survey

Presentation title: The National Mapping Agency of the Future: Technology, Science and Business Trends

Exploring the changing role of NMOs, the presentation looked at the implications of trends in technology, science and business through a series of points:

1 In the Information Age, change is the norm.

The pace of change is becoming faster and the impact more profound. Technology is a major agent of change. Take for example the capacities of the latest portable data storage devices which may be seen as a valuable asset and at the same time a security risk and IP licensing challenge. The evolutionary stage of current geo-technologies can be viewed against the Gartner 'Hype Cycle'.

2 Business isn't what it used to be.

For many the focus is currently on managing and maintaining data, but there is growing focus among others on service.

3 It's all about Geographic Information Systems.

Within GIS the same database and software can be used for many different purposes, enabling production of multiple products for multiple people. While it is OK to separate activities of creation and maintenance of different types of geographic data, users want integrated information through all scales.

**4 We've forgotten geography.**

Cartographers used to make important decisions about what and how to represent geographic information. To some extent progress has gone backwards on the understanding of geography due to the focus on other disciplines (e.g. computer science). There are some areas of progress (e.g. Ordnance Survey GB semi-automated small scales data generation from large scales data). However not everything can be solved by algorithms - better understanding is needed of data modelling concepts and how the actual environment changes (what needs to be known).

**5 NMOs are no longer in control.**

The future is about bringing together information to produce something greater than the sum of the parts. In the example of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0, movement has been seen from taxonomy to 'folksonomy' focus, where people using the content are tagging and organising information with respect to purpose. There are new providers of many different types of geographic information.

In conclusion, ESRI shares parallels with national mapping and charting organisations, in that it is important to be able to adapt to change. Organisations need to be service orientated, developing partnerships and promoting quality and integrity.

Questions	Answers
Note - Qs and As for this session were part of a panel discussion, reported in a separate document.	