Date

Thursday 19 July 2007

Title of session

Workshop 5 - Introduction to Neo-geography

Name of presenter/chair

Chair: David Overton, Business Development & Innovation Manager, Ordnance Survey

Presenters: David Overton, Business Development & Innovation Manager, Ordnance Survey

John Abbott, Technical Consultant, Ordnance Survey

Name of rapporteur

Tim Martin, Ordnance Survey

David Overton and John Abbott, both from Ordnance Survey, spent the final workshop of the week discussing the latest developments in the fascinating world of Neo-geography and Ordnance Survey's involvement in the Web 2.0 phenomenon.

David began the session by identifying the market developments that have given rise to the growing interest in data sharing using the latest technical developments. With the most important development being the role of the social network sites such as facebook, myspace and YouTube which has spawned multi-million user communities.

John followed this overview by identifying the key concepts that are considered to be the Principles of Web 2.0, all of which could play a significant role in a business' engagement with their customers. John highlighted that within the Geospatial Industry the edge is the data. By combining that data edge with the Wisdom of Crowds wrapped in an engaging user interface a business could hold a potentially lucrative position within a market.

David and John then continued to give details about a variety of different projects which are all, in one way or another, trying to include some of the Web 2.0 principles. For example, Orchestra, a collaborative European project aimed at creating an Open Architecture for Risk Management is using open source software. John then described Ordnance Survey's OpenSpace API, which is set to be released before December this year. The API would allow uses to create Mashups, for example, mapping their favourite walks, or bicycle rides and sharing them with a community of like minded people.

John then highlighted the potential of using an online community to continually improve a perpetual beta data product. He provided examples of this within the Geospatial Industry of companies who now have an online application for customers to highlight omissions or errors in their data.

In wrapping up both presenters highlighted the fact that any business can begin to adopt the Web 2.0 principles to enhance their internal processes and improve their data by utilising the communities they serve.

Questions	Answers
Andrew Coote (ESRI, UK) Why is Ordnance Survey involved in Orchestra?	Ordnance Survey needs to understand how information is required and made available to the user now and in the future. Projects like this allow an insight to these requirements.
David Spackman (MapAction)	Stated that the majority of disasters MapAction has had to respond to are in areas where there is no data. And that their rapid responders require rapid data and a method such as that used to create OpenStreetMap might be the answer.
Andrew Coote: Will the data be maintained 12, 24, 36 months down the line?	The data providers all have a passion for mapping. It is likely that once a national coverage is created its maintenance will be achieved by the local population. The use of Mapping Parties such as that on the Isle of Wight is a good example of getting a group of like minded people together to map an area.
David Spackman	Believed that data collection could be an excellent school activity.
Eric Loubier (Canada): What about validation?	The majority use a Wiki based approach. If there is a feature already there it is amended, this therefore doesn't require versioning. Validation is always problematic, but with a big community it is almost self validating.
Malcolm Havercroft (Ordnance Survey)	Described how Ordnance Survey uses CODES data for pre-build houses, Ordnance Survey validates this data by using its field staff. Malcolm also mentioned

	how users could build up a score, such as those used on Ebay.
Tomasz Kubik (Poland) Queried the possibility of data overlapping.	Due to the setup, a feature is altered rather than being replaced, therefore there would be no overlap.