

Date

Monday 13th July 2009

Title of session

Plenary: Challenges of economic turbulence on mapping and how mapping can help solve it

Commercial World: Understanding the value of geographic information in turbulent times

Name of presenter/chair

Professor Željko Bačić, Director General, State Geodetic Administration Croatia - Chair

Steven Feldman, Principal, ConsultingWhere - Presenter

Name of rapporteurs

Danny Hyam & Jenny Green

- Steven started by saying he was pleased to be at the event. He wanted to talk about National Mapping & Cadastral Agencies (NMCA) and their work with the commercial sector based on examples in the UK. He wanted to focus on learning from the commercial sector and how to work with them.
- Budgets under pressure – lots of graphs with a downward turn, your budget, customers budgets
- Return on Investment – Need to find an RoI (return on investment), you and your customers in government, commercial sector, land registry etc.
- Value – There needs to be a tangible value, not just a story or marketing. Given a choice of investing in a NMCA or a hospital, there is more tangible benefit in the hospital.
- Cost does not Equal Value – The cost to build something is not the same as the worth to the customer, the customer dictates the worth. Geodata is expensive, but it does not mean it is valuable. He used the example of OS MasterMap in Great Britain; in his opinion outside of government and utilities it has not been taken up as it is too expensive.
- Navteq – mentioned that they do not do much better than government in terms of creating data, it costs them 46% of their revenue to create the data.
- Free – E.g. Google has made global street level mapping available for free. We are now working in an environment where data costs nothing.
- 90% - in a large project data costs 75-90% of the cost of the project, but data is now free so we are in a changed world.

- Used an example of “check before you dig”. A start up company with a £50K budget with an unknown number of customers. They had an initial quote of £30K for the data per year. Searching more got them the data for £5K for 1 million transactions. Data ended up as 10% of their solution.
- We are National Mapping Agencies – the legal body, the cadastre
- Street maps are becoming commodities – most people want a street map not cadastral data.
- Strengths and Weaknesses – the same things that make NMCAs strong limit their ability to produce innovative products at street level.
- Egyptian example – 4 years ago contacted by Egypt, came to Ordnance Survey, went to Steven Feldman who suggested open source for Cairo. Between 2008 and 2009, with GPS illegal until April 2009 a volunteer production force, with volunteered photography has created a highly detailed map, freely available. Why? because the Egyptian Cadastre has fantastic maps but they are all locked away, so they made it again for free.
- What to do as a NMCA – Focus on strengths and “Stick to your knitting” and do it well.
- Cooperation – engage with commercial sector, engage with opensource to get your products into theirs.
- Thank you.

Questions/Comments	Answers
<p>Professor Jacqueline McGlade, European Environment Agency: With a trading approach, such as the Meteorological Office, it is a danger that they can get too far from the customer, such as with the weather model for the Oil and Gas industry. Will mapping agencies end up supply to government and leave the commercial sector?</p>	<p>Steven Feldman: That may be the answer. It is costly to integrate and maintain a land database.</p>