

Visualising GeoData

What Is It?

GIS (Geographic Information Systems) have been around for several decades. But the recent launch of web-based, open systems such as Google Maps, Yahoo Maps and Google Earth have suddenly made a whole new generation of affordable (even free), rapidly developed GIS applications possible.

Google Maps and Yahoo Maps

Google Maps and Yahoo Maps enable programmers to embed browseable maps into their own applications. A simple XML language determines what needs to be plotted on the map, and this is created on-the-fly by the application from the source data.

Google Earth

In contrast GoogleEarth is a visualisation service. It provides a complete, browseable Earth using satellite imagery ranging from 15m to 1m resolution. At the highest resolutions individual cars can be seen on roads. The Earth model even includes height data, so the whole image can be thrown into relief, showing hills and valleys, and in some cases individual building heights. Developers create overlays for GoogleEarth again using an XML based language. Users can then bring in as many overlays as they want for a particular task. The overlays may be image based (e.g. current clouds or weather radar), or data points (e.g. Houses for sale, planning applications, places in the news etc).



Why Is It Important?

Speed, cheapness and access. New GIS applications be working in days, or even hours, and made available to every user on the Internet.



How Can I Use It?

Almost all of the traditional GIS applications are possible – from mapping climate and weather data, to looking at social patterns, advertising, housing and so on. The consumer aspect though brings in new possibilities such as mapping houses for sale against local social information and amenities, tracking news stories as they happen across the globe, combining traffic and travel information, and even providing virtual tours complete with images, panoramas and movies.

Next Steps

If you have data or information that is associated with locations then give us a call. If you have an easily accessible set of data we can probably get a **free** demo up and running for you in a couple of days. So contact us, and see your data in a whole new way.

Technology Briefing

More Information

Google Earth: <http://earth.google.com>

NewsGlobe: www.daden.co.uk/newsglobe

Google Maps: <http://maps.google.co.uk/>

Yahoo Maps: <http://maps.yahoo.net/>

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