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Welcome to The Harlow Report - GIS

Welcome to the 7th issue of 2003! This issue is filled with information that you should know. You will learn about a new idea in GIS – something called “interoperability kits.” Blackout says it all quite succinctly about the, well, the blackout. No one likes to be unsuccessful, so we added an article on the traits of the Successful Manager by Kathleen O’Connor

Featured Articles

GIS Enterprise Interoperability Kits. Imagine not caring what the file format or creator looked like. Just imagine a GIS world where one size finally fit all.

Blackout Want a bird’s eye view of the blackout? You got it here.

The Successful Manager There are so many aspects to management! Your staff responsibilities run the gamut from goal–setting to hiring through performance appraisals. Here are 12 tips that will help.

More to Know

Out of the Box Our collection of news events that may indirectly effect your GIS project. Events are categorized by State and Local Government, Technology, and Utilities.

GIS Net Surfing Our monthly list of interesting GIS web site links. If you want a description and links for GIS suppliers, click on [GIS Vendors](#) in the upper right corner.

News to Use. Short takes on the latest GIS news with links to more information

Just 4 Laffs

Slpelnig Deosn’t Cnout! If you understand the title of this piece, you are well on your way to understading the results of this astonishing study. Do ysurolef a fovar and raed tihs one firsr.

As always, we thank you for your support.

Chris Harlow



GIS Enterprise Interoperability Kits

Imagine a GIS life that was not vendor dependant. Imagine not caring what the file format or creator looked like. Just imagine a GIS world where one size finally fit all.

The lack of interoperability within the GIS community is among the several reasons why GIS has not moved out of its comfortable niche market. To be fair, it is not the only reason, but it does play a major part.

Technology forces interoperability

As a GIS user, you naturally welcome interoperability. It means that you can use data that was created by someone else on another platform as if you created it. GIS suppliers automatically broaden their market, because they do not have to knock out the core GIS supplier just to sell data or other complimentary GIS products.

The big winners in interoperability are government agencies that deal with disasters and homeland security. What was once eye candy to impress the politicians, GIS is now a standard tool for disaster and homeland security response teams. The problem isn't GIS expertise, it is getting compatible data.

A customer driven initiative

As it is with most smart ideas, interoperability is a customer driven initiative. This initiative was taken up by Intergraph Mapping and Geospatial Solutions, Autodesk, Laser-Scan, MapInfo and Oracle Corporation. The idea is to facilitate interoperable data sharing and access using the Oracle Spatial, an open, enterprise database technology. A first-of-its-kind collaborative effort positioned to develop and submit open specifications to OGC's consensus standards process, this initiative takes steps to enable additional seamless data exchange capabilities at the database level in organizations where separate departments require a range of applications.

"Intergraph has been championing enterprise-wide interoperability through OGC since the introduction of GeoMedia®," said Preetha Pulusani, President, Intergraph Mapping and Geospatial Solutions. "... In addition to our core products that implement OpenGIS specifications, we can now offer our customers the ability to access and maintain, within an Oracle environment, a variety of geospatial data sets including features and descriptions, in application formats provided by all of the participating vendors."

The price is right

According to Intergraph's Rita Roberts, "Each vendor will provide free Interoperability Kits for complete data access through Oracle between Intergraph, Autodesk, Laser-Scan and MapInfo's tools and technologies, regardless of the application used to create, analyze or view the spatial data. Now, organizations with previously implemented systems, software and training that are "mix 'n' match" to best fit their budget and information requirements can experience the benefits of interoperability. Using the new kits, customers can eliminate complicated data transfers or the storage of multiple copies of the same geospatial data between departments, thus preserving data integrity and enhancing productivity."

The purpose of the Interoperability Kits is to automatically convert text and oriented point features across the different applications. For example, a land use feature class with descriptive text being maintained by a local government's planning department using GeoMedia Professional can be read by Autodesk Map or MapInfo Professional as part of the land use information. Likewise, pipe or valve descriptions and labels of a water network being maintained by a public works department using Autodesk Map can be read with GeoMedia or MapInfo Professional.

Conclusion

This is an important step in moving GSI into the mainstream, where it belongs. We live in a world where information is taking over in every aspect of our lives. Yet with the exception of the Internet, interoperability is still a dream. Do you think the Internet could have flourished if every page had to be designed specifically for each user that wanted to access it?

Right now, ESRI is not directly involved in this initiative. Frankly, they are probably the target of it. Be that as it may, given proper implementation and publicity the GIS community may actually become a community.

B l a c k o u t !



The picture that truly is worth a thousand words.

The Successful Manager: 12 Tips to Maximize Your Performance

by
Kathleen O'Connor

Editor's Note: Kathleen O'Connor is the owner of the O'Connor Success System, which provides professional growth programs for managers and entrepreneurs. To access their free resources, visit their website at www.OconnorSuccessSystem.com You can sign up there for your free 4-part mini-course on communication skills and a free subscription to their monthly e-zine, "The Edge."

There are so many aspects to management! Your staff responsibilities run the gamut from goal-setting to hiring through performance appraisals. Here are 12 tips that will help:

Listen To Your Employees

Do you listen to your employees? Really listen? Letting employees talk is not the same as listening. You have to work at it, the same way you work at anything else you want to succeed at. Here are some things to remember:

1. Put your work away. As soon as an employee comes to you and wants to talk, put whatever you're working on away. Remove all temptation to do anything other than give your full attention to the employee.
2. Bite your tongue. One of the first signs that someone isn't listening is when he/she cuts off the speaker in mid-sentence or mid-thought. Make sure your employee is finished before you begin speaking.
3. Smile and lean forward. You will be amazed at the effect a simple smile can have. By smiling and leaning forward, you send the message that you are fully engaged in what the person is saying.
4. Always ask questions, even if you don't have any. Questions tell the employee that you have been listening and are truly committed to resolving whatever issue is being discussed.
5. Start your own comments by paraphrasing the employee. Again, this tells the employee that you have been listening; it also helps you get the issues clear in your own head before you speak.

Getting Through Workload Crunches

Your staff is overworked and if you don't do something about it now, you're going to start losing some of your best people. Here's what you can do immediately to turn the situation around:

6. Be the one to bring it up. Make sure your staff knows that you recognize how hard they're working. Some managers actually believe that if they don't talk about it, employees won't notice it. Wrong. They'll notice the extra workload – and resent you and the company for not addressing it.

7. Explain the reasons behind the increased workload. Often, employees will put up with being overworked, as long as they understand why it's happening – a tight budget that is prohibiting you from hiring extra people, for example.
8. Give them extra resources. Ask employees what you can do to help them survive the rush. Do they have the equipment they need? Would hiring interns or temps help? If employees think you're truly interested in helping them get through a work onslaught, they won't entertain thoughts of leaving the company the first chance they get.
9. Drop low-priority projects. Do anything you can to relieve the pressure. Are there projects you can stop, or at least put on hold until the staff has more time to handle them? Cut as much as you can, so employees can focus on high-priority jobs only.

Make Time To Network With Your Staff

As a manager, it's easy to get so caught up in your administrative duties and personal projects that you overlook a primary rule of management: Keep in touch with you're your employees. It takes time and effort, but it's the only way to build and maintain an effective, balanced staff. Here are some tips:

10. Walk around. Take to the halls. Talk to people along the way. Visit employees in their offices or at their workstations. Respond to their phone messages or e-mails in person. There is no substitute for face-to-face contact in building a trusting and familial atmosphere in the workplace.
11. Join company sports teams. By immersing yourself in the camaraderie endemic to company sports teams, you'll be associated with the can-do spirit on the field. Plus, many employees are more apt to discuss problems, concerns and ideas with you when away from the formality of the office.
12. Join committees. Whether it's an employee committee forming to redecorate the lunchroom or to plan a holiday party, join it. Employees will realize you're not only interested, but are opening up a new conduit for feedback.

Try these suggestions over the next month. You'll find that what seems like extra work actually makes your job a lot easier.

The Successful Manager:
12 Tips To Maximize Your Performance
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Out of the Box

Editor's note: In “Out of the Box” we bring you news snippets that are not necessarily related specifically to GIS. These are items that come across my screen that help me understand our industry, by understanding the world around us. For the complete article just click “Details Here.” Think of it as thinking **Out of the Box**

In State and Local Government ...

- A new digitized soil survey of Sandusky County is now available on compact disc, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The CD, which offers many advantages over printed soil surveys, is available through the Sandusky County Soil & Water Conservation District in Fremont at 419-334-6324.
<http://www.thenews-messenger.com/news/stories/20030912/localnews/246539.html>

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency offices are currently in the process of digitizing their land records using Geographic Information Systems

<http://www.madison.com/captimes/business/stories/56415.php>

In Technology ...

- Xybernaut Corporation (NASDAQ:XYBR), an Oracle Partner, today announced that the Company's wearable computing technologies, including the MA V® and the Atigo®, will be showcased in the Security Command Center (BOOTH #1736) portion of OracleWorld 2003—the annual Oracle Corporation international conference scheduled for September 7 - 11. The Security Command Center is a showcase of advanced technologies that are being used in a variety of security applications -- particularly homeland defense, national security, military/government and emergency preparedness/response.

http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?epi-content=GENERIC&newsId=20030908005050&headlineSearchConfigBO=1062414000000%201063052552000%20%20groupByDate%20%201%207%201062414000000%20%20%20%20%20%20%201000151%20true%20true%20&newsLang=en&beanID=2055223794&viewID=news_view

- Geographic Information Systems Manager for Eules TX helped map debris from space shuttle The Columbia Accident Investigation Board recognized David Allen for his efforts.

<http://www.dfw.com/mld/startelegram/news/local/states/texas/northeast/6714093.htm>

- Two British researchers have invoked the aid of hi-tech software to find the location of one of English literature's most famous buildings. They used geographic information systems (GIS) software to pinpoint Blandings Castle, immortalized by the novelist P G Wodehouse..

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_7-9-2003_pg9_8

In Utilities ...

- U.S. electrical grid vulnerable to terrorism. A growing number of security experts in and out of the U.S. government are worried that potentially hostile states and even a rebuilt al Qaeda could wreak havoc through simultaneous and coordinated assaults on sensitive points on the electrical grid. Industry officials said that during the second half of last year, 60 per cent of the country's power and energy companies experienced hacking attacks, however, none were successful. According to Steven Flynn, a senior fellow on the Council on Foreign Relations, the grid has many other vulnerabilities. If the electrical transformer for the Port of Los Angeles and Long Beach in California were blown up, for instance, it could take months, even under a crash programme, to bring electricity back to the vital port facility, which handles more than 30 per cent of the nation's imports in terms of dollar value. There are no spare transformers, he said, and it normally takes two years from order to delivery for a new one, and most are built in South Korea.

<http://www.straitstimes.asia1.com.sg/world/story/0,4386,205339,00.html>

- Electricity council says it's too weak. The electric industry group that oversees the nation's power grid, born in an attempt to prevent disruptive blackouts, says it doesn't have the resources or authority to do that job in today's complex, deregulated market. The voluntary system of standards under which utilities and the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC) work is no longer adequate, according to NERC officials and many outside experts.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?pagename=article&node=&contentId=A11626-2003Aug18¬Found=true>

- Utility group-Power grid upgrade may cost \$100 billion U.S. consumers would have to foot a \$100 billion bill to upgrade the nation's rickety electric transmission grid but could reap five-fold savings from cheaper power costs, according to an industry report..

http://www.energycentral.com/sections/news/nw_article.cfm?id=4089785



GIS Net Surfing

GeoSpatial Services

<http://www.gis.smumn.edu/>

GeoSpatial Services, a division of the Department of Resource Analysis at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota provides a wide variety of GIS consulting and development services..

MTA

<http://mta.info/index.html>

Selected as MapInfo's e-government site of the month, State of New York Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) created a terrific service. It provides quick and easy access to fares, schedules, station locations, driving directions and more. Choose a station from the list and scroll down to "Get Driving Directions" to see MapInfo technology at work. Presently, the areas for Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad provide this level of information.

Magert

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/maplib/magert/>

The Map and Geography Round Table Education Committee (MAGERT) provides an excellent resource for the basics of GIS.

NSGIC

<http://www.nsgic.org/>

NSGIC is particularly concerned with creation of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). The technology behind the NSDI helps to create intelligent maps and databases that enable public and private decision makers to make better informed and more timely decisions in a wide array of governmental areas. This site includes a valuable list of state GIS coordinators.

News to Use

U.K. Environment Agency

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk>

United Kingdom's Environment Agency signed a three year contract extension for the supply of corporate geographic information system (GIS) technology and services with ESRI (UK) Ltd. Under the agreement, the agency plans to roll out spatial information as a corporate standard to up to 10,000 staff through the implementation of many mapping products within ESRI's software suite.

Florida Keys Mosquito Control District

<http://http://www.keymosquito.org/>

The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District (FKMCD) engaged AT&T Wireless business partner CompassCom Inc. to provide Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology and GIS mapping support for a major mosquito control program. FKMCD purchased CompassTrac™, the mobile positioning and fleet tracking component, and CompassFDE™, the universal AVL server, from the CompassCom suite of products. Central to this program's success, the CompassCom AVL solution is being used to monitor the locations of insecticide spraying vehicles. See also CompassCom (www.compascom.com)

ImageLinks, Inc. and Intermap Technologies, Inc.

<http://www.imagelinks.com>

ImageLinks, Inc. and Intermap Technologies, Inc., global providers of geospatial imagery data products and solutions, were awarded a significant new contract for their co-branded STARPlus imagery products. Under the contract, the two companies will build accurate, "cloud-free" base maps for the Solomon and Vanuatu island chains in the South Pacific that cover an area of nearly 100,000 square kilometers. The Solomon and Vanuatu islands are typically quite cloudy and therefore ideal for the application of STARPlus processing. True-color, color-infrared, and six band multispectral fused STARPlus products will be created for more than 600 7.5' map sheets.

Telemorphic, Inc.

<http://www.telemorphic.com>

Telemorphic, Inc., announced MapImager™, an extension to ESRI's ArcGIS software. MapImager adds geographic imaging and visualization capabilities to the ArcGIS desktop. MapImager includes simple intuitive tools that provide ArcGIS users the ability to quickly compare scanned maps, aerial photos, satellite imagery, and vector GIS data layers to interactively identify changes or differences in real time. Specific functions include one-button toggle and slider bar controls for fast and efficient interactive swipe overlay, blend and merge data fusion, morphing, and band substitution operations. The resulting custom image products can then be saved or added into the current ArcMap document.

Maptech

<http://www.outdoornavigator.com>

MapTech's Outdoor Navigator delivers detailed topographic maps and nautical charts for the millions of hi-tech mobile adventurers who use handheld PDAs. Outdoor Navigator lets you pick and download the maps and charts you want, when you want them from Maptech's vast library over 60,000 maps. Connect the handheld to a GPS wireless receiver for a moving map that shows your location on highly detailed maps for recreation and even work. Outdoor Navigator works with Palm and Pocket PCs and even some of the new smart phones. Outdoor Navigator works like a subscription; the first year is \$100 with an annual renewal of \$30. Maps are delivered via the Internet. Any maps you download are yours to keep. Try it free at www.outdoornavigator.com.

GE ACQUIRES M.J. HARDEN ASSOCIATES, INC.

<http://www.gepower.com>

GE Power Systems acquired M.J. Harden Associates, Inc. (MJH) of Kansas City, Mo., a leader in geospatial data management and integration services. The terms of the transaction were not disclosed. MJH specializes in geographic information system (GIS) solutions for a wide range of industries including pipelines and utilities. M.J. Harden will become part of the pipeline integrity services division of PII Pipeline Solutions. Based in the U.K., PII was acquired by GE in 2002 and is a member of GE Power Systems's Oil & Gas business.

Intergraph and Z/I Imaging

<http://www.intergraph.com/gis>

Intergraph Mapping and Geospatial Solutions and Z/I Imaging, an Intergraph company, today announced that the contract to support the Land Reform Implementation Support (LARIS) project was signed. This contract, valued at \$2.5 million (U.S.), has been awarded by the Federal Land Cadastre Service (FLCS) ministry of Russia. LARIS is the Russian Government's large-scale land cadastre development program supported by a loan from the World Bank. Intergraph will provide FLCS with more than 20 copies of the ImageStation® Stereo Softcopy Kits (SSK) from Z/I Imaging for photogrammetry, along with mapping and GIS solutions that include GeoMedia® products, services, training and support to expand their cadastral mapping system. The FLCS is responsible for the State Land Cadastre for the Russian Federation, including overall system design, development, implementation and maintenance of the land cadastre and development of standardized solutions to support the system.



Spelnig Deons't Cnout!

Get rid of that dictionary, thesaurus and spell checker. What makes you think that spelling counts? According to some researchers (and they are never wrong, are they?), spelling is for the birds, not the bees!

... And we laughed when VP Dan Quayle couldn't spell ptotao

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At The Harlow Report we try our best to comply with the above findings. Unfortunately, every so often we spell everthing korrekctly.



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Go to <http://www.aaadomain.net> where domain names are \$8.75 or less!**