

A UK USER CONFERENCE VIEW

WITH A FOCUS ON THE ROLE OF SPATIAL TECHNOLOGIES IN IMPROVING SERVICES AND DELIVERING OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES, THIS YEAR'S AGENDA HAS APPEAL ACROSS INTERGRAPH'S CUSTOMER BASE, FROM UTILITIES TO THE EMERGENCY SERVICES.

Organisations across all sectors are facing increasing budgetary pressures and a constant push to do more with less and this was the theme for the user conference this year: increasing efficiency and improving quality of service by making wider use of existing spatial information resources through integration and collaboration.

New head of Intergraph Security, Government & Infrastructure (SG&I) in EMEA, Horst Harbauer, outlined a strategy of coordinating Intergraph resources across European offices to derive maximum benefit from their skills and experience such as the major events management system deployed for the recent G8 summit in L'Aquila. An early tangible example has been the launch of a comprehensive suite of commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) products for INSPIRE founded on Intergraph's delivery of four European national SDIs and a host of regional portals. Another European solution cited was a multi-agency, collaborative platform for government Emergency Operations Centres.

The first user presentations of the day highlighted how very different organisations can have similar business functions and requirements. Paul Gomez of Anglian Water and Sue Lampard of Surrey Police both explained how integration of existing spatial information within call centres increases efficiency and quality of service.

Individual incidents often give rise to multiple calls for service. Unless these can be identified as the same event when calls are taken, duplicate tasks get created which tie-up additional resource and require more work. By integrating existing spatial information into the call centre and geo-coding callers' locations, operators are better able to assess whether the current call relates to a known incident or it is a new event. More efficient call handling at Surrey Police resulted in a 20% year-on-year reduction in the number of crime calls compared to the level of crime reported. Being able to tell callers that an incident is known and already being investigated also provides reassuring feedback, something that is particularly important when dealing with calls for incidents such as anti-social behaviour.

Stefan Carlyle, the UK Location Programme Director at Defra and UK lead on INSPIRE, set-out the Government's strategy which will stimulate new services for the UK. Stefan's talk generated a significant level of discussion with a number of delegates expressing concern that engagement to date had been limited in scope and needed to involve a broader range of functions and organisations than just existing GIS users within government.

Intergraph's Ralph Diment illustrated the benefits of wider data re-use and collaboration. For example achieving safer and more reliable hurricane evacuation using real-time monitoring of traffic flows and weather data; the growing use of OGC and INSPIRE infrastructure in emergency management; an OGC flood management test bed; and the EU's new Emergency Support System that will develop a portable emergency command and control system incorporating real-time data collection.

Another real world example was provided by Merseyside Fire and Rescue and the fire risk analysis tool developed at Liverpool John Moore's University. A sophisticated numeric model examines interrelationships between multiple physical, social and economic themes to generate probabilistic maps of fire risk that provide a better basis for risk mitigation as well as planning emergency response.

On the second day, Mark Doherty, Intergraph's global technology lead introduced a number of new capabilities including GeoMedia 3D and near-real time geo-referencing and draping of motion video from aerial surveillance platforms with GeoMedia Motion Video Exploitation,



Mark Doherty Intergraph Exec Director Technology Architecture and Strategy



the first product of its kind. Under the integration theme Mark described additional of out-of-the-box links to third-party systems, including business intelligence and consumer mapping (Intergraph's command and control platform is the latest of its products to integrate with Bing and Google - especially useful for '3D' views) and the move towards component web services.

Richard Short of Cleveland Police continued this theme, describing the Force's strategy for improved data integration, sharing and analysis capabilities using web services and related technologies. By developing consistent web services and components, the initiative has enabled Cleveland to exploit legacy applications and data in enterprise solutions, while also providing an evolutionary path towards an all-encompassing Service Oriented Architecture (SOA).

A number of presenters covered new data sources and their use, including Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd's Phil Davies who explained how, due to their relatively low cost, small satellites can be deployed to provide daily imagery for any point on the globe, making them ideal for monitoring and managing disasters such as floods and fire. Finally, Ian James, Chief Architect at Ordnance Survey made the first presentation of the new system that is being delivered by an Intergraph-led consortium to manage the process of incorporating and tracking updates to OS MasterMap. A SOA coordinates and manages the 5,000+ updates to the core dataset that are made by hundreds of staff every day using COTS products.

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