



# WEB-GIS ON DEMAND

SEBASTIAN MITTER AND MARIÁNGELES AGUIRRE DISCUSS GEOMARKETING AND A STRATEGY TO COMBINE PRICING MODELS INTO THE DELIVERY SYSTEM.

Many companies are comparing mapping solutions to learn more about the possibilities for improvements of market area decisions or target group mapping with Business-GIS applications. During their research in the world of geographic information systems (GIS) for marketing, they usually have certain basic questions about the specifics of mapping, e.g.: What is GIS and geomarketing and what are the operational areas? Are there pricing models available which could suit also small and medium sized companies? We will try to answer this questions on appropriate and dynamic GIS business models, which should help to make better and more precise spatial market decisions in today's increasingly complex and competitive markets.

## **The application**

The MapChart GeoManager is a perfect example for new approaches to GIS. As an ASP model (application service providing) that integrates geo-data, the GIS software, a networked communication and interaction system with the service of a team of spatialists one just one online platform. By using the latest Java technology the service grants its user unique features like creating micro web-mapping pages, import of spatial data (e.g. shape files) or the mailing of the generated maps in an integrated MapMessenger.

This so called web-geomanagement system is based on the idea to provide, publish and analyze spatial market research data and socio-demographic data (geodata), online, transparent and "easy-to-use".

The up-to-date ASP approach features clear advantages for the clients: The investment cost for a company wide GIS infrastructure

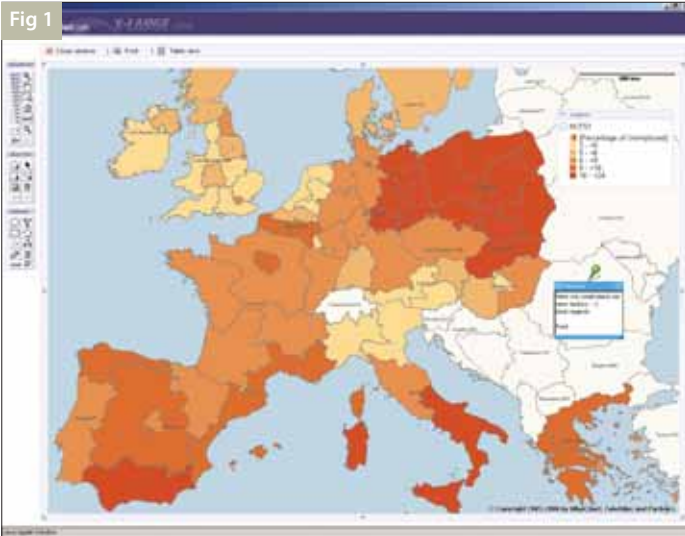


FIG. 1: European demographic information



FIG. 2: MapChart web-GIS with Portugal data

using an GIS ASP service are essentially lower than a combination of desktop GIS seats with a server for the web based distribution of the data. Due to the higher availability of an online ASP service, the mapping tools can be used together with the client at a presentation at the clients office, just using an UMTS card and a notebook. On demand represents also the idea, to license market data like purchasing power on a zip code level or household data on a street level just for those areas, where the client plans to perform a marketing campaign or a spatial market research instead of buying large data sets with a lot of unnecessary information.

### From a clients perspective

There are many areas, where geomarketing can achieve a better understanding of the market and the ways to manage a business spatially. We will explain how online based geomarketing works in a specific direct marketing case.

Let's imagine that a retail company, specializing in supermarket chains plans a campaign to reach old and new customers with product offers through leaflets and walls capes. The company already uses the MapChart GeoManager in their market research department, to analyze the trading area of their stores and the spatial brand awareness. The company has a number of stores and plans to establish new outlets, where the largest amount of purchasing power can be reached and where the potential customer lives. Of course, through using the web based geocoding functions of the GeoManager, they also know where their main competitors are located.

For this supermarket, business mapping became a strategy for success while expanding into new locations and intensifying product lines. They have already experienced that when businesses expand outside their area of knowledge into a new market - and while they may have succeeded in their own hometown market by knowing the area well -, it's very likely to have only limited expertise about this new

area. As this company trying to avoid spending valuable resources in mistakes by relying on guesswork, they started using MapChart GeoManager in combination with the appropriate geodata sets and found answers to questions they couldn't answer just by the internal business and market intelligence.

For the campaign, the supermarket hires an advertisement agency who uses the MapChart GeoManager (Fig. 2) to deliver leaflets in those specific parts of the city where the supermarket wants to reach new customer potentials for the new offers. This advertisement agency can provide a special service in direct and door drop mailings. Through using MapChart GeoManager it has increased the value of its services for the customers. By selecting the target groups spatially, planning and selecting distribution areas through the visualization of the market potential with economical- and socio demographic characteristics a perfect join between the demand of the customer and the planning of the agency can be created. In the past data from different suppliers was needed to plan a target group related campaign. Different kind of distribution areas (analog map materials, graphics, digital maps, post code lists, etc.) had to be brought together. With an online solution, the client and the agency can share the planning and mapping outputs on one networked platform. They exchange the needed information and make the decisions together.

Finally the supermarket enlists an outdoor advertising agency to put walls capes on the most traveled streets and expressways in the market area of the campaign. This agency also works online with the product, so it already knows which are the streets with the highest frequencies and where to place outdoor advertising in the most efficient way. In this case, the outdoor marketer has generated its own geodata by surveys and traffic studies and has uploaded its data in its MapChart group account.

The consultants in the outdoor marketing agency also know where the competitors of their customer from the retail branch are located. They can see where they have already placed large billboards and where places are still available. Now our supermarket and the two advertisement agencies are networking, sharing information in form of maps, Excel tables or PDFs, and planning together the steps to achieve a successful direct marketing campaign.

### Are Web-GIS systems a real competition for the desktop GIS world?

With companies like SAP or Microsoft "going ASP" and "on demand" with their solutions, the GIS branch faces also the challenge of evolution of technical and business models. The integration of on-demand GIS solutions like the MapChart GeoManager will activate a whole new potential of clients and users of geoinformation services. With an appropriate price/performance ratio for small and medium sized companies market oriented GIS based methods like geomarketing may help to increase competitiveness and marketing efficiency.

This new dynamic will help, to establish new innovative solutions and will elevate the method of spatial analysis to a broader usage in companies all over Europe. So the answer to the question, weather Web-GIS is the new competitor to the still ruling desktop systems is clearly no, because Web-GIS solutions can help to lower the entry threshold to the GIS market in general and will help to enlarge the complete GIS market, as new user groups will enter this market permanently.

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