Geospatial Powering Business Intelligence Capabilities

Daniel Shannon, Senior Program Manager, Telus, Canada

Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) in utilities present unique challenges including managing complex connected networks across a broad geography. But GIS connectivity is about more than network connectivity. Organisations today need their spatial information to connect their businesses in much more dynamic and far reaching ways. However most enterprise geospatial systems in service today carry with them limitations inherited from their initial design from years ago when they were stand alone asset management applications. Meanwhile geospatial applications are being developed and employed throughout the business community, many of them agile, affordable and effective. Overlaying Business Intelligence capability that truly integrates with and augments legacy geospatial capabilities requires careful planning, and a GIS Technology Road Map that can provide a framework to justify investment to realise a GIS strategy that truly supports a firm’s business objectives. Data often proves to be the biggest impediment to the modernisation of legacy GIS. Many of the more elaborate capabilities of newer geospatial systems remain beyond reach due to the barrier created by the deficit of the geospatial data required to power those business intelligence capabilities. Therefore a modern GIS Technology Road Map must treat spatial data as an enterprise resource, independent of any one application. GIS Data architecture must evolve with enterprise requirements in hand, ideally to be interacted with Business case development supporting deployment of new GIS capabilities will need to rely more upon intangible strategic benefits. Compared with quantifying the benefit of automating a manual CAD function for one department or a single business unit, articulating the value of deploying Business Intelligence capabilities functionality across multiple departments requires an extra level of organisational effort and savvy and collaboration. The payoff will be a GIS that manages a connected network, but one that enables a more connected organisation.

Geospatial Information – The Vital Ingredient for Insurance Decision-Making

Nigel Davis, Executive Director, Willis Group, UK

As we understand more about the features of the world and the complex processes within it, our dependency on geospatial information continues to grow. Geospatial information is used every day to influence the way the communities are designed and reverse-engineered in order to minimise loss of life and establish sustainable habitats for our population. In a society that strives to become more resilient to the strains of natural and man-made influences such as climate change or urbanisation, the role of the insurance sector becomes increasingly important as a mechanism to offset risk, to change the way risk is considered and to drive behavioural change. In particular, natural catastrophes and their associated risks are implicitly spatial in their composition and the insurance market increasingly relies on the a deep understanding of these phenomenon in relation to insured assets as part of each companies daily financial decision-making. This presentation provides an overview of the diverse uses of geospatial information within insurance decision-making from the perspective of Willis - one of the world’s leading insurance brokers.