Summary of GIS Webcast (4/24/07)

We had 138 connections to our GIS Webcast "Low-cost Internet-based Geospatial Technologies for Transportation," and many of the connections were conference rooms with groups of people. We estimate a minimum of 150 people joined us to learn more about this subject. There were representatives from division offices, MPOs, and State DOTs. A full list of participants will be available shortly.

Of the 88 people that responded to the polls at the conclusion, 96% agreed or strongly agreed that the presentations were interesting and insightful and 84% agreed or strongly agreed that they could apply what they learned in the session to their current job. One person said that he did not find the presentations interesting. We also created a Yahoo Group for the GIS Quarterly Webcasts and 13 people joined after the presentation. One new member posted the following message on the Yahoo Group site:

I listened in on/watched the Webinar this morning (afternoon) on Google Earth and low-cost GIS Technologies. For small MPOs with a small budget, this is a high-tech/low-cost solution for meeting SAFETEA-LU requirements which states that MPOs create visual web-based applications for public use. I will definitely be researching Google Earth Pro and looking into how I can enhance mapping projects when paired with our ArcGIS maps.

Kindra Martinenko
Planning Technician
Corvallis Area MPO (Oregon)

The chat feature was used throughout the session, and included very high-skill/technical questions that other participants were able to answer. Some listeners were much more advanced technically, and were able to explain the basics to the others. There was also a lot of discussion about the specific costs of Google mapping products.

Overall, the Breeze webcast has once again proven to be a useful tool to reach a broad audience without the need for travel. There is a strong demand for information about this particular topic.

In the suggestions for a future web conference, the poll results showed:

41% -- Challenges to Enterprise GIS Implementation
34% -- Advanced Research & Emerging Technology
21% -- Fostering Executive-level Commitment to GIS
5 % -- Other (suggestions below)

- Commitment to gathering a standardized data set
- New Transportation for the Nation Initiative from NSGIC (which may relate to previous comment)
- Archiving/creating digital imagery archives (air photos and orthos, primarily) ...what are other state DOTs doing?
- FHWA Transportation Data Models (aka Tom Roff); Aligning GIS-T with FHWA initiatives; Role of FHWA & FGDC

Record of chat:

Shelby Sours: To join the audio portion, please dial:1-888-458-9977 Passcode: 50391
Nate Kane: Please speak louder, Thanks
Shelby Sours: To ask a question over the phone, please press *1
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: What are the licensing requirements for sketch up in an agency?
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: Google earth is $400/user not total cost
Michele Chalfant: Isn't that $400 PER MACHINE?
Lindsay Banks: Yes, but i believe that Google does offer package deals when you are purchasing for a large organization.
Nancy Mattson: So, only compatible with ESRi products>? what about GeoMedia? MapINfo, etc?
Michele Chalfant: FDOT D4 was quoted quite a large number ($!2,000) per base package per month
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: that's Google enterprise runs at 100K initial cost for 250 concurrent users with 13K/yr annual maintenance
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: Does an agency need to publish data in OGC WMS for Nasa WorldWind?
Nancy Mattson: what happens to the metadata, particularly for the imagery data? How do we know what spatial resolution is? or the vintage? or other metadata elements? any thought here? it seems like metadata are compromised....
Craig Casper: this isn't for analysis as much as it is communication with the public
Craig Casper: it doesn't replace GIS, it supplements it
Tejaswi Tharakabhushanam: Most software being discussed are for enhancing visualization and not to conduct core GIS analysis
Tejaswi Tharakabhushanam: Does anyone has thoughts on GOOGLE maps being productized and what it means?
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: Google Maps is licensed separately from Google Enterprise. Google Maps is a per hit cost. Albeit pennies a hit. Similar to ArcWeb Services from ESRI.
Paul Vidal: Do you mean for the Google Enterprise level of Google Maps?
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: Google Earth Enterprise is separate from Google Maps.
Paul Vidal: Right. You mentioned a per hit cost. What does that cost apply to?
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: Each map pan, zoom, refresh is a hit cost.
Michele Chalfant: It's pennies a hit but they sell it in large bundles - the cost runs up quickly
Tejaswi Tharakabhushanam: I agree with Michele.
Paul Vidal: ...for Google Earth Enterprise only, though.
Michele Chalfant: no - if you are sending data up in kml and have a website they charge you
Ali Bonakdar: Where does all of this 3-D Modeling come from--Google or a GIS (e.g. 3-D Analyst)?
Tejaswi Tharakabhushanam: Does anyone know what projection/coordinate system GOOGLE earth supports - GCS NAD 1983?
Nancy Mattson: ...about that metadata...
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: How do you convert your CAD data to KML?
Nate Kane: How much time do you spend marking-up each project?

Paul Vidal: A couple options: convert it to a shapefile and from there you have a few different options to go to KMLs
Paul Vidal: coordinate system: Simple Cylindrical WGS84
Shelby Sours: Please press *1 to ask question over the phone.
Brian Lott: How much manpower is required to maintain your data?
Shelby Sours: To withdraw your question, press *2
Paul Vidal: From Google Earth's Documentation: Note - Currently, files using NAD83 projection are not supported by Google Earth.
Shelby Sours: To increase the size of the presentation, press FULLSCREEN in the lower left corner of the slide. To return to the meeting room, press FULLSCREEN a second time.
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: If you are using the Google Maps Java API in your own web applications, then you pay.
Michele Chalfant: They will also bill the agency - FDOT is not allowed to have advertising so you must pay for packages of hits run several hundred thousand per year
Nate Kane: Can't hear you, Gary
David: MapInfo??
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: MapInfo makes GIS software.
Craig Casper: MapInfo is to the world what Esri is to the US
Larry Donelson: What about GeoMedia in the US?
Brian Parr: actually, Esri has a strong international market too
Paul Vidal: Why the preference to Google Earth over Google Maps? Google Earth is easier to set up but Google Maps is a more light-weight for the user. Just curious.
Craig Casper: at the start maps was much more restrictive for adding files
Teague Buchanan, GDOT: Google Earth is 3D. Google Maps is 2D. 3D makes projects look cool to the public.
Craig Casper: well there is that also
Paul Vidal: I agree 3D is fun but I think the time to download, setup, and use those features can deter some users.
guest 5: Can ArcGIS 9.2 export to KML?
Craig Casper: yes
Craig Casper: its a native tool now
Paul Vidal: Especially with the new mobile markets, these sorts of solutions will be very useful but light-weight will be key. For instance, you couldn't pull these crashes onto your Blackberry or Treo.
Craig Casper: arc2earth will go from any Esri
Craig Casper: GeoMedia, MapInfo and manifold will also send it to KML
Paul Vidal: MapWindow GIS also has an extension called Shape2KML that works well.
Fred Hejazi: No one mentioned Map24 so I will mention it. www.map24.com provides both 2D and 3D with a lightweight JAVA client.
Chick Dougherty: Do I understand that Ohio did a mail-merge into a single KML file rather than have the application query a database?
Craig Casper: that's what i understood
Matt: Wow! This is a great media tool!
Chick Dougherty: All of the Ohio applications seem to be 2D. Could these have been done in Google Maps. Does the time slider work in Maps?

Paul Vidal: I'm sure there's a way to have similar functionality to GMaps but it'd require a lot more programming. As for the 2D aspects, yes, they probably could have been done in GMaps.

(session ended, polls were opened, many people stayed online to continue discussion)

Matt: GeoMedia has a direct export to Google Maps.
Matt: That was supposed to be a question.
Craig Casper: i believe the pro version does
guest 5: will these slides be available from any of the presenters?
Randy Jansen: In Ohio did you have to get approval via state or legislative action to put this information on the web?
Paul Vidal: Where do we see all this going? Who is going to be the main consumers?
Gary Macklis: we consulted with the attorney general's office
Paul Vidal: And Ohio, PPACG, etc, did you contract that work out or did you keep it in-house?
Gary Macklis: we did all of this ourselves
Paul Vidal: You can serve out imagery through Google solutions.
Paul Vidal: Also, GMaps can hit the USGS WMS servers to get imagery. I have a few sites that make that work and serve as options people can click on next to Satellite, Hybrid, etc.
Ohio DOT: retire the data
Chick Dougherty: Ohio, go back to the phone, not speakerphone.
Paul Vidal: Was most of the work done in-house at the DOTs?
guest 5: link for the Boston redevelopment authority---is it their 3d VRML link?
Matt: Excellent job Presenters!
Ohio DOT: Thank you!
Paul Vidal: Yep, thanks to all!
Lindsay Banks: Thanks for all the input!
Louisiana Division: Thanks!
Larry Donelson: Very interesting and thought provoking, thanks.
Bret: Well done guys (and lady) thanks
Tejaswi Tharakabhushanam: Thanks everyone. Good forum.
guest 5: I wish my boss could have seen this presentation--it was excellent--good ideas
Chick Dougherty: Thanks. We are working in the same direction. Expect more questions.
Pravara Thanapura: Where can I download the PowerPoint presentations?
Lindsay Banks: right now, only the first presentation is available right now. Gary is going to post his in a moment.
Pravara Thanapura: thanks
Shanda Yaeger: How often do these webcasts take place?
Lindsay Banks: This was the first webcast and we would like to continue to do them quarterly.
Shanda Yaeger: Great idea. It's wonderful to not have to leave the office. (Although some times greatly appreciated :o)
Chick Dougherty: Excellent use of this meeting technology. Well prepared.
Lindsay Banks: Craig is uploading his file to the file share pod, but it is a large file, so it might take a couple of minutes.
Lindsay Banks: Same with Gary!
Lindsay Banks: Ok, Gary's presentation is now available (GE_Webcast)
Lindsay Banks: And the fourth one is Craig's.

Paul Vidal: Is anyone finding that they're steering away from ArcIMS or ArcServer sites and instead opting for these solutions (i.e.: GMaps, GEarth, MS Virtual Earth, etc.)?
Lindsay Banks: It seems that the programming is so much easier with these other tools, and you can get the visualization/public outreach much more easily with these (as opposed to ArcIMS, ArcServer)
Craig Casper: world wind, being open source and compliant with some other standards is looking more and more interesting to me.
Paul Vidal: Or are these sites going up as a matter of convenience? Sort of a "they fast and easy so why not" attitude? I guess I'm just curious if they're replacing those options.
Lindsay Banks: but you lose out on the heavy analysis capability
Craig Casper: that's what manifold is for
Paul Vidal: Which heavy analysis exactly?
Garrett Staats: Something to consider is the low overhead of posting a KML file for download. Our section may look into using GE for mapping. It has been lightly discussed.
Lindsay Banks: querying, buffer analysis, layer manipulation, mergers, typical GIS functions
Paul Vidal: I'm sure I've shown my hand here a bit but I really do believe that GMaps is the often better solution.
Garrett Staats: I think most of those terms are beyond the publics knowledge of GIS and mapping...
Craig Casper: we're working on crash rates by segment with ADT added in with crashes
Gary Macklis: We would like to do something similar
Paul Vidal: Querying can be incorporated and I'm sure some buffer analysis could be also. Layer manipulation to some extent... mergers, geoprocessing... not really available, true.
Lindsay Banks: Yes, (Garrett) and that is why these options are looking so attractive.
Craig Casper: so that we can compare V/C crash rate and pavement condition in an analysis to mix in with HERS-ST
Paul Vidal: Yeah, I think Garrett has it exactly right. These are more for relatively light viewing and use and that's why they're good... and becoming ever-more popular.
Craig Casper: basically, we are so fiscally constrained that i want the public to see the huge needs and get discouraged about what we can afford to do
Garrett Staats: It is also really nice that no new software needs to be purchased. With very little programming abilities one can create a KML file from almost any database.
Chick Dougherty: As a large MPO, we are taking a multi-path approach. ArcGIS as our primary GIS toolset and for heavy analysis, moving away from Arc IMS for web-visualization to one of the approaches covered today, and a combo of GIS and Web services to port lighter GIS analysis to staff to save on licenses.
Paul Vidal: Is there also a movement to providing services for mobile users?
Paul Vidal: For instance, showing traffic information to Blackberry/Treo users? (I know GMaps already incorporates this to an extent)
Lindsay Banks: That could be a topic for a future webcast!
Paul Vidal: I'd support it ;)
Craig Casper: nothing for mobile users here
Craig Casper: the mountains get in the way
Paul Vidal: By the way, good to see 7 new members to the Yahoo group.
Chick Dougherty: The private sector is quickly fill that gap in the big urban regions
Paul Vidal: How is that? Are there pay services available?

Paul Vidal: Speaking of which, any insight on the Google Terms of Service that stipulates GMaps and GEarth can't be used for commercial use?
Paul Vidal: Does that simply mean the maps must be available to the public or does that mean you can't pay someone to develop a GMap/GEarth site for you?
Craig Casper: government isn't commercial, and we have the pro license to allow us to share the data
Craig Casper: that's our take on it
Gary Macklis: We also use the pro version
Paul Vidal: All of your sites are freely available to the public, though, right? Are some of these private solutions Dougherty mentioned charging for access to a GMap?
Craig Casper: i don't know of any
Paul Vidal: Thanks all! I appreciated the chats.
Craig Casper: have a great day
Lindsay Banks: Thanks Paul!
Craig Casper: Have a great week everyone. This was fun.
Lindsay Banks: If anyone is downloading a file and needs to keep this session open, please let us know.