OGC Standards and Mapsolute Map24

Building Spatial Information Systems using international, publicly available standards has become almost mandatory today. The situation in 1996 was quite different: the term â€˜web mappingâ€™ was not yet established and nor were there web-mapping standards. Back then Mapsolute began developing a product that provided interactive mapping using proprietary vector-streaming technology. This technology, combined with data suitable for car navigation in Europe, North and South America, the Middle East and Australia, empowers real-time applications for fleet management, online tracking of goods and services, supply-chain management, car navigation and other applications. The Mapsolute internet portal Map24 is now available in twelve languages and daily performs more than 1.5 million route calculations on three hundred server machines.

Since Mapsolute products are often part of an organisationâ€™s Spatial Data Infrastructure, data and service integration with platforms from other vendors is often an issue. Instead of continuing to rely on data transformation and custom-service development Mapsolute decided to address this by implementing commonly agreed standards. In 2006 the company became a member of the Open Geospatial Consortium Inc (OGC) and began implementing OGC standards to enhance those web services it had already implemented based on the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP). The first step was adding an interface that implemented OGC OpenGIS Web Map Service (WMS) Implementation Specification. WMS enables the integration of many external geospatial resources in the Map24 portal and in customer applications. Other standard interfaces and encodings under development include those that implement OpenGIS Specifications for Open Location Services (OpenLS), Geography Markup Language (GML) and data integration services like Web Feature Service (WFS) and Web Coverage Service (WCS).

The implementation of open, standard interfaces is valuable to Mapsolute in two ways. Firstly our products become more transparent to customers and more easily integrated into existing Information Technology infrastructures. Secondly, we benefit from the extensive knowledge of implementation of geospatial solutions shared by the OGC community. The OGC is the forum for unique, worldwide information exchange among software vendors, universities and public authorities. The most comprehensive knowledge of geospatial standards research and industry standards trends can be gained from the OGC portal and OGC meetings.

Besides implementing already adopted standards, as an OGC member Mapsolute helps shape the future of geospatial information exchange by actively working in Revision Working Groups, currently for Web Map Service Specification 1.4 and Web Processing Service Specification 1.0. This is a great opportunity to be among the first vendors to implement new technologies and to become aware at an early stage of new market opportunities for our company.

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