

National Requirements and Global Standards

Since 1994 the OGC has operated with a global agenda for achieving interoperable geoprocessing. Our members, technology users and providers, collaboratively develop interface and encoding standards of local to global relevance across many communities, from oceanography to urban planning. OGC standards have been steadily taken up in the market; vendors have many business reasons for implementing the standards in products. Users choose these products because of the benefits accruing from systems, components and services that operate seamlessly, often across the internet, with others. Today international involvement in the standards process is more important than ever, both from the unique perspective of individual nations and regions and in terms of the shared perspective of 'everyone benefits from a bigger network'.

OGC growth has been continual and increasingly international. In September 2008 OGC had 160 members from North America, 157 from Europe, 45 from the Asia/Pacific region, four from the Middle East, and one from Africa. An increasing percentage of board members are from non-US organisations, reflecting the changing geographical distribution of our membership. Our members want the consortium to aggressively encourage national and regional players in bringing their requirements to the standards process. Different nations and regions have different languages and cultural, political, social and economic patterns shaping their business, government, research and educational requirements involving geospatial technologies. OGC standards need to accommodate these variations, and participation in the standards process is the most effective way to influence consortium activities.

OGC meetings, website and email communications offer rich opportunities for networking and evaluation of potential business partners. This of course bears directly on players in nations and regions getting solutions that meet their immediate needs and strategic goals. Another important element in fostering collaboration, uptake and increased participation in the OGC process are the OGC national forums. These can play an important role in the OGC standards development process. The UK-Ireland and France Forums have respectively helped focus outreach through local meetings and product demonstrations. Canada and Australia currently have no formal OGC forums, but in both countries OGC members have in the past come together in national activities that helped their countries and provinces establish shared architectures and policies. These in turn contribute to the world-class spatial data infrastructures in each country.

Interoperability initiatives too focus interest and activity. In India, the OGC and GIS Development Pvt Ltd (India) have issued a Call for Sponsorship and Participation in the Delhi Transit Routing Interoperability Pilot (D-TRIP) (www.opengeospatial.org/projects/initiatives/delhipilot). D-TRIP will demonstrate best practices and standards enabling interoperability among diverse information resources for transportation routing for the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi, India. We need as soon as possible in this increasingly networking, interdependent and resource-constrained world to discover those things that bring mutual benefit. We encourage stakeholders to come together in all countries and regions to discuss how an OGC Forum or an OGC Interoperability Initiative might help them advance toward their goals.