Supporting Membersâ€™ Activities

Computer Aided Development Corporation Limited (Cadcorp) is an UK developer of digital mapping and GIS software, doing business internationally. The company started trading in 1991 with a Windows-based CAD system called 'Wincad'. The rights to the product were sold in 1994 and the proceeds from the sale used to develop the Spatial Information System product family (SIS), an integrated digital mapping and GIS system that comprises desktop, ActiveX and web mapping components. In 1995 Cadcorp brought SIS to a market that was largely dominated by North American companies. To gain any traction it was important for the software to be readable by (and, where possible, written in) the various GIS formats of incumbent vendors.

Differentiation
Given the requirement to integrate with existing systems, Cadcorp had been following the activities of the then nascent Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC). The company was attracted by the OGC goal of defining interface interoperability standards to allow seamless, vendor-independent access and interchange of GIS data (and now web services). This interface definition approach was the single major differentiating feature between the OGC and other attempts to introduce standards into GIS, which had been focused on data formats. Cadcorp joined the OGC at Technical Committee (TC) membership level in 1997; the OGC TC directs the technical work of the organisation. Cadcorp staff has represented the company consistently at TC meetings, held five times per year, and participated actively in standard development activities. In 2004 technical director (CTO) Martin Daly was awarded the OGC Kenneth G. Gardels Award, presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to advancing the OGC vision of geographic information fully integrated into the world's information systems.

Widest Possible Choice
Today implementations of OGC standards can be found throughout the SIS product range and, indeed, throughout the product families of virtually all other geospatial software vendors. The SIS product suite is certified OGC-compliant in the categories of Simple Features (SF), Grid Coverages (GC), Co-ordinate Transformation Services (CTS), Web Map Service (WMS) and Web Feature Service (WFS). It also implements support for Web Map Context documents, Geography Markup Language (GML), SQL 92 databases, Web Coverage Service (WCS) and Catalogue Services for the Web (CS-W). In addition to its OGC credentials, the product suite also provides support for more than 160 different CAD, GIS and database formats. Since Cadcorp entered the GIS arena, the company has followed a technical and commercial strategy of being able to integrate with other players in the GIS market, giving the end user the widest possible choice of implementation strategy. In this endeavour the work of the OGC has been and remains very important to the success of the company. In turn, we like to think we have helped to drive the OGC open-systems agenda so widely adopted by the market today.

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