

Why 'Where' Matters

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New books on geomatics are commonplace. *This one, Why Where matters: Understanding and Profiting from GIS, GPS, and Remote Sensing*, is not. Directed squarely at the business and policy communities, authors Bob Ryerson and Stan Aronoff focus on two value propositions: firstly, what increased use of these technologies can do for you, your business or your political constituency, and secondly, if you see yourself as already successful, why you should continue to increase your use of geospatial information. The publication is also serving as a useful resource to help those in the geospatial market sell their products and services.

The authors note that not only are geospatial technologies developing rapidly, but they, and the data produced, are changing business and public policy practices. The adoption of geospatial data and technologies is altering the very societies in which they are being used. Those who fail to understand and profit from geospatial are likely to find that they are making poorer choices and decisions, whether as individuals, municipalities, companies or countries.

The richly illustrated volume is easy to read. All terms are explained, so that no previous familiarity with geospatial technology is needed in order to fully appreciate the material. Its use as a reference book is eased by highlighted text employed to emphasise key information, as well as a comprehensive index and detailed table of contents.

There is a fascinating chapter on the historical context of geospatial information; the way it has channelled development of geospatial technologies to produce the applications we see today, and future directions in which it will evolve.

The fundamentals of technology are addressed, with explanations focused on what geospatial technologies do that is of practical value to the business and public policy communities.

Subsequent chapters illustrate key information needs that companies, communities, and countries can address with the aid of geospatial data. Also included is the importance of geospatial data policies, showing which policies work and which don't. The authors see an important shift towards a new economy dependent on and driven by geo-information; they term this the GeoEconomy - the name chosen for the book's website: www.GeoEconomy.com.

The book has already garnered impressive comments from experts in the geospatial field as well as business and public-policy domains. They include Steven Franklin (remote sensing) and John McLaughlin (geomatics engineering), who currently serve or have served as university presidents, and John Manley, currently president and chief executive officer of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, and former Deputy Prime Minister of Canada.

The website offers the first pages of each chapter (some forty pages can be viewed), and online ordering.

Dr. Robert (Bob) Ryerson and Dr. Stan Aronoff (2010). *Why 'Where' Matters; Understanding and Profiting from GPS, GIS and Remote Sensing*. ISBN 978-0-986636-0-5.