OS Openspace Web-Map Builder

An easy to use tool has been introduced for Ordnance Survey's online mapping API, OS OpenSpace, making it easy to create map mash-ups without the need for technical know-how. OS OpenSpace Web Map Builder is a simple tool that allows users to add markers, routes and search functionality to their web map without having to write a single line of code. The move comes as the mapping agency seeks to remove the technical barriers that it believes stop many potential users from making the most of online maps.

Peter ter Haar, Ordnance Survey's Director of Products, comments: "For many people, particularly smaller clubs, societies and charities, a lack of technical knowledge is locking them out of the benefits available from using mapping online. Through the introduction of Web Map Builder we want to give those people the chance to see how OS OpenSpace can help them engage with their community and organise their information."

OS OpenSpace was launched in 2008 and currently has around 2600 registered users. Ordnance Survey hopes that by making it easier for people to use, the service will reach an even wider audience.
Darcy Harmer-Manning, OS OpenSpace Product Manager, says: "We want to take users step by step through the mash-up process without them having to do anything other than click through the options. The code is all written and stored automatically meaning it can even be re-edited at any time without starting the process over again."

Among the OS OpenSpace mash-ups already created by developers is the Big Lottery Fund supported project looking into the benefits of fishing. The Assynt Angling Research website gathers information from anglers visiting the north-west of Scotland. Users can add markers, post information about which lochs they used, what they caught and how good the location was. Web Map Builder should now bring this kind of project within reach of anyone regardless of training or expertise.

Mr ter Haar continues: "Over the past few months the range of OS OpenSpace applications has diversified greatly from being mainly outdoor recreation websites to include the provision of public services, environmental and community projects. I hope we will now see even more people making use of it, in even more innovative ways."

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