

CLOSER



Award-winning site brings open data to the citizen

With increasing amounts of open Government data now available to the public, Arcus Global has used the OS OpenSpace® application programming interface (API) to bring that data to life using geography. In doing so, it won the MediaGuardian® Innovation Award for the best use of data.

Challenge

Public sector organisations from the biggest Government departments to the smallest local authorities are now publishing datasets on a wide range of topics, such as the details of local schools, crime statistics and levels of spending. However, while great strides have been made in making data available, less progress has been made in making it meaningful to the wider public.

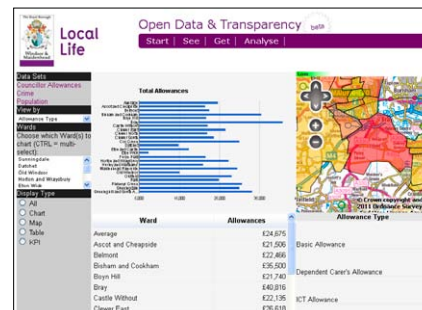
Solution

Arcus has been working with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to address this issue. Jointly, they have created a solution called DataTAP, which makes it easy for the authority to publish open data from internal systems and make it useful to the average citizen. In a nutshell, the solution has an agent sitting inside the council's IT infrastructure that extracts and transforms the data into a publishable format. The data is then transferred to the Arcus infrastructure on the 'cloud' and made available to the public in a variety of formats.

This includes the usual downloadable CSV and XML files but more importantly, Arcus adds the ability to instantly visualise the data in a variety of formats, including tables, charts, key performance indicators (KPIs) and notably, heat-maps based on the OS OpenSpace API. Ordnance Survey mapping provides a particularly powerful example of how data can be made useful through visualisation, because it relates directly to something that is intrinsically meaningful to people; the place they live.

Benefits

Fundamentally, visualisations such as those available through DataTAP make data accessible and open to manipulation and interpretation by ordinary human beings. People are then able to filter, drill into, sort and compare data and thereby get to a view that gives them exactly the answers they want. This in turn could help lead the way towards a new wave of democratic engagement that will make Government more open, accountable and ultimately, better at what it does.



'Ordnance Survey mapping provides a particularly powerful example of how data can be made useful through visualisation.'

Lars Malmqvist,
Director and CTO of
Arcus Global.



OS OpenData seminars now include other Government agencies

Learn about data from Land Registry, British Geological Survey and Environment Agency™ at our OS OpenData seminars. The Government agencies will be on hand to answer your questions about their products.

To register for your free place at one of the two seminars taking place on 2 November 2011 at Holborn Bars, City of London, visit www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/useopendata, where you'll also find the latest agenda for the seminars.

Also in this issue:

- ➔ The Environment Agency launches a new flood warning system.
- ➔ Our newest team member Steve Winter was once a judo champion.
- ➔ John Baldock explains how he uses OS OpenSpace to repudiate claims.

Live flood warnings now available



The Environment Agency has developed a Live Flood Warning feed, which can be provided to companies under license. The benefits to insurers are considerable. It enables them to understand and visualise areas under threat of flooding as events develop, and was created as a response to the *Pitt Review* of the 2007 floods.

The whole property book can potentially be monitored, so the impact of a Flood Alert turning into a Flood Warning or even a Severe Flood Warning can be understood and mitigated against. A fast response allows insurers to engage with their customers at a crucial time, helping to reduce damage, control any claims and reduce fraud. Commercial properties can be very complicated, but by understanding the site in question and by monitoring not just the assets insured, but also assets that influence their ability to do business, action plans can be developed and business interruption claims minimised.

The arrival of OS OpenData means it is now easy to visualise this information and make it widely available. The use of addressing data can also result in fast, precise analysis of any particular situation. For more information, please contact James Winbolt at james.winbolt@environment-agency.gov.uk.

CLOSER to the team...

Steve Winter, Senior Account Manager – Banking



What is your role in the team and what does it entail?

I am Senior Account Manager focusing on the banking sector and I'm managing and developing new relationships with our clients in the sector. My job is to identify and support the many and varied uses of geographic information within organisations operating in this sector and to further develop our many propositions, working with our partners and developers to provide innovative solutions that assist banks in identifying and managing risk, enhance their operational efficiency, combat fraud and improve business intelligence.

What do you think will be the main issues facing our customers over the next 12 months?

The current growth forecasts, both in the UK, Europe and US, along with the tightening of legislation, is going to be a considerable challenge for every segment of the banking sector. The lack of clear understanding with regard to the prospects of our global economy and little clarity on pending legislation is compounding both these issues.

What do you enjoy about the job you do?

I love working for a business that is renowned as being truly world class. I really enjoy explaining the various elements of our business to people that only recognise us for our paper maps. It's a great way to start a conversation, especially when you finish by demonstrating how our geographic information is used throughout people's lives, from registering births and genealogy to moving home to taking out insurance policies, protecting people from crime and natural hazards. Many people do not realise how often our data is relied upon in the background to enable 'their' everyday decisions.

Tell us something not many people know about you – a fun fact/claim to fame, for example.

I won the Hampshire judo championships for my weight category two years in a row, as well as being my club champion for five years. I had to finally retire after shattering my elbow defending my title in 1990.

A note from our editor

Welcome to our October 2011 issue – where has this year gone and more importantly, why did our summer not arrive until October?

This edition has a special emphasis on OS OpenData, which was launched in April 2010. Since that time, the most popular products downloaded are Boundary-Line™ and OS Street View® from the 11 datasets available in this suite of products.

Our featured client and case study both highlight how OS OpenData is being used to great effect and demonstrating the power of visualisation in communicating messages.

However, for an opportunity to quiz some clients and our technical experts on how OS OpenData can bring value to your organisation, why not register to attend one of our free half-day seminars taking place on 2 November 2011 in London? We are delighted to also be joined by colleagues from Land Registry, Environment Agency and British Geological Survey, who will be demonstrating some of their products relevant to financial services.

The much-awaited new definitive address datasets for Great Britain have now been launched as the AddressBase™ suite of products. We will be providing more information over the course of the next few months, including presentations at various upcoming events on how the increased level of detail behind each address can deliver powerful benefits to financial services organisations.

Finally, I would like to thank those of you who have taken the time to be interviewed by a market research company that we have commissioned to undertake an analysis of the financial services sector. We really appreciate this, as it will help shape our strategy and product development for the future. We expect the results to be ready for publication in November and will include a summary of the key findings in our next edition of **CLOSER**.

Sarah Adams
Sector Manager – Financial Services



In our OS OpenData seminars, we'll be covering linked data. In preparation for the session, in this article, the GeoDoctor answers *'What is an RDF file and what can I do with it?'*

Linked data has taken the basic idea behind the linking of documents and applied it to data, and has also reused as much of the technology as possible. So, linked data uses HTTP and using a standard called RDF to enable data to be interconnected via links, much as HTML enables documents to be linked. So linked data is part of the Web, just as documents are.

But what does this actually mean and what problems does it help to solve? The two main problems that it seeks to address are to standardise data around one format – much as HTML has standardised documents on the Web – and to provide a way to directly link data so that once linked it is not necessary for others to link it again. Although this may not sound much, it is actually a very big deal; in time, it will probably affect the way we all do business as much as the original Web has.

To read the full article on linked data, visit www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/geodocor.

Please email your geo-questions to greg.davis@ordnancesurvey.co.uk; we will feature the most popular question in the next edition of **CLOSER**.

Mortgage Industry Conference and Exhibition – 3 November 2011

We'll be exhibiting at the Council of Mortgage Lenders industry-leading event at London's Business Design Centre. Come and talk to us about how geographic intelligence could help improve your mortgage book. We're also running a seminar at the conference showcasing how AddressBase can help improve property valuations and reduce fraud. Register online using promotional code 'MICE001' at www.themice.org.uk and save £40 off the regular registration fee.



GeoPlace™ and Ordnance Survey launch AddressBase

The new addressing products are created by GeoPlace LLP, a joint venture between Ordnance Survey and the Local Government Group. A combination of the best parts of the Local Government Group's National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) and Ordnance Survey's OS MasterMap® Address Layer products and the Royal Mail® Postcode Address File (PAF®) creates a single definitive source of spatial address and property information database for Great Britain (England and Wales initially with Scotland being included in 2012).

Each of the new products, derived from this definitive address database, provides enhanced levels of detail:

AddressBase™

Provides a current view and precise location of Royal Mail postcode addresses.

AddressBase™ Plus

Adds 2 million properties in addition to geographic addresses that do not receive post (for example, electricity substations).

AddressBase™ Premium

Adds information on a further 2 million addresses.

Insurers and banks using AddressBase will find the inclusion of the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN), which is allocated to every property by local government, enables easier identification of new builds; previously financial services organisations have found such properties difficult to locate.

In addition, by using AddressBase Plus, the extra 2 million properties that are not postal addresses will aid commercial property insurers in locating, for example, large industrial sites and sports pavilions.

Counter-fraud/financial crime professionals using AddressBase Premium will also be able to immediately spot bogus addresses by checking against the alias addresses available, for example, Rose Cottage, Lackford Avenue and 60, Lackford Avenue are the same property and also track changes in property usage by seeing whether Council Tax or Non-Domestic Rates are payable at the property.

The ability to understand historical use of a property is a very useful development for insurers from both an underwriting and claims perspective, for example:

Pacific Bar and Grill – 320 Goldhawk Road,
London W6 0XF

Was Queen of England

Grand Union – 243 Goldhawk Road, London W12 8EU

Was Seven Stars

Was The Mulberry



'Ordnance Survey data helps to compile irrefutable evidence to repudiate fraudulent claims'

John Baldock, Director of Investigation Services, Direct Group.

John Baldock is Director of Investigation Services at Direct Group Ltd and has worked in the industry for almost 30 years. John has been a member of the management committee of the ABI Arson Prevention Bureau and was one of the founders of the CILA Special Interest Anti-Fraud Group and remains a member. Well known in the insurance counter-fraud community, John was the lead investigator in R v Chan Miah on using PACE in civil proceedings and Direct Line® v M&W Khan in relation to fraudulent arson. After 25 years of working for a well-known chartered loss adjuster, John joined Direct Group in 2008 to set up Direct Group Investigation Services (DGIS).

How long have you been using Ordnance Survey data and what do you find most useful?

I've been using Ordnance Survey data since 2008 when DGIS started. OS OpenSpace Web Map Builder is the most useful; it has integrity of data and is contemporary. It is easy to use and can be linked with other data sources to provide easy-to-understand pictorial images.

Why did you become interested in geographic information?

After seeing predictive flood mapping from Ordnance Survey

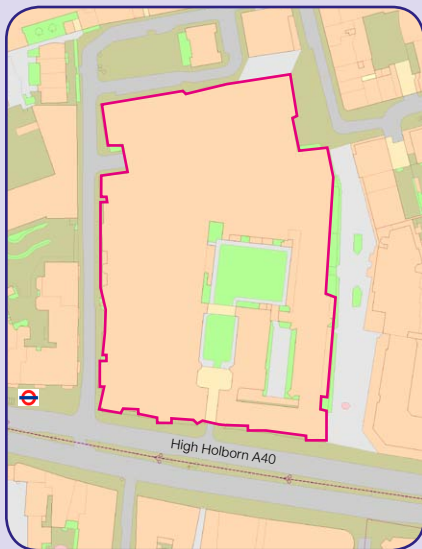
some years ago, the power of Ordnance Survey data was plain. Ordnance Survey data with postcode data not only helps underwriters to improve their risk profile but can also be used for a variety of counter-fraud purposes. Adding relevant images or text to Ordnance Survey maps when interviewing witnesses, claimants or defendants enables investigators to demonstrate that claims are just wrong. This reduces interview times and because the data is incontrovertible, fewer challenges to claims that are denied, with resultant saving in costs. For example, one public liability injury claim was denied by using an Ordnance Survey map of the incident locus with a press cutting inset, showing that an alleyway was closed and boarded up on the date when the claimant alleged they stepped into a manhole with no cover and broke their leg – they had broken their leg playing football (also confirmed from a referee's report)!

What, in your opinion, are the key issues facing the financial services industry over the next three years and how can geographic information help?

As financial pressures mount on domestic purses and small and medium enterprise (SME) businesses particularly, many people will either not take out insurance at all or see the payment of insurance premiums as an entitlement to get a financial return from making a fraudulent claim. The volume of claims across all product types is likely to increase and so the industry will drive for slicker, reliable and less expensive solutions. By working smarter using technology including Ordnance Survey maps, which are understood like pictures especially when images and press cuttings are inset, enables ease of comprehension, replacing the need for long pages of text or lengthy explanations. This saves time and costs so improving productivity and efficiency.

Tell us something not many people know about you? A fun fact or claim to fame, for example.

I am a keen Wasps RFC supporter.



CLOSER to...?

This issue we're giving away five 12-month subscriptions to OS getamap®, our new online mapping service that will help you plan your outdoor activities.

With OS getamap you can:

- draw and print routes on Ordnance Survey maps;
- print A4-size Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 and 1:50 000 scale maps in full colour;
- save your routes using your own map folder;
- use ready-made routes from featured brands; and
- even check local weather and news!

To be in with a chance of winning a 12-month subscription, which allows you unlimited printouts of our maps, all you have to do is simply guess the name of the building shown in this extract from OS MasterMap. Clue: it used to be the Prudential® headquarters. All correct answers will be put in a prize draw and five lucky winners will be drawn. Simply email your answers to greg.davis@ordnancesurvey.co.uk before 1 November 2011. Last issue's answer was the HQ of UBS. For terms and conditions, visit our website www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/closer.

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