

Bentley Leaves Choice to End User

“Google Earth Nothing More than a Handy Tool”

Google Earth is a nice tool capable of several things, in spite of the limited number of features. However it is nothing more than that, says Styli Camateros: “We don’t really mind if data are being viewed with Google Earth or with a different web browser.”

By Lambert-Jan Koops



Vice President of Bentley Geospatial Styli Camateros: “The interface of Google Earth is nice and disposes information to users. But in no way is it a GIS program and for this obvious reason we don’t regard it as such.”

Popular Tool

“The interface of Google Earth is nice and disposes information to users. But in no way is it a GIS program and for this obvious reason we don’t regard it as such”, comments the Vice President of Bentley Geospatial. “Our interest in Google’s software depends on the way in which our customers deal with it. We noticed that it is becoming a popular tool and for this reason we got involved, but for customer-driven reasons. Nevertheless we have been developing some very nice things. Bentley Map for example not only makes it

possible to add data to Google Earth but features as well. An example of this is assigning names to layers so that it is more clear that a layer contains water pipes. Besides this it is even possible to replace the background made available by Google by own data. In many cases this is no luxury since very up-to-date high resolution images are available for the US, but not especially for the rest of the world. I myself live in Quebec and when looking up my house I saw that the image was already four years old. However I expect the quality of the images to improve.”

Integration

According to Camateros the recent acquisitions made by Bentley are exciting. The integration of this software with MicroStation doesn’t oppose any problem. “Many companies that we acquire are developing applications on top of MicroStation and as such are compatible. With Cook-Hurlbert this wasn’t the case but that software is very open thus easy to integrate. We always start by the integration in ProjectWise and once succeeded we are working towards the final stage in which programs are capable of dealing with XFM. What we really don’t want is several platforms; all our software must be capable of dealing with other software some way or the other. Sometimes we succeed within one year after the acquisition and sometimes it takes a bit longer. That doesn’t matter, as long as we succeed.”

Customer Demands

All acquisitions and cooperation agreements might make people think Bentley finds it difficult to make choices and meddling with all kinds of businesses. However Camateros knows very well what he wants: “We want to meet our customers’ demands. We are investing a lot of time in conversations with our end users and if we notice a certain change in working method we want to offer solutions. It is the end users making these kinds of decisions. It is nice if they opted for MicroStation, but if they purchased a different type of GIS software that is no problem either. In any case we don’t want to waste energy on discussions about the choice made by the end user. We’d rather invest in developing solutions aiding the end user in situations arisen by decisions already made. Even if an end user has a GIS system not developed by Bentley, we can still offer solutions that can optimise the use of GIS. “

Lambert-Jan Koops (lkoops@geoinformatics.com) is contributing editor of *GeoInformatics*. Surf to www.bentley.com for more information on Bentley, its vision and its products.