

# Bentley's Geospatial Tracks in London Focus Was on Advancing GIS for Infrastructure

*BE Conference Europe took place in London in June, shortly after Bentley's BE Conference 2007 in Los Angeles.*

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To help emphasize Bentley's efforts in the area of CAD/GIS integration, geospatial 'guru' Styli Camateros proudly mentioned Bentley's active participation in OWS-4, a workgroup of the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) concerned with CAD/GIS/BIM integration — the latter of which refers to Building Information Modelling, originally an Autodesk term. Camateros also announced the imminent launch of Bentley Map.

## Long Service Life

The theme of Camateros' keynote-presentation was Bentley's focus on infrastructure. "The division between GIS and infrastructure is an historical aberration. We want to bring back engineering into GIS. We are not GIS about infrastructure, we are GIS designed for infrastructure," said Camateros. Commenting on the new Geospatial Server being used by several municipalities, Camateros remarked: "It's not a plan and design solution, a build solution or an operations solution. It applies to the whole enterprise and the whole infrastructure lifecycle, just like Web publishing."

## European SII

Clearly, Bentley is committed to advancing GIS for infrastructure and invites others to get involved in the process through its annual Geospatial Research Seminar, which encourages open, in-depth technical discussions. The hosts of the 2007 seminar were Oscar Custers from Bentley and Peter van Oosterom of the Delft University of Technology. The theme this year was 'Creating Spatial Information Infrastructures towards the spatial semantic web.'

Agreeing on the syntax and formats of spatial data and the development of systems handling these is the first step towards Spatial Information Infrastructures (SII). Recently, there have been a number of large initiatives encompassing spatial information infrastructures — for example, INSPIRE and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Geospatial Data Model. These harmonised models can be used

for the implementation of information systems according to the model-driven architecture approach. The same model can be the basis of a database schema (SQL Data Definition Language) and the exchange format (XML schema). This model can also define the user interface and associated behaviour in an edit environment. Within Bentley, the XFM technology is an important example of this development.

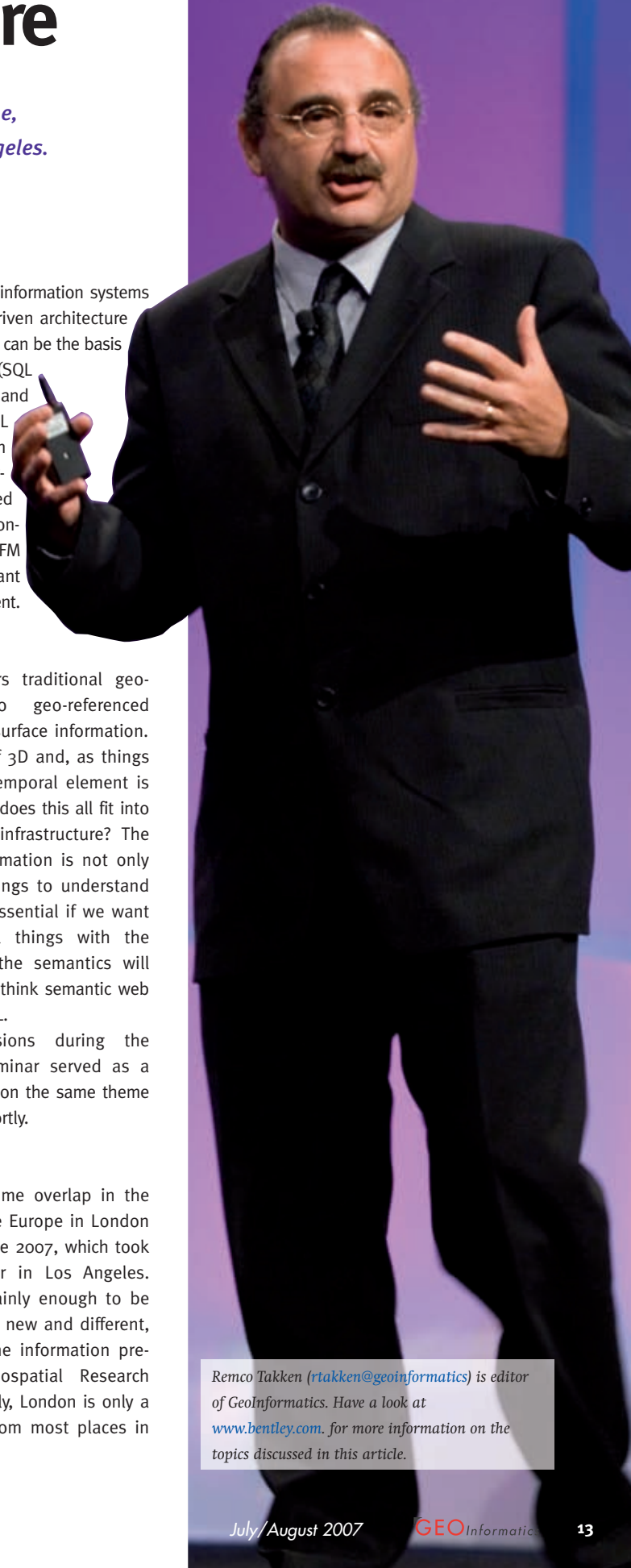
## What Does It Mean?

The SII not only covers traditional geoinformation, but also geo-referenced designs/models and subsurface information. Also, there's the issue of 3D and, as things change over time, the temporal element is also very important. How does this all fit into a usable interoperable infrastructure? The semantic aspect of information is not only important for human beings to understand each other, but is also essential if we want machines to do useful things with the information. Therefore, the semantics will have to be formalized — think semantic web stuff, ontologies, and OWL.

The afternoon discussions during the Geospatial Research Seminar served as a sneak preview to a book on the same theme that will be published shortly.

## All in All

Of course, there was some overlap in the content at BE Conference Europe in London with that of BE Conference 2007, which took place five weeks earlier in Los Angeles. However there was certainly enough to be seen and heard that was new and different, especially considering the information presented during the Geospatial Research Seminar. Not unimportantly, London is only a couple of hours away from most places in Europe.



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