



MAKING LOCATION INTELLIGENCE INTELLIGENT

LOCATION INFORMATION NEEDS TO BE LINKED TO NON-GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION TO PROVIDE TRUE 'INTELLIGENCE'

Location Intelligence is a term bandied about so often that it is becoming almost comparable with marketing clichés such as 'blue sky thinking' and 'no idea is a bad idea'. It is sold as being a 'good' thing, often without a clear understanding of what that good thing actually is – we are just told that it is good.

The intention of Location Intelligence is to link geographical information with other business applications, i.e. link geographical information with non-geographical information. Significant barriers to achieving this are to be found in the accuracy of the geographical information (if it is inaccurate, it has little value), and in the ability to link the geo and non-geo systems together.

Instances of this are to be found throughout Local Authorities of England and Wales where there are a vast array of departments, each requiring a system to control the complexities of their different requirements, some geographical, some not. A common theme is their requirement for address data, combined systematically with their department's brief, such as the linking of electors to an address for the electoral register or the rubbish collection day for waste management.

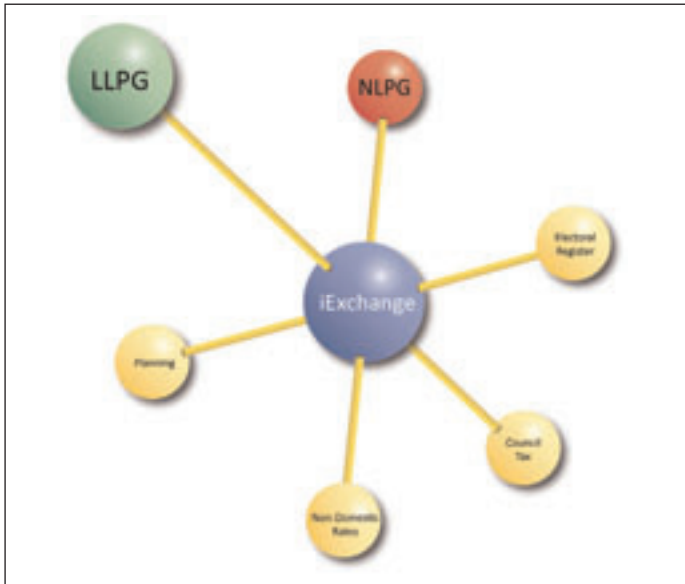
Within these authorities, what often happens is that each department maintains their own address data, taken from different sources, resulting in a disparity amongst the information. In some cases this data can be several years out of date and the information in one system can contradict that in another.

This barrier to proper Location Intelligence moved a step closer to removal with the introduction of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) in the UK, which necessitated the establishment within all local authorities of their own Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPG). These LLPGs are a single source of geocoded, uniquely referenced address data that offers to each authority the most accurate and up to date information possibly available.

Accuracy is not the end of it though, and key to Location Intelligence is the ability to access and fully utilise the data - an issue of systems integration. A frustration for many local authorities is that they now have the data available but lack the ability for it to be disseminated across departments.

This barrier can be removed with a piece of software called **iExchange** from gazetteer specialists Aligned Assets that works as an integrator of systems and disseminator of information. Once synchronised, data can be exported from the LLPG through iExchange, which then sends it to other systems in a variety of formats, including DTF 6.3, DTF 7.3 and XML. The other systems can then import that data, thereby allowing all departments to benefit from utilising the best address data available.

Since the LLPG is the main portal through which changes to local address data occur via the Street Naming and Numbering process, the LLPG will always contain the most up-to-date information. Once data is in



the LLPG, iExchange can be used to export that data on an automated basis to each linked system, as well as using this automated process to send these updates to the NLPG.

The Next Stage

As the use of Location Intelligence grows, and the demands and expectations placed upon it rapidly increase, soon it will no longer be sufficient to simply export from one system and import it into another. Organisations are looking for ever greater levels of interoperability with systems that are interconnected, increasing efficiency and generating considerable savings.

In order to fully realise the interoperability that leads to complete Location Intelligence, Aligned Assets have created a new addition to their Symphony Suite of products, called **SinglePoint**. Working as a bridge between systems, SinglePoint's advanced technology acts as a single

portal through which all Council data can be sourced, regardless of department.

Initially conceived as a powerful search engine that allows for sub-second searching of the entire NLPG, it evolved into an application, which through the use of specially designed adaptors is capable of searching any database alongside NLPG and LLPG searches. The ability to simply select the search criteria by turning these adaptors on or off allows for complete search flexibility, so those in the council tax department could select to search the LLPG and the council tax database, whilst those in housing options could turn off the council tax search and turn on housing.

Through the use of SinglePoint, UK local authorities will be able to achieve fully 'joined-up government' as access to information will no longer be limited to individual searches through different databases. With all information accessible from the same place, with the option of setting the criteria for which databases are to be searched, SinglePoint is the definitive way of achieving Location Intelligence in UK local government.

Conclusion

Through software such as iExchange, local authorities are able to take the most definitive source of address data and populate the systems across all departments, giving full value to their LLPGs. With SinglePoint, those authorities can fully integrate all their disparate systems and access not only this one definitive source of address data in sub-second time, but pick and choose which of the associated data, regardless of department, that they would also like to access.

Any form of intelligence is not about quantity, but rather concerns issues of quality, and specifically what one does with that intelligence. Location Intelligence is no different and to simply have that intelligence is not the same as the ability to use it. Through the work of Aligned Assets, Location Intelligence just become more intelligent.

Article by Carl Hancock, Executive Marketing Co-ordinator, Aligned Assets, Surrey, UK. Contact: carl.hancock@aligned-assets.co.uk, www.aligned-assets.co.uk, 0870 750 8 750

ENERGY SOLUTIONS EXPO
EFFICIENT SUSTAINABLE RENEWABLE
8-9 OCTOBER 2008 LONDON OLYMPIA

Find out how to improve your business' environmental performance whilst reducing energy cost. Energy Solutions Expo is the UK's fastest growing event dedicated to the ongoing support of environmental professionals.

Energy Solutions Expo offers:

- The latest technology and developments from over 100 market leading companies
- Over 300 hours of FREE educational content
- The Roadmap to Sustainability, a series of FREE seminars and a starter pack, forming a step-by-step guide to achieving a more sustainable business
- New feature areas including the Office of the Future, Managing Safety & Health Area, a waste and much more

For more information about visiting or exhibiting visit www.energy-expo.info.

Principal Sponsors: energy institute, THE NATIONAL ENERGY FOUNDATION, iema

Other logos include: CMP, WORKING TOGETHER 2008, INCORPORATED, THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS, TOTAL WORKPLACE, and ENERGY SOLUTIONS EXPO.