



# Working in Partnership

## The People's Map seeks support from Bath Spa University

### Overview

Bath Spa University have been able to support Getmapping LLP with a product development project involving a three-way partnership between Getmapping LLP, the Local Authority and the University.

### About the Project

One of Bath Spa University's major industry partners, Getmapping LLP, approached the University in July 2008 with a proposal for collaboration on an exciting, ground-breaking new product development called 'The People's Map'. The potential market for this product is vast. Bath & North East Somerset Council is also a collaborative partner in the project and has been the pilot Local Authority for The People's Map.

The People's Map is an exciting new mapping concept which enables any individual or organisation to create and maintain maps of Britain by 'drawing' features like roads, land use and points of interests over aerial photography, using simple online editing tools. The information is checked and compiled to create high quality cartographic maps in various scales that can be used either as a source for finished maps or as the basis for the creation of new maps. The People's Map data is free from third party copyright, with fair and straight forward licensing.

### Benefits

For Getmapping LLP, the collaboration brings academic, technical and manpower support, as well as the underwriting of The People's Map by a respected university.

There is great potential for many other projects to arise on an ongoing basis, linked to areas of study and local mapping needs, and perpetuate the collaboration with Getmapping LLP and The People's Map. In terms of the partnership generating real-life relevant projects for students at the cutting edge of the trends in geographic information systems and cartography, experience in the following types of practical applications have already arisen as topic areas:

- Integrating Local Authorities' mapping requirements into modules
- 3D display of road networks
- Anticipated fuel consumption against certain routes
- Locations of icing risks on roads



### Fast Facts

- Getmapping LLP had a development project for a mapping product and sought support from Bath Spa University
- The collaboration contributed to the development and launch of a new mapping product with the potential to be a market leader in its field
- There is great potential for other collaborative projects to arise, linked to areas of study and local mapping needs

- Links to social network applications, eg communities, clubs
- Optimum routing linked to known constraints such as lane information, height/weight/width restrictions, etc
- Assessment projects for Year 2 undergraduates
- Undergraduate modules to verify the outputs of the assessment projects with GPS
- Routing and assessment requirements for a civil engineering charity which designs and builds routes for cyclists, walkers and people with disabilities
- Routes to schools for green transport planning
- Student progression from undergraduate project to dissertation topic to research, including potential for shorter and full Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

This collaboration has also enhanced Bath Spa University's profile in the local community. For example, a workshop and training day was held to introduce The People's Map in a local secondary school, to coincide with Global GIS Day and Geography Week in November 2008. The potential for other opportunities with schools is also being explored, for example linked to 3D games, tourism, web and graphic design, etc.

## Outcomes

Bath Spa University supports academic attendance and input at project and steering group meetings in an expert advisory capacity, as well as technical advice to The People's Map venture. This type of assistance has contributed to the development and launch of a new mapping product with potential to be a market leader in its field.

Progress on product development has led to other Local Authorities expressing interest in participating in The People's Map and exploring opportunities with the business, giving critical mass to the concept and enabling its launch as a fully commercial venture.

Bath Spa University students in remote sensing, photogrammetry and geographic information systems have completed mapping assignments related to their own Local Authority requirements, digitising and transferring data to interface The People's Map with current systems. They have completed the mapping of the city of Bath and the resulting products have been put online in a commercial capacity.

Bath & North East Somerset Council have also provided a desk at their premises for Bath Spa University students and staff to work on The People's Map project on an ongoing basis.

The Managing Director of Getmapping LLP and the Project Director of The People's Map are generous with the time they give to the University. As well as giving talks to students, it has been proposed that an annual student prize – sponsored and presented by the business – for mapping could be introduced.

## Perspective



Alexander Koh

“The collaboration with Getmapping and Peoples Map is about transferring good ideas, research results and skills between the parties to enable innovative new products and services to be developed. Our students benefit from the experience of real industry projects, and we also gain invaluable case study material for teaching purposes.”

**Alexander Koh**  
Principal Lecturer Remote Sensing  
& Geographic Information Systems,  
Bath Spa University

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