

Intranet GIS gives Users a New Dimension of Information

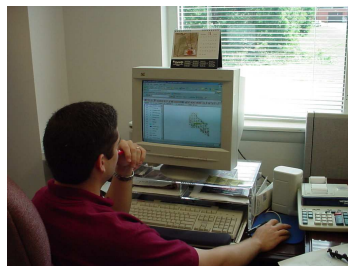
St. Mary's County, Maryland



Jeff Edgin, the GIS manager in St. Mary's County, Maryland, can scarcely find the time to talk about the tool he's counting on to add more hours to his day. "In this business, there's never enough time or money to get the job done the way I want it to be done."

It's a plight most government technology experts can relate to. But his enthusiasm for GTG's LG products, in particular LGweb is also a feeling familiar to anyone who works hard to juggle priorities and meet overwhelming demands that come with the territory.

LGweb is an intranet GIS application which brings online mapping to users in an easy-to-use, powerful Web Interface. Users can quickly query both map and database information with a few simple mouse clicks.



"LGweb is a huge help because it gives users the power to do things for themselves that otherwise they'd need to ask us to do," Edgin said.

"We installed it last summer so we could give our people LG capability without having to load software on each machine. With LGweb, the maintenance and networking issues are minimal. The only time required of me is to maintain the GIS layers. The software itself is bulletproof; it runs great."

Considered the birthplace of Maryland, St. Mary's County has more than three and a half centuries of history, and now has the second highest concentration of high technology businesses in the state. Today the county government is focused on the future and the role technology, specifically GIS, can play.

"LGweb gives users a new dimension of information," Edgin said.

So far, the application has been deployed in the County Treasurer's Office, the Planning and Zoning Department, and with the County Commissioners and Department of Economic Development.

"Our entire Permits Desk is using it," he said. "Whenever County residents come in to apply for building permits, our staff can call up the location, turn the screen to the citizen and show them all of the features of the area they want to build on. If they are in a critical water area, for example, we can explain why we can't allow them to build there. It's a lot more effective than just saying no."

Edgin said one of the County Commissioners has quickly become an enthusiastic user of LGweb.

"He's found it saves him a lot of time and energy, because when a citizen calls with a complaint or question, he can pull up a map of the area in question and all of the surrounding areas. He can see who owns the surrounding property, what type of structures are built on it, and the natural land features in the area. It's a whole lot easier and faster than getting in the car and knocking on doors to gather information."



The Planning and Zoning staff has also responded positively to having maps with layers of information rather than having to use tables and databases.

“Honestly, I get very little feedback from my users, which I think is a positive sign. Mostly they call when they want additional layers or features. GIS is fairly new to our County’s important role in our future.”

“LGweb helps us tie our A/S 400 data to the geographic data we’ve collected in our HTE land-based modules, and that was impossible before LG,” Edgin said. “It’s so helpful to be able to see our data clearly and visually.”

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