



The Business Case for GIS



Using geographic information systems (GIS) enables businesses to make quicker, more effective decisions which in turn lead to decreased expenditure and increased profit. GIS does this by helping businesses to answer the “where” questions relating to customers, competitors, assets and location. This positions business leaders to identify and capitalise on overlooked gaps and opportunities.

All factors essential to commercial success can be analysed, managed and visualised using GIS. But what exactly is GIS? It's a system or platform which digitises geospatial data and then processes, stores, interprets, analyses, and manipulates the geospatial data according to organisational requirements.

Justifying expenditure is increasingly important in times of constrained budgets and the favourable return on investment from GIS works to its advantage. Businesses that understand the spatial relationships between themselves, their customers, and their suppliers can not only improve their profit margins and but also implement more effective advertising campaigns. Customer buying habits can be spatially analysed to pick up on trends and anomalies such as when particular products sell well and where the consumers purchasing them live.

Increasingly manufacturers of consumer goods are using GIS and spatial analytics to track social media activity, identifying brand preferences in specific areas and then making informed decisions on where to spend their marketing budgets. One of the fastest adopters of GIS over the last five years has been the telecommunications industry. A need for near real-time understanding of the network structure to facilitate better capacity planning has been the main driver behind this trend. Other contributors have been the role of GIS in reducing planning and design costs on telecommunication projects and in identifying potential antenna sites through analysis of customer, terrain, and landownership information.

GIS plays a crucial role in supply chain optimisation. Using data from mobile devices and radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags, GIS can provide real-time information on moving assets as well as provide insight on how to improve asset movement. Delivery routes can be optimised to determine the most efficient delivery routes taking into account variables such as distances, speed limits, and traffic light locations.

GIS can also assist communications companies with the dispatching of service vehicles for outage response and service provisioning. GIS routing applications can optimise drive times, territories, and the skill sets of individual technicians resulting in increased cost and time savings and improved customer satisfaction.

If your business is looking to manage its resources better in order to improve existing operations, if it is looking to save money and cut costs while simultaneously improving quality, efficiency and service, it might be time to implement GIS into your business operations.

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