LSGI Distinguished Lecture Series

Understanding Issues of Data Usability

Date: 26 September 2017 (Tue)
Time: 4:00pm - 5:00pm
Venue: Z414

Dr David Forrest

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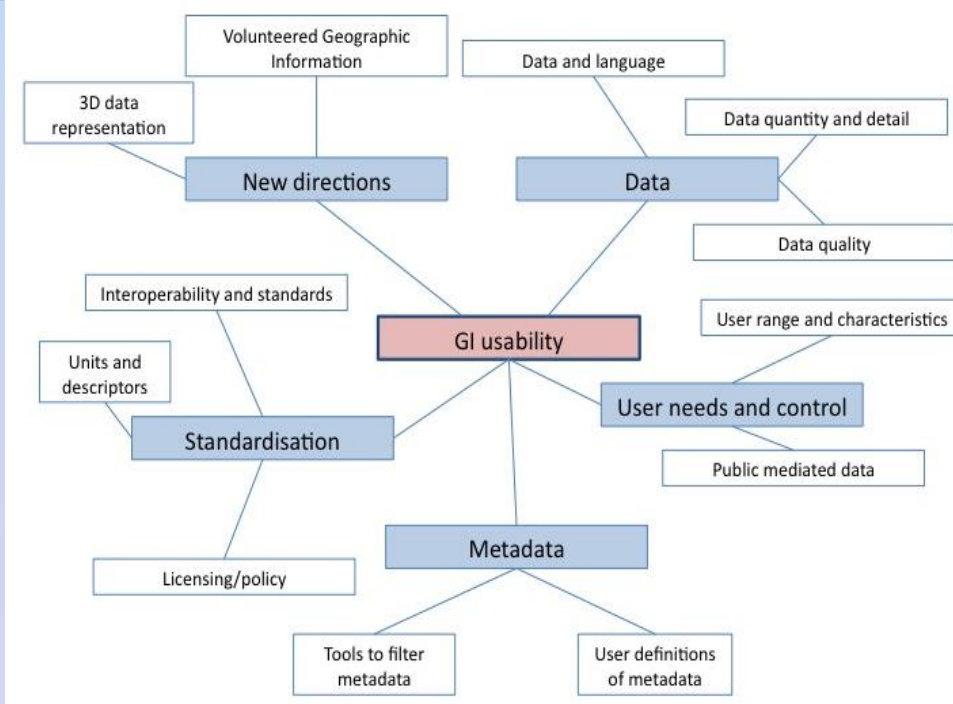
Biography

David Forrest PhD, FBCart.S is Senior lecturer and MSc programme director in Geomatics at the University of Glasgow, where he has taught cartography for 25 years. He is a Vice-President of the International Cartographic Association. A member of British Cartographic Society Council, he was BCS President 2000-02 and is currently chair of the UK Cartography Committee. Research interests include topographic, tourist and public transport map design, application of knowledge based systems to mapping with GIS, the design of maps for public information, and the perception and use of maps.

Abstract

Most research in the use and user area focuses on testing end users with end products, or on assessments of aspects such as user interface design. Very seldom does the usability of basic geospatial data products figure in such investigations (Sharples et al 2012). If such data products are going to be used for a range of applications, then the user needs to be able to understand the contents of the dataset. Most datasets are structured into themes, diving the data into different types of feature such as transportation, drainage, administrative boundaries, etc. Within these individual features can be distinguished either by use of feature codes or sets of attributes.

From a map maker's perspective, although such datasets may appear to be at an appropriate scale and level of detail to provide the base information for a map, on closer inspection it can be difficult to determine exactly what the features codes or classification of features actually mean. Much effort in recent years has been focused on the need to provide metadata which in theory should relieve this problem, but generally most metadata is at 'discovery' level, and while this may list the type of features in the data set, it does not provide sufficient information the understand the classification or what the individual feature classes actually represent.

The presentation discusses and illustrates some of these issues and highlights what is required to make datasets more (re)usable.

All interested are WELCOME!
To register, please go to: https://goo.gl/forms/IlvtWZCzdS3H3EmP2
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