

Extending GIS without Extending Your Day

By Monica Pratt, ArcUser Editor

Your life as a GIS manager just got a little easier.

With Esri Maps for Office, your organization's non-GIS staff can map their own tabular data and incorporate the map and feature services your department creates and maintains on ArcGIS Online for Organizations without leaving the comfortable and familiar confines of Microsoft Office.

Dealing with Mission Creep

As a GIS manager, your mission is to geoenable your organization. This means you are responsible not only for supporting the people who build, manage, and maintain your organization's GIS but also the customers in your organization who use geospatial intelligence to inform decisions and improve workflows.

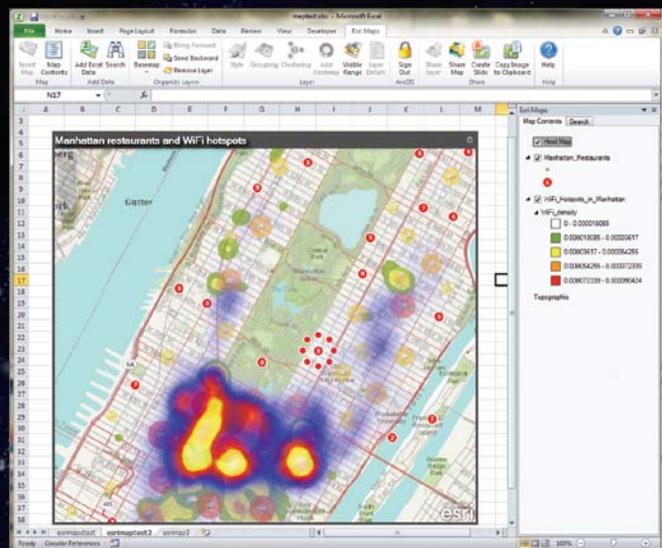
As the value of GIS has been recognized, its role has expanded from a tool to accomplish specific projects to an enterprise-wide information framework. In the process, the focus has shifted from making data available to providing actionable information to the organization. As a result, many GIS departments not only directly help individual customers but have developed strategies that let customers help themselves. Esri Maps for Office is a leap forward in this second process.

With 500 million users, Microsoft Office is likely the most used software in your organization for both presentation and analysis. Microsoft PowerPoint presentations are a staple of both conferences and staff meetings. Business professionals rely on Microsoft Excel for calculating, aggregating, manipulating, and graphing all kinds of data.

Although much of this data contains geographic information in the form of addresses, place-names, or coordinates, there was no way to visualize and analyze using location until now. With the Esri Maps for Office add-in, decision makers and managers can add location to their analysis and presentations without changing the way they work. It will make patterns in the data visible that graphs, charts, and tables cannot reveal. Interactive maps add impact to PowerPoint presentations and can be shared via web pages, mobile applications, and ArcGIS Online.

A Shortcut to Productivity

To get started, all that is required is Microsoft Office 2010 for Windows, an ArcGIS Online for Organizations subscription (either paid or trial), and the Esri Maps for Office add-in, which comes with



↑ Dynamically clustering points aggregates points as a single symbol at a small scale that can be broken apart when selected. At larger scales, points are displayed as individual symbols.

Hotspot analysis of restaurant locations and Wifi



↑ Point density can be represented as a heat map. Maps created with Excel data can be combined with map and feature services from ArcGIS Online. PowerPoint slides can be generated directly from Excel maps.

the ArcGIS Online subscription. The add-in seamlessly embeds in Microsoft, installing its own ribbon in both Excel and PowerPoint.

With the add-in, hard-core business users can immediately start creating interactive maps in Excel by choosing the Esri Maps tab, clicking Insert Map, and accepting the default basemap or choosing another. Add Excel data from a table, named range, or cell range. If this data is associated with areas, such as countries, subcountry regions (in the United States, Canada, and western Europe), ZIP Code, or custom regions (supplied as feature services), color-coded maps of sales, customers, or other types of data associated with areas can be created.

Locating data as points on a map is simple but remains very useful. Esri Maps for Office can geocode by address, ZIP Code, state, and country. The symbology of Excel data points can be manipulated in terms of marker style, color, size, and grouping. Esri Maps for Office handles point data intelligently. Tightly spaced points are dynamically clustered. Dynamically clustering aggregates points as a single symbol at a small scale, but aggregated symbols separate when selected. At larger scales, points are displayed as individual symbols. Point density can also be represented as a heat map.

Users can use Search to locate map services or feature services on ArcGIS Online. They can choose services added by your organization or some of the thousands of services contributed by other organizations. Having everyone use data layers that are centrally maintained by your organization ensures that the most current data is being used for analyses and presentations. Content created using the Esri Maps for Microsoft Office add-in can be added

to ArcGIS Online maps or shared back on ArcGIS Online for use by others in mashups.

Like other maps on ArcGIS Online, maps created with this content can be used by a mobile device (smartphone or tablet), embedded in a web page, shared via social media such as Facebook or Twitter, or converted to a web application. As the GIS manager, you maintain control over who can access, use, or contribute to the content you maintain on ArcGIS Online through assigning roles (i.e., user, publisher, administrator).

PowerPoint slides with interactive maps can be created from inside Excel and placed directly into an open PowerPoint file. Alternatively, web maps located on ArcGIS Online can be placed in a PowerPoint presentation by simply clicking the Add Map Slides button on the Esri Maps ribbon in PowerPoint. Maps can also be shared as static images.

Language support is provided for Arabic, Chinese (simplified), English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

A Complete Geospatial Platform

With the Esri Maps for Microsoft Office add-in, non-GIS users can take advantage of geointelligence without changing the way they work and without making more work for you and your staff. They can use your work, their work will be accessible across many platforms, and they will feed content back into your system, further integrating GIS into business systems and leveraging the organization's GIS assets. For more information, visit esri.com/software/esri-maps-for-office.

The Importance of Keeping Current

Isaac Asimov was right: "The only constant is change, continuing change, inevitable change."

This applies to software as well as other aspects of life. The GIS user community requires new functionality and applications. Operating systems, databases, complementary software, and industry standards are constantly revised. ArcGIS software, too, constantly evolves to meet users' needs and function in this changing environment.

Consequently, it is important to keep up-to-date with service packs. Each service pack helps improve performance and get the most functionality from ArcGIS. A service pack contains all the fixes and patches released for a version of a product as of that date, including *all previous service packs*. Occasionally, service packs even add functionality.

Because patches and hot fixes are built on the most recent service pack, software must be current on service packs to implement patches and fixes. Regularly applying service packs to all installations of ArcGIS also simplifies maintenance and troubleshooting because all machines will be running the same software.

Service packs relate to specific products and language versions of the software. Each is supplied as a Windows Installer patch (.msp) file or as a .tar archive file, depending on the product and/or

platform addressed by the service pack.

To download service packs, go to the Support section of esri.com and click the Patches and Service Packs link to view a list of the available current service packs and patches. Make sure service packs are downloaded to a location other than the one where ArcGIS is installed. All users can download service packs, whether or not they are on maintenance. Upon request, service packs can also be supplied on CD on a quarterly basis to those on maintenance.

To find out which Esri service packs are currently installed on a machine, use one of the PatchFinder utilities available for Windows and UNIX platforms from the Patches and Service Packs page on the Esri Support site.

Prior to installing a service pack, read all the accompanying documentation. If several Esri products are installed on the same machine, the order in which service packs are applied may be important. Once a service pack is applied to the software, it can only be removed by uninstalling and reinstalling the software to which the service pack was applied.