



British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

# Autodesk MapGuide Drives Exploration and Blends GIS Data from Separate Systems

## The BCMEM Delivers Valuable Data to the Exploration Community

To maximize the value of its geospatial information to the exploration community, the BCMEM turned to the Internet and Autodesk MapGuide to distribute its spatial data.

Using Autodesk Solutions, BCMEM is:

- Delivering maps with as many as 400 layers of data
- Serving maps that include layers from an ESRI SDE data warehouse
- Helping to cut research time from weeks to days or hours for many projects
- Saving exploration companies thousands of dollars in the preparation of investment proposals for mineral and energy exploration

## THE CHALLENGE

The British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines (BCMEM) encourages investment in energy and mining activities in this Canadian province, and such investments begin with exploration. To foster exploration, the BCMEM collects and shares valuable geological and geospatial data. Faced with the challenge of sharing its data as widely and efficiently as possible, the BCMEM depends on Autodesk MapGuide® to help it control costs and save time as it distributes data to the exploration community and beyond.

### Blending Layers from 15 Databases

To cut costs and to maximize efficiencies, the BCMEM moved from hardcopy publications to Internet publications, including the display and distribution of geospatial data using Autodesk MapGuide. Called MapPlace, the BCMEM's Autodesk MapGuide website blends geographic information system (GIS) layers from both its own database and those maintained by other government agencies. That outside data comes in a

variety of data formats, such as ESRI's proprietary Spatial Database Engine (SDE).

"We have about fifteen major databases from which we draw geological data, and when included with other data, we can deliver up to 400 layers on any one map," explains Larry Jones, senior geoscientist for MapPlace. "Autodesk MapGuide gives us a fast, affordable way to deliver information. We are even able to serve maps that blend ESRI's SDE data from other agencies."

## THE SOLUTION

### A Complete View in Minutes

Though it has a relatively small target audience, the MapPlace website gets over two million hits each year. MapPlace is now a critical tool for the mining exploration community and has become an integral part of the way many industry players do business. For instance, when the BCMEM releases new geological data, exploration

companies sometimes have helicopters and employees waiting to stake mining claims based on the new information. "Users can create the maps they need on-the-fly," says Jones. "Our maps blend information such as our agency's mineral potential data with information, like fishery or forestry data, from other agencies' servers. MapPlace gives users a comprehensive view of an area in just a few minutes."

The exploration community has demonstrated its appreciation for MapPlace by showering it with praise. Don Hryhor, a mining industry consultant, reports that MapPlace is "the most impressive site I have ever seen." And Dick Billingsley of Heritage Resources says, "I can now do research in one evening that once took two weeks in the library."

### Browsing ESRI Data in Under One Day

To further its goal of making a wider variety of information available to the exploration community, BCMEM wanted to serve data stored in an ESRI SDE data warehouse in Victoria, Canada. BCMEM turned to Pacific Alliance Technologies, an Autodesk partner

and authorized reseller, for help. Using Autodesk MapGuide and FME Spatial Data Provider for MapGuide, an on-the-fly data translator from Safe Software, Pacific Alliance configured the system to dynamically blend the ESRI layers.

According to Chris Webber of Pacific Alliance Technologies, "We were successfully browsing the ESRI data in less than a day. Autodesk MapGuide can blend layers from any number of sources, such as SDF, SHP, and SDE files, on a single map. And it's fast even when the data layers are coming from multiple servers."

## THE RESULT

### Weeks and Thousands of Dollars Saved

MapPlace users often report that the website saves them several weeks of tedious research each year, but the cost savings are just as significant, especially for smaller exploration companies. "GIS data can be expensive to purchase and manipulate," explains Jones. "Because we want to encourage exploration, all our data is free. If we weren't making so much data and map building power available with Autodesk MapGuide, it would cost exploration companies as much as \$10,000 just to create simple preliminary maps."

He adds, "We have built one of the most comprehensive and powerful websites of its kind anywhere in the world using MapGuide. We are competing with other areas for exploration dollars, and MapPlace is helping us to make British Columbia a more cost-effective place to invest."

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Larry Jones,  
British Columbia Ministry of Energy  
and Mines

## For More Information

To learn more about how Autodesk MapGuide saves time and money by making GIS data more available, visit us on the web at [www.autodesk.com/infrastructure](http://www.autodesk.com/infrastructure).

To see the MapPlace in action, visit [www.MapPlace.ca](http://www.MapPlace.ca).

## About Pacific Alliance Technologies

An Autodesk Authorized System Center, Pacific Alliance Technologies provides software, customization and implementation, application development, education and support. Pacific Alliance Technologies serves customers throughout North America from its offices in Calgary, Victoria and Vancouver. To learn more, visit [www.pat.ca](http://www.pat.ca).