

Scottish Enterprise



1Spatial's Broadband Portal has enabled Scottish Enterprise to improve broadband availability across Scotland. The online one-stop-shop integrates databases and datasets from across Scotland to display live coverage mapping showing which areas are not yet connected to broadband. The Portal also enables telecoms companies to assess the viability of installing a broadband service by querying population and business classification information.

The Challenge

In order to improve opportunities for Scotland's businesses, the country's main economic development agency, Scottish Enterprise was looking for a way to support broadband delivery to all areas of Scotland, both urban and rural. Recent research has highlighted a disparity in the accessibility of broadband services across Scotland. Urban areas are generally well provided with broadband, but rural and more remote areas were often unconnected; telecom companies found that installing broadband services to small rural populations was not commercially viable due to the large distances involved and the low take-up.

Scottish Enterprise needed a tool to enable assessment of the current status of broadband delivery across Scotland as well as the potential for future delivery. This involved bringing together information from a number of sources. This tool needed to be widely accessible both within Scottish Enterprise and externally to telecom companies.

The Solution

1Spatial created a 'Broadband Portal' that integrates datasets and databases from across Scotland and displays live mapping of broadband coverage; it shows, amongst other things, the current status of local exchanges together with scheduled broadband enablement date and completion dates. Users can also assess the viability of broadband delivery to a particular area via spatial queries that show businesses, classifications of business, residential classification and demographics.

The basis for the development of the Broadband Portal was mapping delivered through MapGuide Server to both Autodesk MapGuide® ActiveX applications (via intranet for Scottish Enterprise users) and Autodesk MapGuide LiteView applications (via extranet for telecom companies)

1Spatial worked with the Scottish Executive, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise to deliver this solution.

The Results

The Broadband Portal developed by 1Spatial represents a cost effective means of disseminating a level of intelligence to a large community that would not have been otherwise possible.

It allows users to access a "one-stop shop" for a definitive source of broadband availability across Scotland. This information has been used to improve delivery of broadband services to the more rural and remote areas of the country. It is also utilised by Local Enterprise Councils in Scotland and the Scottish Executive to inform local and national policy initiatives.

This has created an effective decision support tool for the enterprise agencies and is a clear demonstration of the benefits that can be derived from using geographical information in a key support capacity.

Although much of the data used within the development was very specific to the topic of broadband, there has been considerable opportunity to re-use the collated data and developed functionality to support other agendas of an 'e' persuasion.

