

MapIT & FM Media provide businesses with web and mobi mapping services
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MapIT has partnered with digital specialists, FM Media, to provide map data for a range of web and mobile solutions that rely on mapping.

It has become increasingly apparent to MapIT that there is a demand from consumers to access map based services from the web and mobile phones. It is estimated that there are 15 million WAP enabled mobile phone users currently in South Africa.

"With an increase of people demanding more portability and information on-hand, mobile offers just that. Being mobile means having the ability to find what you are looking for when you really need it," says FM Media Communication Director, Arshad Mahomed.

With such a broad audience at one's finger tips, services that rely on mapping are becoming of increasing interest to companies. According to MapIT Managing Director, Ray Wilkinson, companies are responding to the trends by adding map based search applications to their service offerings to enable people to search, locate and route to their businesses and services with pin-point accuracy. The first of the three products to be rolled out by FM Media is Store Locator, Mobi-Map and Go-Halaal. These services can be incorporated into a company's web and mobi sites offering its customers more value added services.

The Store Locator, which is available for the web and mobile phones, has been designed to allow businesses to offer consumers the ability to search for their nearest branch. By layering map data into a development environment, the product is able to add listings of companies that have more than one outlet. These "sites" get geo-located by converting the physical address into a GPS coordinate, the data is then stored in a database with tags depending on industry/branch/other physical location. This then allows users to find any Points of Interest from wherever they may be, by simply inputting their physical address. The system then calculates their closest POI, and displays turn by run directions directly on the handset.

The Mobi-Map portal assists users to search for highly accurate street addresses and points of interest that can be viewed on a map display. Users can search for a "to" and "from" address and received turn by turn directions as well as a street map with the highlighted route to the required destination.

Go-Halaal (mobi.gohalaal.com) is a one of a kind product available only in South Africa designed for the Muslim community that enables the user to locate a mosque closest to them without the use of GPS. This product utilizes the same method as the store locator and can be modified to suit any industry that requires such functionality.

"This partnership between MapIT and FM Media ensures the companies are answering the demands of their consumers in terms of accessing the web and mobile search space with highly accurate and efficient map based search applications," says Wilkinson. "The value added services for companies and their customers are invaluable. It is available all day every day, accessible from

anywhere in the country, increases brand awareness, improves customer loyalty and it's easy to use," he adds.

"MapIT is excited about the partnership with FM Media and we look forward to providing our expertise to a company that is helping to evolve the mobile space."

About MapIT

MapIT is at the forefront of digital mapping in Sub-Saharan Africa powering the next generation of location enabled technologies. MapIT's data is used in products and applications such as asset tracking, fleet management, business and market intelligence and web services. Its partnership in Africa with Tele Atlas, a leading global provider of digital maps and dynamic content for navigation and location based solutions, has enabled MapIT's data to be incorporated into Tele Atlas' international map offering, thus providing clients with map data of international standards.