

DIGITAL MAP PIONEER AND FOUNDER OF MAPIT RETIRES

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Ray Wilkinson, pioneer of commercially viable digital mapping in South Africa and founder of MapIT, is stepping down as MD. Wilkinson has handed over the leadership of the company he started eight years ago to Etienne Louw, a professionally qualified geo-spatial application expert and director of Spatial Security Solutions for African Astronautics. Louw will take the reins as managing director at the beginning of May 2010.

According to Wilkinson, MapIT needs new leadership to address the growing demand for enriched geo-spatial mapping content, which will be a part of the next major phase in the company's growth.

Wilkinson announced his retirement in Pretoria this week, stating that having achieved his long term goal of turning MapIT into South Africa's leading supplier of digital mapping data, it was time to address new market demands. These include GIS related corporate enterprise solutions and geo-location marketing and advertising -- all of which require enriched digital content.

"We have to use our very powerful position in the market to not only service our existing clients, but to address the growing demand for content that would enable business to implement targeted marketing," said Wilkinson. "We're not only talking about geo-location marketing and advertising in the mobile market, but also about digital map enabled geo-spatial applications that offer the corporate enterprise world incredibly powerful and accurate tools for analysing and monitoring business activities at ground level."

Wilkinson added that MapIT had appointed Louw on the merit of his 21-year track record in the geo-spatial field to spearhead the company's move into the geo-spatial content age.

"Etienne has just the right kind of background and experience to guide MapIT into a field where we can use the unique strengths of our two shareholders" adds Wilkinson. "On the one hand, we have Tele Atlas, one of the world's leading mapmakers, and on the other, Avusa, a media giant in South Africa -- no other company can offer this kind of leverage in the geo-spatial field and this is exactly the kind of insight and expertise that Etienne brings to MapIT."

Louw has extensive experience in identifying new GIS applications and integrating these applications into complementary technologies. "This applies especially to multimedia content that can be overlaid onto digital maps. That is why enriched content is becoming so important," said Wilkinson.

Speaking from Pretoria, Louw said that GIS had evolved over time from a scientific application into an extremely powerful business tool.

"Bearing in mind that every single activity in a company takes place somewhere in geo-located space, we want to enable large corporations to leverage the advantages of being spatially enabled," says Louw. "The new generation of decision makers in South Africa are much more spatially orientated than the previous generation -- they eat and sleep the mobile market," he added. "To meet this demand, we're positioning MapIT to talk to this new generation of decision makers."

Backed by two "very strong shareholders" – one bringing content, the other 'space' – MapIT has the capacity to offer spatially orientated market solutions that no other company in South Africa can address. "The company brings the two worlds of content and space together, and we're sitting at the centre of this world where content is king. This, in a nutshell, encompasses my vision for MapIT," said Louw."

Under his tenure, Wilkinson turned MapIT into South Africa's leading supplier of digital maps and map related data. In 2008, he negotiated a buy-out by Tele Atlas of a 49% shareholding in MapIT, a partnership that gave MapIT's clients access to world quality mapping and mapmaking techniques.

About MapIT:

MapIT operates at the forefront of digital mapping in Sub-Saharan Africa. Working in tandem with shareholders Tele Atlas (a world leading international mapmaker) and local media giant Avusa, the company is Southern Africa's leading supplier of digital map data and enriched geo-spatial content used in the mobile and corporate enterprise markets. MapIT also supplies commerce and industry with applications and data used in asset tracking, fleet management, business and marketing intelligence and web services.