Microsoft®
Virtual Earth™

Location Services for the Hospitality and Travel Industry

Competition in the hospitality and travel industry is growing increasingly intense. The rising costs of fuel, along with other economic factors, have tourists and business travelers thinking twice about how they spend their travel dollars. Likewise, the slowdown in the industry is driving businesses to look to technology for new ways differentiate the guest experience and gain better insight to manage their business more effectively. Microsoft® Virtual Earth™ helps provide hospitality and travel firms the ability to forge more satisfying customer connections and to visualize important business information to make better decisions.

What You Can Do with Virtual Earth

Strengthen Customer Connections

: : Engage your Web site visitors with bird's eye[1] and hybrid imagery so they can get detailed views of specific properties from various perspectives.

: : Provide guests with localized walking directions[2] and driving directions based on current traffic conditions, in 15 languages.

: : Help customers plan their travel and lodging needs with multipoint routing and trip planning, and provide search results to find local attractions and amenities on specific properties.

Improve Business Insight

: : Focus marketing efforts by visualizing important information, such as key customer concentration and demographic areas, on Virtual Earth maps.

: : Optimize business performance by quickly visualizing business intelligence data, such as customer trends or reservation statistics, using layered data within the Virtual Earth environment.

Grow Through Innovation

: : Expand current services by delivering new online offerings that leverage location and geospatial solutions.

: : Take advantage of data visualization by integrating line-of-business applications with location-based data, such as GeoRSS feeds or location-specific performance metrics.

Virtual Earth Advantages

The Microsoft Virtual Earth platform is an integrated set of services that combines advanced viewing options—including bird's eye[1] and hybrid views, and aerial imagery—with innovative mapping, location, and search functionality. It enables hospitality and travel companies to engage business partners and customers by providing innovative solutions and a visual display of data. Additionally, the architecture enables companies to easily develop solutions that leverage customizable features and imagery, dynamic maps, multi-language driving and walking directions[2], and powerful data visualization and reporting capabilities—without significant financial investments.

Empower: The Virtual Earth platform empowers hospitality and travel companies by providing tools to help them manage data and connect to users more effectively. By leveraging powerful Virtual Earth data visualization capabilities, companies can use the platform as a foundation for building location intelligence solutions. Empowered with up-to-date information, hospitality and travel companies can focus on connecting with users and delivering the best products and services.

Real: The Virtual Earth platform offers reliable imagery and data, allowing hospitality and travel companies to build a precise view of their organization. Bird's eye[1] imagery helps companies create rich connections with their users by allowing them to view and familiarize themselves with locations before they arrive. Enhanced geocoding and reverse geocoding[3] provide accurate and up-to-date results for efficient driving directions and position locators. Pushpin information boxes help users learn about a location or quickly visualize information relevant to it. Combined, these features result in an enhanced and immersive Web site experience.

Professional: The Virtual Earth platform utilizes open standards-based technologies, and offers flexible licensing options to fit almost any budget, enabling hospitality and travel companies to develop innovative solutions in a cost-effective manner. With 99.9% availability, companies can be confident the platform services will be available when needed.

Locate. Innovate. Integrate.

See how Virtual Earth can help your company create online experiences to drive better customer connections and internal applications to help visualize information for more informed decision making.

Here are two sample scenarios:

Virtual Earth in Action – Improving Customer Connections

Bolster Online Bookings with Maps

Example Scenario: Bookings through your hotel chain's Web site are good, but you know they can be better. You're looking for a cost-effective solution to make your Web site visitors more aware of your various brands and properties so they can more easily find one that suits them. You also want to provide driving and walking directions to get them where they need to go once they arrive.

Solution: You integrate Virtual Earth into your Web site to provide visitors with easy-to-read maps that provide the information they want. Customers can search for your hotels by city, or they can find your nearest property by searching by a popular point of interest, such as Wrigley Field. When customers enter their travel dates and destination into the search criteria, the map displays your property options, including availability, pricing, and directions.

Benefits: By providing your customers all the information they need at a glance, you've created a hassle-free way to search and book accommodations. This added convenience goes a long way towards creating customer loyalty and satisfaction that will keep them coming back to your site for future lodging needs.

Virtual Earth in Action – Improving Customer Connections

Drive Customer Satisfaction with Local Information

Example Scenario: Your clients are busy travelers. When they book their accommodations, they also want to know more about the area: the local restaurants, bars, shopping, and events—such as a concert or farmers' market.

Solution: Your Virtual Earth mapping solution allows you to easily overlay additional information on a map to give your customers insight into what's happening locally. You offer reviews of local restaurants, or locations of local theaters and events, for example, and can provide multi-language driving and walking directions[2] to better serve your customers.

Benefits: From your hotel Web site or via a kiosk in your lobby, you're providing helpful information that empowers your customers to get where they want to go and better understand the local surroundings. These value-added conveniences make your hotel stand out from the crowd, and customers will remember you each time they plan a new itinerary.

More Information

For more information, please visit: **www.microsoft.com/virtualearth**.
In addition, you may contact a Virtual Earth Sales Specialist: North, Central, and South America, **e-mail**: maplic@microsoft.com.
In Europe, Africa, Middle East, and the Asia Pacific region, **e-mail**: mapemea@microsoft.com.

[1]Available in many metropolitan areas. Not available for government customers.
[2]Walking directions are available in the United States and the European Union.
[3]Reverse geocoding is available in the United States.

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