

Client Case Study

Can't see the wood for the trees?

You can with a mobile tree management solution from WoodPlan



Background

WoodPlan is an expanding GIS software solutions provider for urban tree management, forest records, production forecasting and harvesting control. The company specialises in data collection and systems integration.

As a major supplier to local authorities, WoodPlan became increasingly aware of a market for a comprehensive and seamless mobile data entry system that would allow surveyors to access and input data on the move.

The challenge

Customers, especially local authorities, increasingly want their mobile workers to generate service and maintenance orders by transferring field survey information seamlessly into a central data store.

To meet this demand, WoodPlan recognised that it needed a more reliable mobile application to integrate its map reporting and tree management software. This would allow field workers to generate service orders direct from on-site surveys, improving workflows and auditing within woodland management.

A robust, cost-effective mobile platform was essential.

"The key demand now has become an application that enhances the value of the MapInfo platform, helps PDAs interface with a database system and serves user requirements across management functions", says Robin Hassall, WoodPlan's Software Development Manager.

The solution

On Dotted Eyes' advice, WoodPlan trialled GBM Mobile, which integrates with MapInfo Professional, allowing field workers to capture and process data quickly using pre-defined form fields to standardise inputs. Users are able to display ownership and boundary layers from their corporate GIS while plotting individual tree points and entering important attribute data. Updated information is easily transferred to the main database as the data has been collected in a consistent way. This further improves accuracy and the speed in which information is uploaded.

Rigorous internal trials confirmed that the solution met WoodPlan's requirements.

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Project outline

WoodPlan required a robust, mobile data collection device on which to run its tree management software.

Benefits

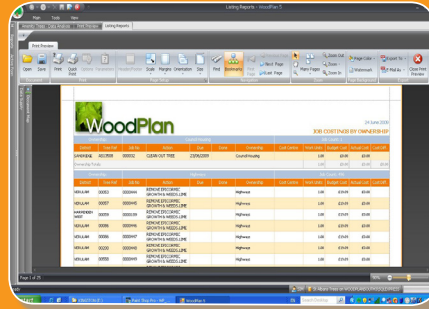
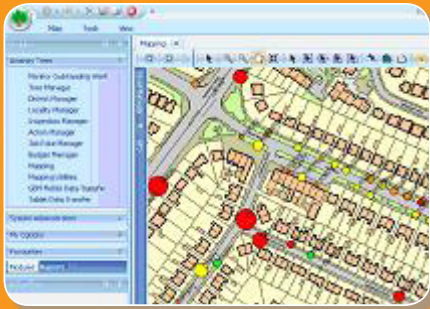
- Easy to use, familiar user interface
- Seamless data transfer process
- Clear audit trail
- Saves time - frees up resource
- Accuracy is significantly enhanced

Key technology and datasets used

- WoodPlan tree management software integrated with GBM Mobile and MapInfo Professional
- Ordnance Survey datasets including OS MasterMap



WoodPlan software interface



Left: Accurate tree data is transferred quickly to the main database

Right: Reports available to print from uploaded data

The pre-defined data capture forms and audit trails ensured that very little support was required by field workers, as the user input required was self-explanatory.

The solution supports all Ordnance Survey background map formats, including OS MasterMap and aerial imagery, so is compatible with mapping licensed by a wide range of customers. Data is written to MapInfo .tab files for smooth integration.

Recognition of success

Since developing the interface for GBM Mobile, WoodPlan has supplied its GBM Mobile / MapInfo driven tree management system to a number of local authorities and housing associations. Customers have quickly realised the benefits of the seamless integration with their corporate GIS.

The consistent, user friendly data input process has shown users that the functionality of their familiar desktop application is achievable in the field. Existing datasets and style sets are used, eliminating duplication, and time is saved over traditional paper based methods.

"We now have a fully integrated mobile and desktop solution for all aspects of local authority tree management," says Robin Hassall.

Why Dotted Eyes?

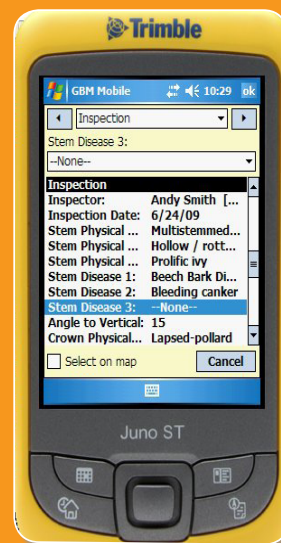
Dotted Eyes' mobile GIS solutions are specifically designed for field asset management. They help with data preparation, control and compliance. Their weight and cost are appropriate for the relevant hardware and they support fully customisable form fields for data input and centrally managed information control.

Dotted Eyes offers two mobile GIS products, GBM Mobile for PDAs and GBM Portable for tablet PCs. As both products work in the MapInfo environment, the familiarity between desktop and mobile means there is often no need for end user training.

Sharing information captured with mobile GIS enables local authorities to maintain street furniture, preserve trees and monitor rights of way, utility companies to manage their network infrastructures and housing associations to monitor the condition of housing stock.

For more information on GBM Mobile visit www.dottedeyes.com/mobilegis

GBM Mobile interface



"The solution is easy to use and favourable on cost," says Mr Hassall.
"That is good for us and good for our customers."