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Conor Lenihan, Minister for Science, Technology, Innovation and Natural Resources today announced Ordnance Survey Ireland's (OSi) (Tuesday, 30th March 2010) launch of its business-to-business online mapping service, MapGenie.

MapGenie provides immediate online access to the most complete and highest quality map data available on the island of Ireland. It offers single source access to premium map data at a variety of scales from OSi and Land and Property Services Northern Ireland (LPS) geodatabases through an All-Ireland web mapping service (WMS).

OSi hosts all map data, which saves significant time and costs as organisations avoid the need to store and manage the data in-house. Map data is presented according to customer requirements and is more cost effective and easier to use, as time-consuming translations to different data formats are not required.

Built on industry standards, MapGenie works across browsers and operating systems. It may be used in conjunction with or to supplement existing web-based applications built around Google Maps or Microsoft Bing API (Application Programming Interface).

According to OSi, the new MapGenie service can be used across a range of business sectors with a wide variety of applications. OSi said that a number of public and private sector organisations already use MapGenie, including Forcelink, a private sector start-up company that uses MapGenie to offer a software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution for managing mobile workforces.

The Forcelink solution improves productivity; delivers a fast return on investment as a 100 per cent hosted solution; offers real-time feedback and SMS messaging and identifies the location of resources, reduces risks for lone workers and provides more accurate mileage claims.

OSi has collaborated with the Road Safety Authority (RSA) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) to produce a web-based road safety application, which displays the pattern and locations of road collisions in recent years in Ireland, where death and personal injury was involved, showing collision data on OSi maps at national, county and local levels by severity, year and type. This valuable resource allows the public to see collision statistics and information throughout the Republic of Ireland instantly, acting not only as a valuable visualisation tool in the analysis of the data but also as a means for the public to plan their journey safely.

The national mapping agency also said that MapGenie can also be used by existing customers, through a web-based map viewing application, that easily combines a selection of an organisation's data with OSi map data to provide a web-based system across the entire organisation.

Examples cited include organisations involved in managing land parcels or property interests; the insurance industry using geographic location techniques to improve pricing and risk assessment processes and access to MapGenie can be provided immediately at any time for use in the event of a national emergency.

A web-based map viewer could be used to support potential Government projects that require quick, easy and simply access to national geographic datasets. Using the MapGenie map viewer it is possible to achieve cost efficiencies in projects through better informed decision making or to obtain feedback through public consultation programmes.

Speaking at the launch today Minister Lenihan said that:

“Premium services of the highest quality are what this country is about and should be about. This MapGenie is a great example of this.”

Geraldine Ruane, OSi’s chief executive, added, “Web mapping services are a key technology within the geo-spatial industry and MapGenie is an important milestone for OSi. Using the latest technology, the new online service will support the development of National industry and assist public sector organisations improve existing services as well as introduce new services as evidenced by the collaborations announced today.

“Existing OSi customers will benefit from MapGenie’s value-for-money offering while new customers will be rewarded with easier access to our map data. This will be particularly attractive for the SME sector,” she noted.

All map data provided by MapGenie is dynamically generated from OSi’s vector databases and styled and cached at a number of scales. National coverage orthophotography is provided as a raster layer. MapGenie is also available as a ‘Hybrid’ web service, provided a mix of orthophotography and high detail large-scale map data.

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Notes for editors:

Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) is Ireland’s National Mapping Agency. Our headquarters are in the Phoenix Park, Dublin. We are proud of one hundred and eighty six year history of serving the national interest in the production of mapping products and services.

Today, OSi employs approximately 300 staff and has a turnover of €25 million. We produce urban, rural and tourist mapping at a variety of scales. This mapping is produced in digital format as well as on paper. In addition, the base data used to create these map series are also used to produce other products such as aerial photography and Digital Terrain Models.

Our customer base spans most sectors and includes Government Departments and Offices, Local Authorities, Utility Companies, Banks, Insurance Companies, Architects and Engineers and the Construction Industry, as well as members of the general public. Most of our revenue is generated from the production and application of sophisticated digital mapping data for use with Computer Aided Design and Geographical Information Systems.

