Santa Clara, Calif.-based Strategic Mapping's GIS system is available for $1,595 including all of the software necessary to perform the various functions.

...Companies Finding Large GIS Markets

Huntsville, Ala.-based Intergraph is finding markets for its GIS software and hardware not only in the United States, but in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Last month, the largest Brazilian utility company bought the company's GIS system configuration of five Unix workstations, one scanner and other equipment. The system's value--which is not one of the company's larger contracts--was more than $1 million.

Intergraph, a member of the Fortune 500 with sales of more than $100 million in GIS sales, is the largest company that supplies interactive computer graphics systems.

...GeoResearch Inc. Finds Software Niche

One company that has grown rapidly and is positioning itself for a possible stock offering is Washington, D.C.-based GeoResearch Inc. The company patented its GeoLink mapping software that employ GPS information to generate and update a GIS database in real time.

Doug Richardson, company president and founder, said GIS would achieve rapid growth in the next few years. Although much growth has come from emergency management agencies and private companies that work with the government, foreign markets continue to be big money-makers for the company.

The company is trying to work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Russian government to map and survey areas in the former Soviet Union that were contaminated by nuclear waste, said James Meenan, GeoResearch international markets vice president.

The company has an ongoing project to map and help the Philippine government to decide what to with the former U.S. Navy base at Subic Bay. Meenan said the government was assessing the base's infrastructure.

"The base is around one of the last natural rain forests in the Philippines. The government wants to promote not only regular tourism there, but ecological tourism," he said.

In other international developments, Meenan said the company was talking to an agency in Malaysia to help it "georeference" jungle areas by air.

Back in the United States, GeoResearch is talking to the District of Columbia government about resurveying its Metro train lines. "They want to use GPS to resurvey the new Green Line extension," Meenan said.

The company worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Systems Engineering and Management Association (SEMA) to help to map Mississippi River flood areas last summer with the GeoLink mapping system and Motorola's LGT-1000 GPS receivers.

As GIS takes off, GeoResearch hopes its annual GPS/GIS conference and training program will grow as well. The company expects a few hundred participants this year in Washington, D.C., for its May 9-13 conference.

The good thing about the GeoResearch Conference, Meenan said, is non-technical managers will have the opportunity to study foreign GIS/GPS markets.

"We have brought in speakers from EPA and other federal agencies [who will talk about GIS]. We plan to have foreign markets seminars--so the conference is not just for technical types," Meenan said.

The company, as part of the conference, is sponsoring a GPS/GIS mapping expedition down the Washington, D.C., area's Potomac River.

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