

Ohio GIS Conference, Abstract Submission for Presentation:

PDF Maps – Past, Present – IS There a Future?

In this age of internet applications, Google Earth, ArcGIS this, ArcGIS that, is there a way that I can send a simple map to someone, digitally, that requires no training? Will spawn no endless list of questions and comments? Does not require an internet connection when out in the field? Will work with an iPhone, iPad, Netbooks, Notebooks – will work with practically any computer on Earth? Does not require me, as the service provider, to purchase any more hardware, software, or software extensions?

There is a solution that we have had some success with here in Clinton County, and that is exporting maps out into a Geo-Enabled PDF file. With a free application, it is possible to add map features on top of PDF maps, using the ever-popular iPhones and iPads. We have e-mailed them to users, made them available on web pages, handed them out on portable drives, in multipage book format and on single pages, and even included limited attributes.

While this may not be a solution for the masses, it definitely fills a niche, and I have found Geo-enabled PDF maps both interesting and very useful.