



Case Study

Town of Newmarket

Microsoft
GOLD CERTIFIED
Partner

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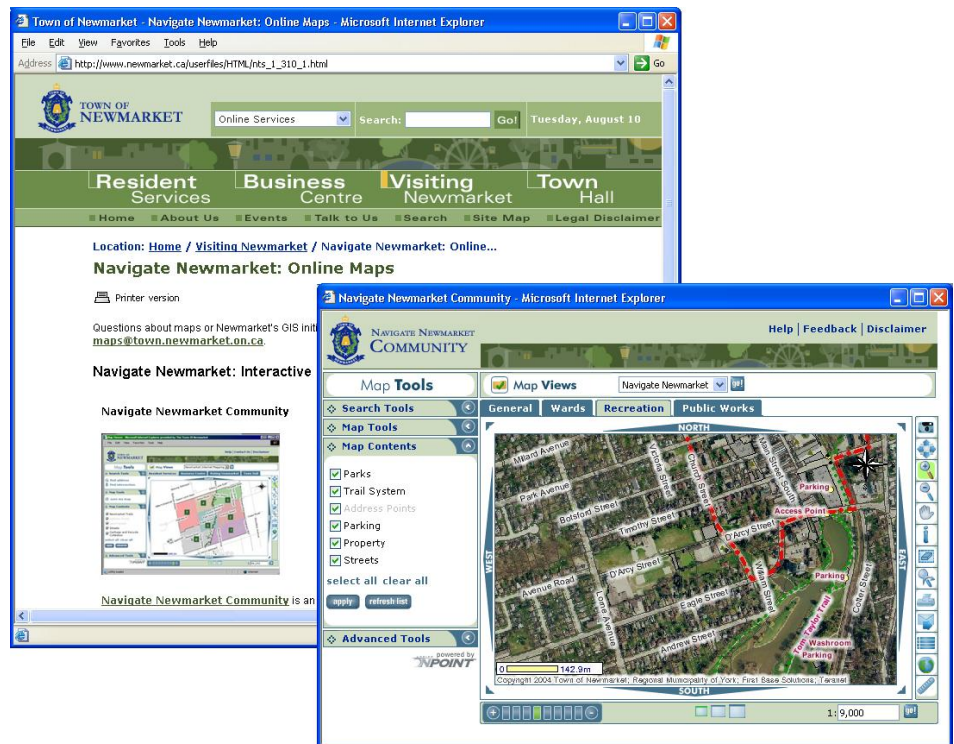
The Situation

In 2003, the Town of Newmarket's GIS department had a great vision for the wealth of land-based data available internally and throughout the Region. They were already using a variety of products from Rolta Canada to manage the geographic data internally; now, they wanted to provide the benefits of that data to the public through Rolta's Economic Development Solutions. After all, what good were all of the aerial photographs, ward and council information, garbage and recycling boundaries, and locations of parks, trails, and key neighbourhood features if the public couldn't access this data easily and efficiently? Moreover, the Town wanted to provide geographic information to the public about the viability of choosing Newmarket as a site for potential business development. Based on their past experience with Rolta, the Town's GIS specialists knew that they provided Rolta OnPoint™, a powerful tool for building a web-GIS portal, which also can be used for economic development to provide demographics, zoning information, and business-related data through that portal. They had the vision; however, there were problems such as resources and funding.

Virtually overnight, Newmarket residents went from having no online access to the Town's spatial data to complete access to data sets prepared by the Town's GIS department. At the same time, the potential businesses could now do detailed research about opportunities in the area

The Choice

After doing some research, the Town of Newmarket's GIS team discovered the GeoSmart program, a \$32-million initiative sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The GeoSmart program assists smaller Ontario communities with implementing GIS solutions to improve community efficiency and economic development through online land-based information services. With Rolta's help, the Town applied for GeoSmart funding, and they were awarded \$400,000 to put toward realizing their GIS goals.



The Town of Newmarket's web-GIS solution: www.newmarket.ca

With funding secured, the GIS team implemented Rolta's OnPoint product to create a web-based front end ("Navigate Newmarket") to the Town's and the region's spatial data. The team used the tool's flexibility to create a customized look and feel for the new web portal and fully control end-user access to the data. When finished, the portal provided the public with an intuitive interface, interactive clickable maps, and access to all of that data they couldn't previously find online. And, through an earlier version of OnPoint for Economic Development, OnSite extension, potential businesses could now do detailed research about opportunities in the area.

Within a few short months, they implemented Rolta Canada’s voting software for making customized election information and maps available to the public online prior to the local municipal election.

And the Town of Newmarket didn’t stop there. Virtually overnight, the “Navigate Newmarket” front end to the Town’s information system enabled residents to go from having no spatial data access to complete online access to data sets prepared and managed by the Town’s GIS department. Then, they implemented Rolta’s InstaMAP product, an earlier version of CartoPrint, for internal staff to view cartographic-quality maps through a web browser. Presto—GIS vision for broad access to data realized. And then some.

The Challenges

- **Integration of multiple data sources**—The Town of Newmarket had multiple disconnected business systems (e.g., JD Edwards for the asset inventory system, Vailtech for the tax system, Heat for Customer Service, etc.). Rolta’s OnPoint Professional product provided a spatial mapping interface that linked the data and allowed users to “drill down” through a string of previously disconnected business systems, view extended attributes, and create dynamic reports.
- **Cohesive interface for the public**—The Town of Newmarket had two separate purposes for its new web-GIS portal: it needed to provide community-oriented information to residents, and it needed to provide business-focused information to the business community. Both needed to be accomplished through a common look and feel. Rolta’s OnPoint solution integrated to provide two flavours in a single web portal: Navigate Newmarket Community and Navigate Newmarket Business.
- **Search capabilities through multiple data sources**—Because the Town’s data resided in multiple business systems, the staff needed the ability to search through various databases efficiently and quickly. OnPoint Professional’s powerful multi-level join functionality allowed them to link the databases and create complex queries to address this requirement.

“Leveraging available partnerships and opportunities, we’ve successfully implemented meaningful, user-friendly GIS products that empower Newmarket residents, visitors, businesses, and staff.”

—Susan Chase, Town of Newmarket

The Process

The Town of Newmarket assessed its situation and found that 80% of the data residing in its databases had a spatial component. The Town drafted a strategic plan for implementing an enterprise-wide GIS solution to integrate this spatial data, make it accessible, improve internal productivity, and boost the overall level of service offered to the public.

To help realize this plan, the Town of Newmarket approached Rolta for assistance in applying for GeoSmart funding. (For more information about GeoSmart, see <http://www.geosmart.gov.on.ca/aboutgeosmart.cfm>.) Rolta Canada assisted the Town with preparing the application, and the Town received a \$400,000 grant from the province.

Over 12 months, the Town of Newmarket used the provincial funding to purchase or upgrade and implement the following products:

- OnPoint and OnPoint Professional (*currently changed to OnPoint Enterprise*)
- OnSite (*currently changed OnPoint Eco Dev Extension*)
- InstaMAP (*currently changed to CartoPrint*)
- OnPoint BackOffice
- Heat Customer Service Application from Telus

The Result

Within a year, the Town of Newmarket's small GIS department implemented a full complement of Rolta's Economic Development Solution to revolutionize the way the area's residents were able to access information about their municipality. Internal staffs were able to query spatial data and create their own maps. As well, through Rolta's OnPoint Web-GIS solution, businesses were given the tools to make informed decisions about business opportunities in Newmarket. Indeed, the solution has been so successful that the Town of Newmarket's Manager of Information Technology, Susan Chase, won the prestigious URISA Leadership Award for her department's efforts. Within the implementation timeframe of a year, the Town of Newmarket now boasts:

- A web-based single point of access to all land-related services to residents, interested members of the public, and prospective business investors, designed for users with little or no previous experience in searching for land-based data.
- A customized look for the GIS web portal that is fully integrated with the rest of the website and reflects the Town's overall corporate brand.
- Full administrative control over search options and contextual information presented to the end user to maximize efficiency and leverage the unique characteristics of the area.
- A business-oriented extension to the portal that allows members of the business community to browse potential properties and then drill down on particulars about the site, the area's demographics, and the zoning for available commercial and industrial land; users can even print reports that summarize the data they discover.
- Web-based browsing capabilities for cartographic-quality maps for internal clients.
- A secure in-house ArcMap environment controlled by OnPoint BackOffice, with full administrative control over the content, functionality, and appearance of the ArcMap desktops.



Susan Chase of the Town of Newmarket won the 2004 GIS Leadership Award from the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA). From left to right: Rolta Canada's Senior VP of GIS Shafik Jiwani, McMaster University's Dr. Nick Bontis, Susan Chase, and URISA Ontario Chapter President Catherine Baldelli.

Rolta Canada Limited
80 Whitehall Dr.
Suite #3
Markham, Ontario,
Canada, L3R 0P3

Tel: +1.905.754.8100
Fax: +1.905.474.4486
Email: info@oriongis.com
www.oriongis.com

The Response

“Leveraging available partnerships and opportunities, we’ve successfully implemented meaningful, user-friendly GIS products that empower Newmarket residents, visitors, businesses and staff. Newmarket’s GIS tools honour our customer service strategy by providing stakeholders convenient access to information. The Rolta Canada team has helped Newmarket come up with options uniquely suited to our vision and workplace. Staff and residents have responded favourably and their support has been unwavering”.

Susan Chase
 Manager of Information Technology, Town of Newmarket