

Lab: Comparison of Map Service Providers

GEOG 319/658

Exercise #2

FALL 2014

Comparison of Map Service Providers

Due: Wednesday, September 17

Select four map service providers and use each provider to create a map of an area that you think would illustrate an interesting comparison of the providers. For example, you might compare the providers for the central portion of a city that you would like to visit. Examples of map service providers include the following:

Bing Maps (<http://bing.com/maps/>)

Google Maps (<http://www.google.com/maps/>)

MapQuest (www.mapquest.com/)

OpenStreetMap (<http://www.openstreetmap.org/>)

Yahoo Maps (<https://maps.yahoo.com/>)

We suggest that you use a screen capture program to capture images from each map service provider and that you then save these images in a Table within a Word document. Before you capture any images, be sure that the images are all at approximately the same scale and depict approximately the same area. The following is sequence of commands that will allow you to save images:

1. Create a default image for a map service provider at the scale you would like to compare all images.
2. Open a new Word document (in room 310, you can access Word by clicking the Start icon in the extreme lower left).
3. Use the Insert Table option in Word to create a table containing sufficient rows and columns to save several images and associated descriptions. For example, you might create a 2 x 4 table.
4. Use a screen capture tool to capture the desired image from the map service provider. One possibility is to use the Snipping Tool (in room 310, this can be found by clicking on the Start icon and then searching for the Snipping Tool).
5. Paste the captured image into the table.
6. Enter a desired text label for the image in the table.
7. Repeat steps 4-6 for three other service providers.

Using the default images given by the provider, discuss how the four maps compare with one another. Does the set of features shown appear to be similar on each map? How does the method of symbolization compare for a given feature (for example, are streets symbolized in the same way on each map or are different approaches used for each service)? Do you think that users will be able to use the map effectively to navigate between locations?

Now select just one of the service providers and discuss the various overlays that are available and how the look of those overlays changes as you change scale.

Your responses to the above questions will all be included in the same Word document as the table of images. When you are satisfied with the Word document, do the following:

1. Save the Word document as a Web Page document. You will find that this will create an htm file and an associated folder containing images and additional htm-related files.
2. Zip the folder containing the images and htm-related files (in room 310, you can right-click on the folder and use 7-zip). This step is necessary because you want to upload the entire folder to the web-hosting service.
3. Go to your web-hosting service and create a folder where you will store things related to exercise #2.
4. Upload the htm file and the zipped folder described above to the folder created in step 3. You will find that the web-hosting service automatically unzips the folder when you upload it. **Be sure that you use the Archives option on the right-hand side of the Upload window when uploading the zipped folder.**
5. Copy and paste the URL for the htm file on your web-hosting service to the [Google Worksheet](#) for exercise #2.