

# Spatial Information Technology - Presentation GISTAM 2020

Presentation for the GISTAM 2020 conference in Prague (virtual)

## 0.1 Conference venue

7 - 9 May 2020: **GISTAM 2020** in Prague (virtual).

## 0.2 Abstract

Since the end of 1977, when I have been asked to write my dissertation on the then emergent spatial information technology, I have followed the most astonishing technical development of Geographic Information Systems and the inclusion of spatial information technology in nearly all forms of IT: spatial database technology, GPS, the web, mobile smart phones, ... In summary: ubiquitous computing and connectivity.

Roughly every 10 years, I have published on trends in GIS technologies and wondered often what makes a technology to become a smashing commercial successes: Google maps perhaps the most spectacular, but by far not the only one.

The talk will discuss briefly the technology advances accumulated the past 40 years responsible for the current commercial successes and when and why they became successes. I will mention a few instructive failures and generalize the social, economical and technical preconditions for commercial success.

My experience leads me to believe that success is possible as a combination of three points:

- firstly, a fundamental human need is at the core - e.g. people need to navigate in the world and must avoid to get lost;
    - secondly, a cost-effective technical mean to satisfy this need is available and,
    - thirdly, a business-opportunity is identified.
- For example, computer mapping was available since early 1990, but became dominant only when the technical solution combining GPS with smart

phones were widely available and "payment" by clients accepting advertisement a sufficient form of compensation for the service.

The conclusion describes a few technologies which I assume could be ready for the commercial limelight, and review critically the extrapolations in the experience of the disruption of the economic situation by the corona-virus epidemic which demonstrates some of the drawbacks of monopoly solutions.

You can fool all the people some of the time,  
and some of the people all the time,  
but you cannot fool all the people all the time.  
Abraham Lincoln

### 0.3 Presentation

[slides](#)

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