

Why Crowdsourcing in Surveying

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SUMMARY

Surveyors are challenged and excited by new concepts like the “internet of things”, data mining, and crowdsourcing. Responsively, surveyors are taking a long, hard look at their role as change agents for global sustainable development to ensure democratization and make digitalization a peaceful transition for the benefit of all. Surveyors and geospatial experts are expected to make a practical application of the available technology, update their tools and manage a “tsunami” of available geo-data in order to serve the continuously increasing needs of society as clearly defined in the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. Surveyors should be able to collect, integrate, manage, visualize, process and provide reliable and personalized geospatial information for their clients reliably and timely, as it is needed. Meanwhile, they must be prepared to provide affordable and fit-for-purpose solutions for their clients.

In fact, it’s about using the latest technology and developing the appropriate tools and methods to do what we already do – but better. It is about serving society’s economic and environmental needs. It is all about improving our skills. Using the latest technology surveyors are positioned to provide reliable, appropriate and affordable geo-spatial information, tools and services in a timely manner to support all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 169 targets of Agenda 2030. The use of crowdsourcing techniques may help to secure tenure and property rights on land, real estate and natural resources for all while eliminating the economic divide between the 2.5 billion people who can register property rights and the other 5 billion people who cannot.

Crowdsourcing, a relatively new concept in surveying today, is the subject of this publication and like all new concepts is defined differently by different experts. One definition explains, “How the power of the many can be leveraged to accomplish feats that were once the responsibility of a specialized few.” Another says that crowdsourcing is “The practice of obtaining needed services,

ideas or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people...”

The theory is that work may be done faster and cheaper but most importantly it allows the collection of such data that would never be possible to be collected by traditional methods, and in many cases would enable the delivery of better services with even fewer errors when validation systems are in place.

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