

# Resource management key in GIS projects

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Human and resource management was the focus of data company AfriGIS's first Spatial and Data Workshop this year, held on 9 March 2016 in Midrand. The company continued its series of topics that explores GIS in business strategies and fulfilling business objectives.

The company believes quality data should underpin business strategy, but also that success depends on a broader business framework.

Christopher Ueckermann summarised the latest quarterly AfriGIS datasets updates, which included the addition of 100,876 street addresses in the NAD, 16,135 links in the street centrelines dataset, 25,018 land parcels, 435 sectional schemes, 2584 points of interest, 567 gated communities, 76 suburbs and 170 SG Towns. The datasets also underwent general updates and modifications, including updating entries' confidence level (an accuracy indicator).



*Petre Agenbag*

Turning this data into insights, however, requires people and resources. Since GIS resources are expensive and specialised, good management is essential, said the company's Petre Agenbag.

Good management relies on a clear scope and work breakdown structure, and helps set realistic duration estimations, as well as enables better cost planning. Identifying which aspects of a project rely on each other is an important first step, and so too is paying attention to team configurations, especially when deciding between outsourcing and upskilling a workforce.

Agenbag's colleague, Armand van der Merwe, further stressed the human element as he spoke about entrenched knowledge and technical debt. Employees' entrenched knowledge from other projects and of little details can speed up projects. Technical debt – the time it takes to bring new members up to speed or learn new processes or software – on the other hand can really slow projects down.

When people switch contexts, a project loses momentum since time is spent getting into new processes, as Van der Merwe showed at the hand of case studies. Understanding the nature of a project is also essential in assigning the right people to it. While some projects can be sped up by assigning more people and resources to it, this approach might not work in other projects that require specific skills.

Van der Merwe concluded that risks and bottlenecks can often be mitigated by playing to peoples' strengths and assigning these capabilities in the best ways through good project and resource planning.

The second quarter workshop will look at processes and IT infrastructure

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