

Measuring Up the Business Case for GIS Volume

Geographic information systems (GIS) are powerful tools that can help organizations improve their decision-making, planning, and operations. However, before investing in GIS, it is important to measure the business case to ensure that the benefits will outweigh the costs.



Measuring Up: The Business Case for GIS, Volume 3

by David S. Law

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The Benefits of GIS

GIS can provide a number of benefits to organizations, including:

- Improved decision-making: GIS can help organizations make better decisions by providing them with a visual representation of their data. This can help them to identify trends, patterns, and relationships that would not be apparent from a spreadsheet or database.

- Increased efficiency: GIS can help organizations to improve their efficiency by automating tasks and streamlining workflows. This can free up staff to focus on more value-added activities.
- Enhanced collaboration: GIS can help organizations to improve their collaboration by providing a common platform for sharing data and information. This can help to break down silos and improve communication between different departments.
- Reduced costs: GIS can help organizations to reduce costs by improving their efficiency and reducing the need for manual data entry. This can free up funds for other important initiatives.

The Challenges of Measuring the Value of GIS

While GIS can provide significant benefits to organizations, it can be challenging to measure its value. This is because the benefits of GIS are often difficult to quantify. For example, it can be difficult to put a dollar value on the improved decision-making that results from using GIS.

Another challenge in measuring the value of GIS is that it can take time to realize the benefits. GIS is a strategic investment that requires an upfront investment in time and money. The benefits of GIS may not be fully realized for several years.

Key Metrics for Measuring the Business Case for GIS Volume

Despite the challenges, it is important to measure the business case for GIS volume. This will help organizations to make informed decisions about whether or not to invest in GIS.

The following are some of the key metrics that can be used to measure the business case for GIS volume:

- Return on investment (ROI): ROI is a measure of the financial benefits of GIS. It is calculated by dividing the benefits of GIS by the costs of GIS.
- Net present value (NPV): NPV is a measure of the present value of the future cash flows that will be generated by GIS. It is calculated by discounting the future cash flows back to the present day.
- Payback period: Payback period is a measure of how long it will take to recover the initial investment in GIS. It is calculated by dividing the initial investment by the annual cash flows that will be generated by GIS.

In addition to these financial metrics, organizations should also consider the following non-financial metrics when measuring the business case for GIS volume:

- Improved decision-making: GIS can help organizations to make better decisions by providing them with a visual representation of their data. This can help them to identify trends, patterns, and relationships that would not be apparent from a spreadsheet or database.
- Increased efficiency: GIS can help organizations to improve their efficiency by automating tasks and streamlining workflows. This can free up staff to focus on more value-added activities.
- Enhanced collaboration: GIS can help organizations to improve their collaboration by providing a common platform for sharing data and

information. This can help to break down silos and improve communication between different departments.

- **Reduced costs:** GIS can help organizations to reduce costs by improving their efficiency and reducing the need for manual data entry. This can free up funds for other important initiatives.

By considering both financial and non-financial metrics, organizations can get a more complete picture of the value of GIS. This information can then be used to make informed decisions about whether or not to invest in GIS.

GIS can provide significant benefits to organizations. However, it is important to measure the business case to ensure that the benefits will outweigh the costs. By using the key metrics outlined in this article, organizations can get a better understanding of the value of GIS and make informed decisions about whether or not to invest.



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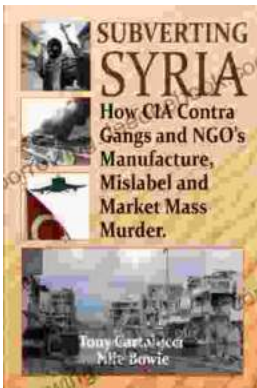
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