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Geographic Information Systems: Mapping ITs Future in the Business School

Brian Mennecke
East Carolina University

Martin Crossland

TUTORIAL 2

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS: MAPPING ITS FUTURE IN THE BUSINESS SCHOOL

Brian E. Mennecke
East Carolina University

Martin D. Crossland
Southwest Missouri State University

Jack Dangermond
The Environmental Systems Research Institute

Geographic information systems (GIS) represent a class of decision support tools that are attracting increasing interest in both the academic and practitioner communities. GIS technology offers a way to integrate spatial data (e.g., maps, floor plans, virtual space) with databases containing textual, analytical, and graphical data. The resulting information set contains data that are referenced to geographically-accurate locations in space and can be used for complex spatial analyses by decision makers. GIS have been used for many years in the natural resources, forestry, and environmental industries. GIS are now increasingly being used for a number of business and management functions such as logistics, site management, facility management, marketing, public policy and planning.

To date, sparse attention has been paid to this important area by business school faculty. It is our intention that this tutorial help to change this state of affairs by helping business school faculty to better understand and appreciate the potential of GIS technology as a focus of research and teaching. To accomplish this, we will provide an overview of the current state of the art in GIS technology and also discuss practical and theoretical topics for future research. Specific topics related to these issues that will be addressed during the tutorial session include

- **Current GIS Technologies:** This portion of the presentation will include a demonstration of leading GIS software products. This presentation will include a discussion of basic GIS capabilities (e.g., data manipulations and queries) and advanced GIS functions (e.g., map layering and spatial analysis).

- **Current GIS Implementations and Uses:** This segment will focus on providing a review of several ways in which GIS technologies are used to support management and decision making activities in both the business and government sectors.

- **The Future for GIS: Research and Development:** The tutorial will conclude with a discussion of the potential research and development issues that information systems faculty and business managers will likely face in the coming years.