



Fun Fact: Geographic Analysts Brave Weather, Wildlife and More to Keep Your Maps Accurate



For nearly two decades, 1,200 geographic analysts have been driving routes from Boston to Bahrain, continually collecting, verifying, validating and updating pertinent road network, attribute and Point of Interest (POI) information to create the most accurate and navigable digital maps in the world.

<http://www.idogocy.com/click-5335167-11036512> While it may seem like the responsibilities of a geographic analyst, whose job it is to drive the routes found in [HERE \(http://here.com\)](http://here.com) maps, could be a bit tedious, they'd be the first to tell you it's anything but mundane. [Geographic information systems \(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_information_system\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_information_system) (GIS) work includes statistical analysis, cartography and database technology, but it also includes the hands-on task of personal observation.

From driving through wild weather, such as tornados, snowstorms and flooded roadways to up-close encounters with bears, monkeys, camels and an overturned tractor trailer releasing millions of bumblebees, geographic analysts have survived a wide variety of situations to secure the necessary location data to keep [HERE \(http://here.com\)](http://here.com) maps up to date.

Over the years, analysts have been followed by the local police, assumed to be storm chasers, challenged by language barriers and surprised by telephone poles in the middle of the road, but they always get their job done. They've come across everything from a clearly marked, but woefully unpaved, road in Italy to a multi-tiered sign in Maine with arrows to Paris, Denmark and Naples and road signs in Washington State with snowmobile speed limits.

Located throughout the world, these roadside geographical analysts record more than 23 million miles (more than 37 million kilometers) of roadway in 87 countries and territories on six continents. The data they collect includes 260 attributes, such as one-way streets and physical dividers and barriers that create turn restrictions, making it the richest map data available today. And they also use the latest tools, including:

High-resolution video cameras: Six cameras are situated in a panoramic arrangement under a bubble covering that is attached to the roof of the vehicle.

A GPS receiver: Located in the trunk, this mega-receiver records the position of the vehicle three times per second.

A pen tablet: The analysts makes notes on a handheld tablet about what is actually being seen through their car window, so that the data collected is an accurate representation of exactly what the landscape offers.

Local experts: Geographic analysts are chosen locally, so they're familiar with the area and can provide knowledge on when new developments are underway; this local knowledge allows for continual updates that reflect the most current situations.

So the next time you travel down a lonely highway, thinking that no one could have ever traveled that way before, you can be confident you're actually retracing the steps of a brilliant — and painstakingly detailed— geographical analyst.

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