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Dear Jesse,

Welcome to the December issue of the JSA GIServices' news letter!

[All of our news letters can also be viewed on our website.](#)

JSA in the News

JSA GIServices was featured in the November/December Duluthian Magazine! The writers and photographers of AdMax assembled a very nice Article highlighting JSA and the services we offer. [Click here to view the full Article.](#)

The Flex API for ArcGIS Server

Ever wondered what the new Flex API for ArcGIS Server is and what it can do?

Flex is a highly productive, free open source framework for building and maintaining expressive web applications that deploy consistently on all major browsers, desktops, and operating systems. While Flex applications can be built using only the free open source framework, developers can use Adobe Flex Builder software to dramatically accelerate development. (Adobe)

Adobe Flex Builder is a software development kit released by Adobe Systems for the development and deployment of cross-platform rich Internet applications based on the Adobe Flash platform.

The ArcGIS API for Flex allows the creation of Rich Internet applications on top of ArcGIS Server. It is based on the free Adobe Flex framework. The Flex framework is a client-side technology that is rendered by Flash Player 9 and above, or by Adobe AIR on your desktop. (ESRI)

There are two ways to start using the Flex API for ArcGIS Server:

1. [Use the free Flex SDK provided by Adobe](#)
2. [Use the Flex Builder software, available free for a 60 day trial](#)

In order to start developing Flex applications, you will need the following components:

- [Flex SDK – available from the Adobe website, or Adobe Flex Builder](#)
- [ArcGIS Server Flex API Library](#)
- [GIS Service accessible via Services Directory](#)

To open the ArcGIS Services Directory for an ArcGIS Server machine, you must know the URL of the Server instance. The ArcGIS Server instance is typically installed in the Web server's root as arcgis, and the ArcGIS Services Directory is in the rest folder inside the instance.

For example, if the Server is at www.example.com, the ArcGIS Services Directory would be located at <http://www.example.com/arcgis/rest/services> (.NET) or <http://www.example.com:8389/arcgis/rest/services> (Java). Contact your ArcGIS Server system administrator if you are uncertain about the Server URL or ArcGIS instance.

Listed below are the advantages of using the Flex API versus the standard Web or Java ADF:

- Speed – Flex, JavaScript, and Silverlight API's offer very fast web applications versus IMS or ADF applications.
- Lightweight – Flex applications are very small applications averaging around 2-7mb.
- Your web application does not have to reside on the same server as ArcGIS. As long as the ArcGIS Server machine has a cross domain file, your Flex application can reside on a different web server.

The Flex API for ArcGIS Server gives users a rich experience with fast response. Give it a try and take your ArcGIS Server web application to the next level. [If you get stuck and need help, give us a call or email.](#)

Giving the Power to the Customer

JSA GIServices puts the power in the hands of the client! Because our Company name doesn't roll easily off the tongue, we are in the process of renaming our Company to better reflect the services we offer. We invite our clients and everyone included on our mailing list to visit our homepage to view the list of name choices and cast their vote! Now that's called putting the power in the hands of the customer!

JSA also provides several methods for clients to offer feedback on our products and services. These include: feedback via our website submission form; a user input form included in our GeoMesh demonstration site; and email. These methods give you the opportunity to tell us what you like or dislike about our products and services. We value the opportunity to utilize your ideas and implement improvements.

Lastly, JSA will give away a FREE water-proof Boundary Waters Canoe Area map twice a month to those who offer feedback. Feedback provided by email; website; web mapping application; fax and writing all qualify! [Check out our website for details.](#)

Designing Web Applications for the User

The fall 2009 issue of ArcUser Magazine featured a wonderful article about designing web mapping applications to fit your target user demographic. Lately I have noticed a few applications that try to accomplish desktop GIS tasks through a web interface but are targeted toward public use. As Geodevelopers we need to realize that most GIS based

applications will not be used by GIS professionals. They will be used by public decision makers, law enforcement, natural resource professionals, and the general public who may not realize the meaning of complex symbology and graphic user interface design.

In order to receive high site traffic and attract users that want to stay on our Geosite we need to develop user interfaces and functionality that are simple, easy to understand, and give the user the desired output. The article outlines 4 basic lessons to take away when developing Geo applications for your audience:

1. Always hide the details – the end user doesn't always need to know the exact GIS functions used to derive an output
2. Provide the users with feedback – this will ensure the user doesn't become overwhelmed with a lot of tools and buttons
3. Reassure the user – reassure the user with feedback that the action they have requested took place
4. Protect users from themselves – if users are constantly circumventing your workflows to generate bad data we need to rethink our approach to deriving the results

In the end making sure your design is easy to use, understand, and provides user feedback will ensure we get high usage and maximum results for the end user. [The full article can be viewed here.](#)

GeoMesh Interface Redesign

JSA GIServices GeoMesh interface has been redesigned. We have improved the interface to make it more user friendly and allow for a larger map viewing area. In addition, we have added the following functions to the GeoMesh framework:

- Draggable “Draw and Measure” Toolbars – for better user viewing experience
- “Save Graphics” – allowing users to mark-up the map for planning purposes and load the saved graphics during a later session
- “New Identify Info” Window with additional information linked by passing parcel PIN to the assessor site for greater access to tax information
- “Select Parcel” Tool – selects multiple parcels, displays attribute information in a draggable datagrid and allows for user download as a csv file

JSA understands that hiring a GIS firm can be a big step. We value putting the customer first and are offering 25% off on first time setups of web mapping applications. This equals a \$2000 - \$3000 savings!! Our web applications are built using the Flex API for ArcGIS Server and guaranteed to perform. Do you have ArcGIS Server installed but aren't utilizing it to its fullest potential? Give JSA's GeoMesh a try and realize the return on your GIS investment! [Click here to learn more about GeoMesh or request our service.](#)

Meet JSA GIServices Staff

JSA GIServices Staff is involved in business and community organizations throughout Duluth and the Midwest. Below is a list of the upcoming events JSA GIServices Staff will be attending. Please stop by these events to chat with our knowledgeable staff and enter to win an iPod Shuffle and other great giveaways.

- Dec. 8th, 4:30-6:30pm – [Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce After Hours Plus Holiday Celebration](#) – [Radisson Hotel Duluth Harborview, Duluth, MN](#)

- Dec. 10th, 5:00-6:00pm – [FUSE Duluth Underground Happy Hour](#) – [Carmody Irish Pub, Duluth, MN](#)
- Every Thursday, 6:45-8:30am - [Business Networking International](#) – [Valentini's Restaurant](#) – Duluth (by invitation only, [contact us](#) if you would like to attend)
- Future Event - Feb. 24th-26th - [Wisconsin Land Information Association 2010 Annual Conference](#) – Appleton, WI

List subject to change without notice. Check back often for updated events schedule. JSA GIServices welcomes opportunities to speak at community events and for organizations. [Contact us](#) if you would like to schedule a complimentary speaking engagement.

JSA GIServices wishes you all a very happy and safe holiday season!

JSA GIServices is always looking for GIS projects and greatly appreciates your referrals. Please click the "forward" link at the bottom of this email to forward this news letter to others who may be interested in GIS or would like to learn more about what JSA GIServices has to offer.

Sincerely,

Jesse Adams, M.S.
Principal GIS Analyst
JSA GIServices

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