

Product Strategy

Mission

Our mission is to help people find the places they seek through the use of intelligent electronic maps, called *mapware*.

By people, we mean anyone trying to figure out how to get somewhere, what things are available to do, and what places are located close to one another. Tourists may be interested in the current shows and descriptions of sights and shopping areas. Sales people may be trying to determine the best order to visit their clients. Locals may be looking for new restaurants or clubs.

By places, we mean everywhere that people may want to find out about or go to. Restaurants, hotels, museums, theaters and people's homes are all examples of places. Streets, bus lines, airplane routes, bike trails, and ski runs are all paths that connect different places together. Maps represent places spatially, and show the paths connecting the represented places.

By intelligent electronic maps, we mean maps that can be viewed and used in many different ways depending on the needs of the map user.

To help people find the places they seek using electronic maps, we must make products and provide services to represent all places, to make map and place information widely available, and to make electronic maps essential and fun to use.

Represent all places

Our first objective is to get all places represented electronically. Our strategies center around the use of a mapware authoring system.

1. Develop mapware authoring system

We will develop a mapware authoring system that can be used by information providers to create map and place information. This information can then be stored on PCMCIA cards or downloaded directly into General Magic machines.

2. Make mapware creation easy and fun

The mapware authoring system will run on popular desktop machines (e.g. Macintosh, Windows) in order to take advantage of existing drawing programs and other development tools.

It will help information providers design and develop mapware that looks good and will provide value to the end user.

3. Provide conversion utilities

There are many maps and places already represented in electronic forms. We will develop conversion utilities from the most popular formats in order to facilitate mapware creation.

4. Plant many seeds

We want to get as many people involved in making maps and representing places as possible. Individuals, universities, chambers of commerce, clubs and organizations, and tour guide authors are excellent sources of information.

5. Charge for the authoring system

We considered making the authoring system available free-of-charge (or at a nominal charge to cover our media, distribution, and support costs). However, to both improve our cash flow and give information providers a strong psychological incentive to use the software, we will charge for the authoring system as an advance on royalties for the mapware created.

Make mapware widely available

Our second objective is to make mapware widely available.

1. Help information providers make money

We will license mapware from information providers for central distribution in exchange for royalties. This is similar to a tour guide publisher who contracts with restaurant reviewers and authors.

2. Turn competitors into partners

We will aggressively attempt to encourage those who may seem to be competitors (e.g. existing tour

book and business directory publishers) into partners by making our technology available to them.

3. Establish duplication and download services

Certain information providers will want to distribute mapware themselves. We will put these people in touch with services to help them master and duplicate their own PCMCIA cards. Similarly, we will help them set up download services using standard General Magic mechanisms for dynamic information and updates.

Make everyone want to have it

The final, yet most important objective is to make mapware so exciting, fun, and useful that everyone wants to have it.

1. Help General Magic change the way people communicate

Our survival is tied to General Magic's success. We will design our product so it helps implement their vision. We will integrate with as many other General Magic capabilities as possible.

2. Make mapware useful

We will provide ways to filter place and path information depending on the interests of the map user.

We will develop features that make new uses of the information, such as providing graphical and written directions from place to place.

We will employ a user interface style that is fun and encourages exploration.

3. Create compelling examples and give them away

We will give example maps away with every General Magic machine sold. These map must be useful, fun, and make people beg for more. Solicit endorsement of well-known industry leaders, potential partners, and the media by providing them with additional examples.