



## SIDWELL ANNOUNCES SIGNET™ SYSTEM

**State-of-the-art interactive computer graphics system provides users with instant access to map and map related information.**

The traditional concept of maps and mapping is rapidly changing. Automation, the watchword of industry, has also become essential in government.

Sidwell's extensive work with all levels of government has given us a unique insight into the problems facing today's officials. This need led to eight years of research into the use of computer graphics for data base management and mapping applications. The research culminated in the installation of an interactive computer graphics system known as SIGNET™ (Sidwell Interactive Graphics NETWORK).

### **SIGNET overcomes problems of manual mapping programs**

In many counties today, there is a lack of up-to-date map information for assessment use, planning and engineering applications. Maps that do exist are often duplicated in one or more county departments, thus, creating a confusing array of map information that is costly to maintain. In addition, the maps are limited to a prescribed scale and format.

Sidwell's SIGNET™ system overcomes the problems inherent to manual mapping programs and provides for management of both graphic (map) and attribute (record) data.

Since many counties already have assessment records on a computer, the SIGNET™ system is designed to auto-

matically transfer this information into the new system.

### **Data is stored in separate layers**

Computer graphics has many advantages. One of these is data layering, where different types of map information are stored in separate layers. Once the information is stored in the system and separated into layers, a map can be prepared by selecting and combining individual data layers until the desired information is shown. For example, an assessor can prepare a tax map by combining street outlines, parcel boundaries, parcel numbers and dimensions. Other layers could be added at the push of a button to show building outlines and street addresses.

### **Data base helps solve many problems**

The system's data base would allow officials to easily solve routine problems such as determining the name and addresses of property adjacent to a proposed zoning change, or locating parcels affected by an election district boundary change.

In the SIGNET™ system, several hundred data layers can be stored and easily accessed.

### **Hard copy printout in seconds**

Maps, however, are only a small part of the system's capabilities. All records and information associated with the maps are stored in the computer and can be viewed on a CRT screen. A hard-copy printout from the screen can be made in seconds. If desired, a final drafted map, in color, can be prepared in a matter of minutes.

### **... any map scale**

Another advantage of the SIGNET™ system, is the ability of the user to specify any map scale desired. Individual parcels on a map can be viewed at a larger scale with the simple push of a button.

### **... custom-designed maps**

Engineers and planners often use base maps that contain information in common with other users. By using a SIGNET™ system, any user can custom design the map by combining the appropriate data layers.

### **... updating of maps and data**

In addition to viewing and plotting capabilities, Sidwell's system streamlines the updating of all map and attribute data so that the data base is easily maintained.

If you would like additional information on Sidwell's SIGNET™ system, write Department MN, c/o The Sidwell Company.

## COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS

One of the important features of Sidwell's SIGNET™ interactive computer graphics system, is the ability to transfer data from an existing computer into the system's computer.

### **Interface and Protocol**

Communications between computer systems can be divided into two categories, interface and protocol.

**Interface** is the method and often equipment used to transfer data from one computer to another. This may be a special circuit board or other device that matches the output of one computer device to the input of another.

**Protocol** is a set of rules by which the data transfer takes place from one location to another. Items such as transfer speed, data format and computer language are specified. Protocol also allows one computer system to simulate another so that the operating systems seem identical during data transfer.

### **No need to re-enter computer data**

By using these techniques, SIGNET™ users eliminate the need to re-enter data already stored on their computer.

## SIDWELL WINS MARKETING AWARD

The Sidwell Company was recently honored for creative excellence in marketing and communications material during the Annual Awards Program at the Society for Marketing Professional Services 1982 Conference.

Over three hundred entries in ten different categories were judged by panels located throughout the United States.

Sidwell's winning entry in the direct mail category was the monthly photogrammetric mailing, Weather Planner.



### WYOMING CITY TO USE SIDWELL MAPS

The City of Green River is a small community in the mountainous southwest corner in the State of Wyoming. However, it has many of the same problems associated with larger cities.

One of these problems is the lack of reliable map information for engineering and planning projects.

To help solve these problems, City Engineer Richard Lemke, contracted with Sidwell to prepare a comprehensive, multi-phase base mapping project.

#### First step was aerial photography

The initial step was the taking of new aerial photography at a scale of 1" = 1667' covering a 39 square mile area. Prior to the flight, field crews targeted control points, which were later used in Sidwell's analytical extension program, to generate the control needed for mapping.

#### ... then topographic maps were prepared

Topographic maps were prepared for most of the area. However, a further step was taken by preparing Topo Plan maps for the City limits and adjacent areas of new development. In addition, two areas of future growth were selected and photographed for large scale mapping at a later date.

#### Orthophotos will form wall mosaic

Due to the rugged terrain, orthophotos were prepared as the base for all Topo Plan mapping. They will also be used to produce a wall mosaic for display in the Engineering Department.

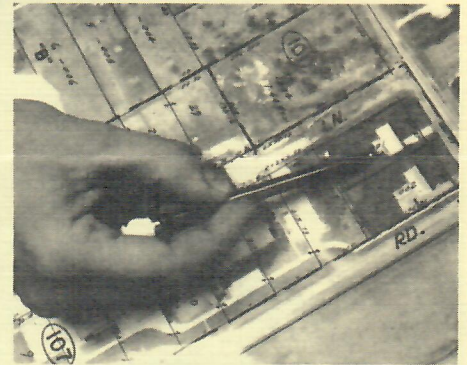
Mr. Lemke says the new maps will provide the first completed base map for the City. The City Planning Department has already begun using the maps and photos to revise the City's Comprehensive Plan and to design an extensive green belt.

### JAMES LYONS ON ASSESSOR'S PROGRAM



Sidwell's Marketing Coordinator, James D. Lyons, presented a program on aerial photography and tax mapping at the 34th Annual Meeting of the South Dakota Association of Assessing Officers.

Jim's presentation included the use of a color filmstrip to highlight the need for aerial based tax maps and the use of a permanent parcel numbering system. The presentation concluded with a look at computer graphics and the future of mapping.



### COOK COUNTY UPDATES AERIAL PHOTOS

A 79 square mile area of Cook County, Illinois, was re flown as part of an annual updating program Sidwell provides to the Cook County Assessor's Office.

The photography is used to prepare enlargements at a scale of 1" = 100' to match the County's existing tax maps.

#### 1,300,000 parcels shown on maps

The tax maps, originally prepared by Sidwell to cover 1,300,000 parcels, are printed on clear plastic material. This overlay method allows property information and ground detail to be viewed together.

#### Maps save time . . . eliminate need for field checking

One of the uses of the photo-tax map combination is to check the status of vacant property within the County. They're also used to spot improvements which might otherwise escape the tax rolls. A tremendous amount of staff time is saved since most parcel checking can be done in the office, rather than in the field.

#### Aerial photos reveal developments not on tax rolls

The new aerial photos have also been used to uncover instances where exempt property has been sold for development without being added to the assessment roll. This situation is uncovered when the tax map and property record card indicate a tract of undeveloped exempt property and the aerial photo shows new construction.

Another important use is in answering taxpayers' questions about their property. Many problems are averted by looking at the photo which clearly shows the property and improvements.

### DAVE SQUIRES SPEAKS TO COUNTY OFFICIALS



Dave Squires, Sidwell's Senior Customer Engineer, was a featured speaker at the 39th Annual Iowa State Association of Counties Conference held in Des Moines, Iowa.

Using a color filmstrip program, Dave explained the importance of aerial based tax maps and the use of a permanent parcel numbering system to insure equalized assessments.

The mapping program discussed by Dave is the same type that Sidwell has prepared for 21 Iowa clients.

### DAVE WILL ADDRESSES ASSESSORS



Sidwell's Customer Engineer, Dave Will, was a program speaker at the recent Iowa State Assessor's Association Convention held in Des Moines, Iowa.

Dave's presentation included the preparation and use of aerial based tax maps for modernizing county assessment procedures. The State-recommended permanent parcel numbering system was also explained in detail. A color filmstrip was used to show how tax maps are prepared by Sidwell.



*Season's Greetings*

