

Map News

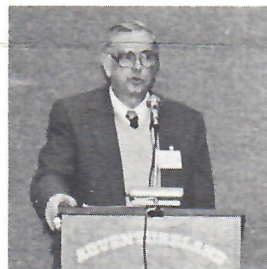
 THE SIDWELL COMPANY

Spring Quarter • Number 125

Second Annual Users of Sidwell Systems Held in Iowa and Illinois



Bruce Mitchell
City Assessor
Ft. Madison, IA



Ernest Lund
Assessor
Washington County, IA



Arthur R. Shroeder
Supervisor of Assessments
Peoria County, IL



Nannette Schrivner
Peoria County, IL

Guest Speakers from several counties helped to make the Second Annual Users of Sidwell Systems Conferences successful.

The Sidwell Company was proud to sponsor its Second Annual User's Conference in Iowa on January 25, 1984 and in Illinois on February 15, 1984.

All users of Sidwell mapping systems, both past and present, were invited to attend the conferences. Such County Officials as Assessors, Auditors, and Board Members were represented at both meetings. Approximately sixty people attended the Iowa conference and forty-nine attended in Illinois.

The conferences serve as a forum for both the Sidwell technical staff and clients. The program is designed to address specific issues, subjects, and questions requested by clients, and to help them make the best possible use of their mapping systems. The conferences also provide an arena where clients can meet and discuss problems and share experience and knowledge.

This year's program was a suc-

cess, judged by responses received from participants. Customer Engineer Manager David Squires served as moderator at the conferences, and presented the SIGNET™ video tape. Presentations were given by the following Sidwell staff members:

- * Photogrammetrist Mike O'Rourke spoke about ortho and rectified photography, analytical control, flight planning, and camera focal lengths.
- * Mapping Services Manager Martha Nunley demonstrated how to write brief, meaningful legal descriptions.
- * Customer Engineer David Will discussed the land surveying topics of distances and bearings, and how measurements are made and read.
- * Customer Engineer Louis Coulombe spoke about the different techniques used for computing the acreage of irregularly shaped parcels.

The following were guest speakers in Iowa:

- * City Assessor of Ft. Madison,

IA Bruce Mitchell discussed his county's experience with converting numbering systems to the computer, and map updating.

- * Assessor of Washington County, IA Ernest Lund analyzed methods for keeping track of property improvements.

The following were guest speakers in Illinois:

- * Peoria County, IL Supervisor of Assessments Arthur R. Shroeder and Nannette Schrivner relayed how their county dealt with parcel number conversion to the computer, and map updating.

Question and answer sessions were held at the end of each presentation, and problems and solutions were discussed.

The Sidwell Company technical staff enjoyed this opportunity to meet and share information with their Iowa and Illinois clients. It was an educational experience for all participants and we look forward to next year's User's Conferences.

The Problem and the SIGNET™ Solution

In the last issue of Map News, the benefits of being able to view or plot at any scale on the SIGNET™ system, and the ability to separate graphic information into levels were discussed. These two benefits tie in closely with a third benefit, SIGNET™'s ability to create custom graphics.


PROBLEM:

A map drawn on paper or mylar can provide much useful information. But, because of the physical limitations inherent to materials such as ink and mylar, the map is restricted to the fixed and inflexible surface on which it is drawn. If it is necessary to make temporary changes on the map surface, or if additions must be made for a special project, the changes cannot permanently affect or interfere with the original map information. Customizing a

conventional map can be inefficient, time consuming, and labor intensive.

What are some of the situations where customization is desirable, and how are conventional maps customized?

Problems occur when placing additional information, such as special district boundaries, on a conventional map. The information is often added via a series of registered overlays, with one overlay for each type of information being added. These overlays are expensive to produce, and registration problems can occur during reproduction. Too many overlays will result in muddled or blurred composites.

Placing a special symbol, such as a  to represent a tree, requires a deliberate manual effort and is expensive to place on a conventional map or plan.

Many of these symbols are used in the course of a mapping project. Highway shields and block number ovals are just a few examples. Adding these symbols can greatly increase the amount of time needed to complete a project.

Removing unnecessary information from an existing map for a special project is labor intensive and time consuming. For instance, a city planner may be interested in looking at parcel boundaries and dimensions, but not interested in parcel numbers and lot information. Often, an inappropriate map is used for the task at hand, since redrawing the map minus the unneeded information is costly and inefficient.

Highlighting specific information on a conventional map can pose a problem. For example,

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Spring Flight Season Begins

Sidwell flight teams begin one of their busiest times of the year with the arrival of spring. Early spring and late fall are the best periods for taking aerial photographs, because the ground is free of obstructive summer foliage or winter snow. These aerial photographs, taken under optimum conditions, serve as a permanent record of all land features.

The weather, as well as the seasons, plays an important role in the photography. Sidwell pilot Doug Frede says the weather conditions are very unpredictable during the spring and fall. It's hard to determine when a front will arrive and how long it will remain over a project area, which makes it wise to allow some latitude when scheduling photography. High winds, haze, or a cloud cover over the area to be flown make taking the clear and precise aerial photographs used for all Sidwell mapping systems impossible.

Doug notes that inclement weather can cut back considerably on the already brief flying season, which is limited to relatively short days. To insure that long shadows cast by the sun do not interfere with ground detail, the aerial photos are shot when the sun is at an angle of 30 degrees or more above the horizon, and shadows are minimal. This often results in a maximum five-and-one-half hour flying day.

During the first part of spring, flight crews concentrate their flying efforts to a band including Southern Indiana, Southern Iowa, Central and Southern Illinois, and Northern Missouri where the snow melts early and the foliage is apt to appear first, due to the angle of the sun.

Anyone requiring aerial photography is encouraged to schedule it now, while conditions are favorable. The photography can always be used at a later date for a future project. Call Mike O'Rourke at 312/231-0206 for more information.

Lake County, Il Signs SIGNET™ Contract

In September, 1983 Lake County, IL Board Chairman Glenn Miller signed a contract commissioning The Sidwell Company to prepare a digital geographic data base of the county on the SIGNET™ system. The data base will be installed on the County's new computer graphics system.

The project will be conducted under the direction of Randall Murphy, Administrator of the Department of Management Services, who was involved in early feasibility studies for a computer graphics system for the county.

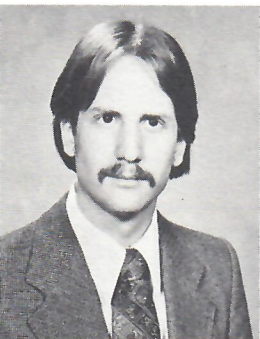
The project will involve converting the 189,211 parcel cadastral map base (468 square miles) into digital form. The Sidwell Company will also provide new aerial photography and the production of ortho-photographs.



David G. Squires
Manager of Customer
Engineering



Martha P. Nunley
Manager of Mapping
Services



Timothy C. Hopkins
Manager of SIGNET™

Upcoming Convention Dates

Look for Sidwell representatives at the following upcoming conventions:

April 30 - May 2

Illinois County Officials
Springfield, IL

May 9, 10

North Central Regional Association
of Assessing Officers
Wichita, KS

May 21-23

Northeast Regional Assessors
Hartford, CT

Ted Nunley, Vice President Operations Announces Top Management Positions

On March 1, 1984 Ted Nunley, Vice President Operations announced the following organizational changes, including the creation of three new departments and the appointment of department heads, effective immediately.

DAVID G. SQUIRES, MANAGER OF CUSTOMER ENGINEERING

Mr. Squire's Customer Engineering Department is responsible for providing technical assistance for SIGNET™ projects, ongoing tax map projects, and tax map service projects. This includes the development of procedures and schedules for gathering property record information, client instruction in the use of new property maps, records, and systems, and the design of map maintenance systems. David provides direct supervision to all customer engineers.

Mr. Squires has been with The Sidwell Company for 17 years, and has extensive experience in cadastral tax mapping, photo interpretation, tax map data compilation, deed research, and field surveying.

He has attended the University of Missouri, Northern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University, and is a Certified Illinois Assessing Officer-Associate.

MARTHA P. NUNLEY, MANAGER OF MAPPING SERVICES

As manager of Mapping Services, Mrs. Nunley has overall responsibility for tax map projects, ongoing tax map service projects, and various commercial projects. This includes administration, supervision, and production scheduling and control. Additional responsibilities involve the scheduling of service, client budgets, and the assurance of client satisfaction. Mapping Services includes the following departments: Tax Map Project Data, Tax Map Services, SIGNET™ Data, and Draphics (a newly formed department consisting of drafting and graphics.)

Martha has been with The Sidwell Company for 26 years and has a wealth of experience in property tax mapping, tax map maintenance, and aerial research. She was instrumental in developing work standards manuals, computer assisted appraisal maintenance procedures, and soils computation production procedures.

She has attended Itawamba Junior College, Fulton, Mississippi; Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois; Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois; College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, Illinois; and is a Certified Illinois Assessing Officer-Associate.

TIMOTHY C. HOPKINS, MANAGER OF SIGNET™

As manager of the SIGNET™ department, Mr. Hopkins is responsible for all phases of new and ongoing SIGNET™ projects. Additional responsibilities include system security and the continued development of interactive mapping and data systems. He supervises programmers, systems analysts, shift leaders, and operators, and is involved in time and cost estimating, and project scheduling.

Tim has been with The Sidwell Company since 1970, and has a great deal of experience in photogrammetric mapping, cost estimating, and project management. His background includes supervision and analysis of analytical aerial triangulation, development of photogrammetric computer applications, flight planning, and stereo plotter operations.

He has completed computer programming and operations courses at Elgin Community College in Illinois, and at Intergraph training facilities in Huntsville, Alabama. Tim has also attended several photogrammetric and computer mapping seminars. He is a Certified Photogrammetrist.

Congratulations to these three capable individuals!

The Problem . . .

(cont'd from page 2)

simply showing a subdivision boundary in red, without spoiling the original print can cause difficulties. Many offices only have one copy of each map in a project, and must special order an extra print, which may take days. An overlay with the red boundary can be made, or the boundary can be outlined in red on a new print of the map. The first approach requires expensive manual drafting and reproduction procedures, and the second is less than timely.

When planning a building site, it is often necessary to produce a detail of the project area, which means increasing the scale of a portion of an existing map. This process requires a redrafted map or photo enlargement. The redrafting method is costly and time consuming, while the photo enlargement method requires darkroom scheduling and results in a finished map that can be hard to read because the enlargement process increases the thickness of all lines, including those that make up the text.

SOLUTION:

SIGNET™ easily produces custom graphics, because all information, both data and graphics, is stored on SIGNET™ in digital form. This means informa-

tion is easily accessed and manipulated in ways not possible using manual methods.

Graphic information is separated into levels on the SIGNET™ system, and any level or combination of levels is accessed to form a very specific map containing only pertinent information. Right-of-way lines are stored on one level, parcel lines on another, topographic contours on another level, and so on. This very specific map can be viewed on a system terminal, or quickly plotted on a high-speed precision plotter. Overlays are not needed to add information to a map, and manual redrafts to remove information are unnecessary, because on SIGNET™, only the needed information is accessed.

Special symbols, such as highway shields, are drawn once on the SIGNET™ system and stored in memory. From that time forward, the symbol is placed with the push of a button, no matter how simple or complex the representation. This ability greatly reduces the time spent on a project.

SIGNET™ highlights graphic information in many ways. Lines of varying thickness are used to accent information, such as a heavy line to indicate

a subdivision boundary. Special line styles, a long dashed line for example, can be used to identify different kinds of graphic information.

Another method of featuring information is through the use of color. SIGNET™ easily generates a plot in color in a matter of minutes. Terminals are available which allow the various levels of graphic information to be viewed on the system in color.

Increasing (or decreasing) the scale of a building site is easily accomplished on the SIGNET™ system. Instead of having a fixed scale as in conventional mapping, SIGNET™ allows the user to determine the map scale. Any area, be it township, subdivision, or parcel of land can be viewed or plotted at any scale. Unlike photo reproduction methods, all the graphics generated on the SIGNET™ system are compatible and in scale with each other. The need to manually redraw maps at a custom scale is unnecessary with SIGNET™.

The flexible SIGNET™ system eliminates the problem of producing costly, labor intensive custom mapping.

This is the second in a series of articles depicting common problems solved by the SIGNET™ system.

Questions & Answers

Direct questions to:

Kim Penton
Promotional Coordinator
c/o The Sidwell Company

Q. Now that Revenue Sharing has been reenacted in many states, can these funds be appropriated to finance mapping projects?

A. Yes, if a government unit qualifies for Revenue Sharing, the monies may be used to finance mapping projects. According to a booklet published by the Office of Revenue Sharing, the funds may be used for "any purpose which is a legal use of the government's own funds under its State and local laws." A mapping project is considered a legal use of a government unit's funds.

No application is needed to receive Revenue Sharing. Since it is an entitlement program, eligible governments determined by the Census Bureau and other Federal agencies, will automatically receive a simple form which must be returned, stating that the funds will be spent in agreement with the law.

If you are a state or local government official and have any questions concerning Revenue Sharing, call Intergovernmental Relations at 202/634-5200 for assistance.



THE SIDWELL COMPANY

Write to: The Sidwell Company, 28W240 North Avenue,
P.O. Box M, West Chicago, IL 60185 or phone 312/231-0206

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON SIDWELL SERVICES, INCLUDING SIGNET™