

Press release

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Up-to-date maps for Central America: GfK GeoMarketing releases the first part of its America Map Edition 2010

GfK GeoMarketing has updated its maps for Central America. The approximately 300 digital maps provide a reliable cartographic basis for detailed analyses and planning in this region.

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GfK GeoMarketing recently released new maps for 35 Central American countries as part of its ongoing update of its American maps. The maps of the Central American countries were digitized and refined using the latest cartographic sources. The level of detail corresponds to a conventional paper map scale of at least 1:100,000.

The maps provide coverage of at least the two-digit postcode boundaries for all countries with postal systems. Administrative levels for almost all of the featured countries are rendered in the highest possible level of detail. The collection of maps comprises 300 map layers compared to only 95 in the previous versions and twice as many digitized objects (approximately 26,000). The digitization of the cities has also been enhanced - for example, the maps of Cuba include coverage of around 2,300 cities, organized into five size categories.

The maps of both large island countries and mainland countries feature coverage of streets and cities, labeled and classified according to the schema used by GfK GeoMarketing across its worldwide map offerings. The maps of the small Caribbean islands depict the most important streets and, in many cases, bodies of water, providing a detailed cartographic basis to support a wide range of uses. The layers of the Caribbean island countries are all contained in one folder, as there are regions and islands such as Saint Barthélemy with only one municipality.

Applications of the maps range from business uses such as geomarketing to disaster management by NGOs and detailed natural catastrophe risk assessment by reinsurance companies. The maps are used by the reinsurance industry for evaluating the relative risk of damages from natural disasters.

"Completely redigitizing North and South America is a huge undertaking," comments Klaus Dittmann, head of cartography at GfK GeoMarketing. "Because the maps of this region feature some interesting markets and provide an important planning foundation

for the insurance industry, our goal is to completely redigitize and refine our administrative, postcode and topographic maps of this area by mid-2010. One of the challenges we face is that cartographic information is very hard to obtain for some South American countries - in some cases, official map sources are the sole preserve of the military. In other cases, the available cartographic information is very basic and sometimes even outdated. For some of the poorer countries, the only sources are NGOs or aid organizations. Our newly updated maps of Central America thus comprise a much-needed, reliable cartographic basis for these 35 countries."





Some of the features of the new maps include comprehensive coverage, seamlessly fitting and overlap-free boundaries, national and local place-name attributions and infinite zoom capability. Like all of the digital maps provided by GfK GeoMarketing, the new maps of the Central America countries are available in all standard digital map formats, including *.shp (ESRI), *.mid/*.mif (MapInfo), *.gdb (Geodatabase) and *.lay (GfK GeoMarketing). The maps for all of America are scheduled for release in June 2010. These maps are part of GfK GeoMarketing's cartographic coverage of 240 countries, the world's largest collection of digital administrative and postcode maps.

Additional information on the GfK maps for America can be found at www.gfk-geomarketing.com/america.

Print-quality illustrations can be found at www.gfk-geomarketing.com/map_centralamerica-2010.

About GfK GeoMarketing

GfK GeoMarketing is one of the largest providers of geomarketing services in Europe for customers and users from all branches of trade. Key business areas include:

-  Consultancy and reports
-  Market data
-  Digital maps
-  Geomarketing software RegioGraph

GfK GeoMarketing is a subsidiary of the globally active GfK Group. Ranked fourth among the world's market research institutes, the GfK is represented in 100 countries with over 115 subsidiaries and approximately 10,000 employees.