

Press release

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New maps of Central America provide reliable basis for risk management

GfK GeoMarketing recently released new maps for Central America offering comprehensive coverage from Mexico to Panama. These digital administrative and postcode maps provide a precise foundation for regional risk analyses.

The countries that border the Gulf of Mexico are particularly at risk from natural catastrophes such as hurricanes. An up-to-date, digital cartographic basis is now available for all of Central America, providing insurers and reinsurers support for risk management activities. Detailed and seamlessly fitting maps of postal and administrative units are available for all Central American countries from Mexico to Panama. The new maps also fit seamlessly with the worldwide, official CRESTA natural disaster zones. GfK GeoMarketing is the official provider of the worldwide CRESTA maps. In addition to worldwide map coverage, the company has many years of experience in the production of maps custom-tailored to the needs of the insurance and reinsurance industry.

All of GfK GeoMarketing's maps of Central America were digitized and refined using the latest cartographic sources. The level of detail corresponds to a scale of at least 1:100,000 when compared to conventional paper maps. In many places - such as coastlines - the coverage is significantly more detailed.

"Central America is a very important region for insurers and reinsurers, and a precise cartographic basis is essential for their analyses of natural catastrophe-related risks," explains Klaus Dittmann, head of cartography at GfK GeoMarketing. "Special postcode maps provide the basis for geocoding locations relevant to insurers, including residential structures, hotels, manufacturing plants, refineries, etc. Also, the highly detailed coastlines comprise a distinguishing feature of our maps and are absolutely indispensable for evaluating risk in the insurance and reinsurance industry. Many insured objects are located near coastlines and are therefore at increased risk from natural disasters such as storms and floods. The precise localization of insured objects is consequently a necessity for the survival of insurance companies."

GfK GeoMarketing's maps are the bridge between actual risks, software- and statistics-based risk models and the objects to be insured. Regional accumulation risks can be

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determined and then precisely localized and evaluated on digital maps by using postcodes contained in the addresses of insured objects. A comparison of the computer-generated occurrence probabilities and the possible damages makes it possible to determine sustainable contract conditions for both insurers and reinsurers.

GfK GeoMarketing's new maps of Central America comprise 100 map layers - a significant increase from the 70 layers available in the previous edition. Some of these new maps are currently available from no other provider.

For example, a map of Mexico's two-digit postcodes is now available for the first time. Administrative boundaries have been comprehensively updated and reflect the latest status of 2,456 municipalities and 32 states. There have also been a lot of changes in the digitization of Mexico's cities. The maps now feature around 3,500 cities and municipalities, organized into five population size categories with coverage down to a size bracket of under 10,000 inhabitants. The 2010 maps of Mexico also depict the most important streets and bodies of water, providing a detailed cartographic basis for all possible applications in the insurance industry.

Maps for other Central American countries have been updated and expanded in the same way, including Belize, Bermuda, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama as well as all Caribbean islands and states.

All map objects feature both native and international place-name attributions. As such, the new maps fit seamlessly with the worldwide labeling schema used by GfK GeoMarketing.





Like all of the digital maps provided by GfK GeoMarketing, the new maps of Central America are available in all standard digital map formats, including *.shp (ESRI), *.mid/*.mif (MapInfo), *.gdb (Geodatabase) and Oracle-compatible formats. Some of the features of the new map editions include comprehensive coverage, seamlessly fitting and overlap-free boundaries and map levels, national and local place-name attributions and infinite zoom capability.

Additional information on the GfK maps of Mexico and all of Central and South America can be obtained from Thorsten Lauszus at +49 (0)7251 9295145 or t.lauszus@gfk-geomarketing.com.

Print-quality illustrations can be found at www.gfk-geomarketing.com/maps_mexico-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 offers the world's largest collection of digital administrative and postcode maps, with coverage of 240 countries.



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.