

# CASE STUDY



**For more information, please contact:**

Christine Simmons  
RMS Public Relations (for Avenza)  
Tel: 949-579-9569 x 804  
Email: [Christine@rms-biz.com](mailto:Christine@rms-biz.com)

## Michigan's Department of Transportation Uses Avenza's PDF Maps App to Improve Overall Quality Control and Planning

*Avenza's Maps App is helping Michigans' DOT go digital*

Located in the heart of Michigan, the states' Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for 9,655 route miles (M, US or I routes) as well as providing financial and/or technical assistance for portions of the states' local transit systems, airports, railways, and bus routes. Every year, millions of people – locals as well as tourists – utilize these means of travel and rely on the MDOT to ensure safety and quality.



With ridership of the MDOT transit systems being critical to the economic success of the state, Surveying Support Unit Supervisor, John Lobbestael explained that the need for clear, easy to use, maps was not only important for his team of land surveyors, but also for the construction workers, engineers, and designers. Keeping all this in mind, Lobbestael and Design



Services Manager Dan Belcher, went searching for a digital solution in hopes of ditching cumbersome, traditional maps.

When Lobbestael discovered that Avenza's PDF Maps app could offer crystal-clear, interactive digital maps, he was thrilled.

"When I found Avenza's Maps app in the iTunes App Store, I was so excited," Lobbestael stated. "The old way of doing business involves use of bulky paper plans – sometimes as big

as 24'x36'; and hauling just a couple of those from one busy job site to another can be cumbersome. Now that I have this app, I can download as many PDF plan sets as I want straight to my iPhone."

With the use of Avenza's PDF Maps app, Lobbestael was able to transfer large traditional paper maps to digitized, interactive PDFs. This simple transfer of data from traditional maps to digitized PDFs gained approval for testing from the team at MDOT in just one short week. "When you're out at a job site, a paper map of this size can easily get battered and become burdensome," said Lobbestael. "The beauty of accessing maps through the PDF Maps app is that I can view them on my iPhone and know exactly where I am in the field at any time – thus eliminating the need to carry bulky paper maps that need to be folded or rolled constantly. To be able to just scroll through a map with the touch of my finger is so convenient and easy," Lobbestael stated.

Avenza Systems, Inc., a leading developer of cartographic software, had recently created a mobile app called Avenza PDF Maps for the iOS (iPhones and iPads) platform so that map publishers and individual cartographers could upload and distribute digital version of their paper maps at no cost. Now in a digital format, maps could easily be downloaded onto an iPad or



iPhone. Paired together with mobile devices that use GPS, the PDF Maps app provided the best of all worlds – the ability to read details clearly like a paper map, find your location with GPS and even add your own placemarks and data points. "The technology behind the Maps app is really great," Lobbestael expressed. "Being able to digitally tag waypoints and geo-references directly on the map is something I could never do with paper maps. It really comes in handy when you're out in the field."

Since MDOT employees must travel throughout the state to different job sites, the conditions often vary. "I find myself in remote locations many times without an internet connection," Lobbestael said. "But with the Avenza PDF Maps app, I don't have to worry about losing reception – I can still view all the maps on my iPhone without fail."

With the Avenza Maps app, Lobbestael and other MDOT employees are able to develop, design, and survey the states' roads, bridges, and railways with ease, efficiency, and superb quality. Lobbestael and his team are able to



download maps through the Avenza Map Store 24-hours a day - another benefit to using digital maps. Through this technology, MDOT designers, engineers, and surveyors can easily prepare well in advance, quickly and conveniently before visiting or designing any job site.

The MDOT Surveying Support Unit implemented the use of Avenza's PDF Maps app just a few short weeks ago, and although still early in their adoption, the team has already seen the essential need and functionality of the Avenza Maps app. "We are still in the demo/trial period and currently, there are only ten surveyors and designers utilizing the software. But we are really enjoying the benefits and plan to issue out all 25 of our current licenses for the app."

### **More about Avenza's PDF Maps app**

Avenza's PDF Maps app is an all-inclusive solution for the transfer of conventional paper maps to digitized, interactive PDFs readily available for handheld mobile devices on the iOS platform. It allows for consumers and businesses to utilize and purchase maps directly to and from their devices; any geo-referenced map may be uploaded and made available for purchase in a compressed, digital version which is both visually brilliant as well as convenient.

Avenza PDF maps app features the ability to:

- Search for places and points of interest on any map using the Google database
- Export, import and share waypoints and associated attribute data, including photos
- Measure distances and areas and estimate walking times
- Download and carry multiple maps on one device similar to music and books
- Import KML waypoints (including images and custom pins) exported from PDF Maps or other software such as Google Earth or Avenza MAPublisher

## **More about Avenza Systems Inc.**

Avenza Systems Inc. is an award-winning, privately held corporation that provides cartographers and GIS professionals with powerful software tools for making better maps. In addition to software offerings for Mac and Windows users, Avenza offers value-added data sets, product training, and consulting services. For more information visit [www.avenza.com](http://www.avenza.com) or call (416) 487-5116.

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