

InstantAtlas Customer Story



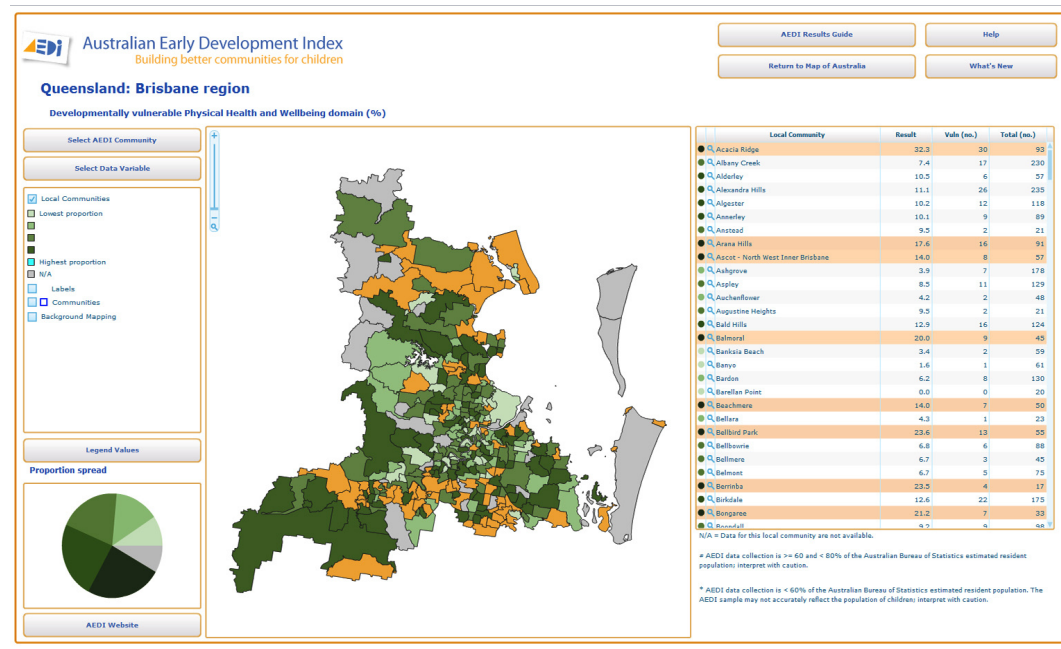
The website was awarded Finalist in the Australian and New Zealand Internet Best Practices Awards for 2010, in the “website openness category”. This is a reflection of the ease of use of the InstantAtlas software.

<http://maps.aedi.org.au/>

visualise / communicate / ENGAGE

Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)

‘Using interactive reports to show a nation’s progress in early childhood development’



Background

Between 2004 and 2008, the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) Building Better Communities for Children pilot project was carried out across 60 Australian communities from all states and territories (excluding the Northern Territory). It involved more than 56,000 children and over 3,000 teachers and was a measure of how young children developed in different communities.

Getting started

In 2009, the project became federally funded, and captured results for 261,203 children, which was 98 per cent of the estimated five year-old population in Australia. The AEDI is now a population census, and has created a snapshot of early childhood development in communities across Australia. It is conducted by the Centre for Community Child Health (within the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute) at The Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne, in partnership with the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Perth.

We spoke to Megan Harper, GIS analyst at the AEDI National Support Centre, about the role that InstantAtlas has played in highlighting the results of the AEDI.

Starting point

The AEDI National Support Centre started using the InstantAtlas mapping software in mid-2008. It had explored other mapping solutions but felt that the software produced by GeoWise would be the best option in terms of displaying their data. InstantAtlas is already being used by the majority of Public Health Observatories in the United Kingdom. In addition, Megan had already seen the work that Melbourne University were doing with the Community Indicators Victoria website (<http://www.communityindicators.net.au/>), and John Glover’s work with the South Australian Public Health Unit Atlases (<http://www.publichealth.gov.au>).

In December 2009, then Deputy Prime Minister, Julia Gillard announced the first national release of AEDI results. According to Megan, the support provided by GeoWise was “outstanding” and played a major role in helping the AEDI National Support Centre to meet this deadline.

Meeting the need

The web statistics show that a large number of people are visiting the AEDI results website <http://maps.aedi.org.au/>. Federal, state, and local government departments, as well as community groups and other not-for-profit organisations are amongst the users. The results are a starting point for officials providing them with evidence of vulnerability levels in children in local communities across the country. The online mapping allows users to choose any community across the country, and see the vulnerability levels of the population of five year olds.

Megan says: “InstantAtlas allowed us to present our results via the user-friendly interactive mapping. From a GIS administrator’s point of view, the software is easy to get to know. The GeoWise support team have been fantastic, and they are always happy to look at our suggested improvements for any software upgrades.”

Taking the project forward

The next release of data will be available on the AEDI website in December 2010 and the team is hoping to use the latest InstantAtlas templates to provide a more advanced mapping solution. The inclusion of Google Maps within InstantAtlas will be a significant advantage in this respect. Megan believes it will offer greater operability and help users to have a better sense of how the data fits together on a national scale. A development that AEDI are considering for 2011 is incorporating the time series analysis to look at how the vulnerability levels of the children within local communities of Australia have changed over time.

Key benefits

The AEDI National Support Centre has been able to present nation-wide results in a meaningful and easy-to-use online mapping system

- GeoWise provided outstanding support to help the AEDI project meet its deadline
- AEDI GIS analysts found InstantAtlas software easy to get to know, and the online support documentation very thorough
- It is easy to add new spatial data into existing Atlas reports, providing more complex and more meaningful data analysis.