

### **Project Background and Purpose**

In 1997 NTG Clarity undertook a technologically advanced software project to develop the software for graphical map locator capabilities and services. The basic need was to develop a technique to dynamically identify specific locations on a map. Up to this point in time these software tools were not commercially available on the Web platform. Information regarding the structure of graphical images was not well documented and significant research was done to understand the different graphical formats and the different ways to compress graphical images. The Web software technology at this time was new and people were looking at capabilities to use dynamic maps. Manual creation and modification was tedious because it necessitated re-creating the static image for each individual location. This manual procedure also required a large amount of disk space and maintenance was extremely time consuming. The requirement was for software that dynamically displays animated graphical images, automatically generates co-ordinates and is user friendly.

### **Main Activities:**

A Locate-It software tool was developed that allows the creation of animated WEB graphics that change without having to be re-created under user control. A user can create animated GIF files under Windows/NT with as many specified locations as may be required. The software can be used to display dynamically created images, based upon a dynamic search criteria string created while a user is navigating a dynamic database. Also, custom product installation software was developed to provide serial number generation, verification and security.

In particular, this unique tool may be used to create maps with multiple locations specified on them. Applications can include, but are not restricted to the following:

- Specify locations on a road map using a flashing star
- Show where different rooms are in a house blueprint using a flashing arrow
- Locate different buildings on a school campus using a flashing sign
- Identify where different stores are in a shopping mall

The Locate-It software is used in conjunction with the IMKIS (In-Mall Kiosk information System) for retail mall kiosk information applications.

### **Accomplishments and Results:**

The Locate-It software tool has been used successfully in a variety of applications. It has been used as a tool to find store locations, products and services in retail mall kiosk applications. The software has also been used in graphic animation games.