

COMPANY PROFILE



Geographx is a small New Zealand company that provides services in digital mapping and custom cartographic design.

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Geographx works from the old Dominion Observatory which is also the company's registered office.

Company Background

Geographx was established in late 1998 by Roger Smith, who continues today as company owner, director and chief mapsmith.

In the years since, Geographx has worked on a wide range of map-related projects with central government, local government, NGOs, multi-nationals, SMEs, universities, iwi, trusts and individual clients. Most clients are New Zealand-based, some are off-shore.

The company's main focus is custom map design and production. It is known for its innovative approach to terrain representation and its work with 3D map projections.

Geographx builds and sells digital map data products and publishes a range of print maps and posters.

Its work extends to mapping dynamic virtual environments. Geographx is the New Zealand distributor for cutting-edge 3D geospatial visualisation products from Skyline Software Systems based in Virginia, USA.

Geographx staff numbers have varied over time depending on the type of projects being undertaken and the challenges posed. Staff levels have never exceeded 5 FTEs. The company has for many years hosted graduate and post-graduate interns from cartography schools in Europe. The intern programme is currently in abeyance.

Personal Bio

Roger Smith considers himself to be a natural born geographer but has no formal qualifications in cartography or geospatial science.



He holds a Bachelor of Science from Otago majoring in geology, and a post-graduate diploma in agricultural science from Lincoln University.

Prior to making maps he worked in:

- finance as a primary industries appraiser and valuer
- agriculture as a hill-country sheep farmer
- aviation as a commercial pilot and flight instructor
- forestry as a plantation forest owner and manager
- tourism as a resource and investment analyst.

Roger currently serves as Vice-President of the New Zealand Cartographic Society.

Selected Project Work

The projects briefly described below have been selected to illustrate the diversity of work undertaken over the past five years. For a summary of work undertaken over the past two years refer to the website blog.

EARTH Platinum World Atlas

Published in 2013 by Millennium House Publishing in Sydney, Earth Platinum is recognised by Guinness World Records as the largest atlas ever produced and it won the 2013 IMTA Global Award for best map product worldwide. Roger Smith was Chief Cartographer and joint Chief Cartographic Consultant on the project, whilst Geographx managed cartographic production and coordinated the many mapmakers around the world who contributed to the atlas. Geographx produced the relief mapping underlying all cartographic plates and was responsible for the correction and processing of final files. The atlas weighs 150kg and stands 1800mm tall. It was printed in Milan, bound in Hong Kong, and is designed to last 500 years if stored under controlled temperature and humidity conditions. A copy is held by the National Library in Wellington.

Mapping the New Zealand Great Walks

In 2014 Geographx produced and published a series of paper field maps covering all nine of the New Zealand Great Walks. Each A1 sized map features a track map on one side and an orthographic oblique (3D) regional map on the reverse. The maps were printed on "Rockstock", a recently-developed hard-wearing, waterproof, environment-friendly paper made not from trees but from stone. The Geographx Great Walk maps were updated and reprinted in 2016. They are distributed, marketed and sold nationwide by Pottin Burton Publishing.

Unfolding the Map — the Cartography of New Zealand

Roger Smith curated this exhibition which opened in the National Library, Wellington on October 15th 2015. **Unfolding the Map** is a celebration of mapping in New Zealand and is scheduled to run for a two year period until October 2017. It includes a chronological display of historic and contemporary print maps spanning more than 250 years, with maps drawn mostly from the Alexander Turnbull, Archives New Zealand and the National Library collections. The exhibition examines the impact of technological change on mapping, and there is a section devoted to New Zealand place names. **Unfolding the Map** was a sanctioned event on the 2015-2106 International Map Year calendar and the 2016 National Cartographic Conference (Geocart '16) was held at the National Library to take advantage of its presence. A series of public lectures and an educational outreach programme run in conjunction with the exhibition.

Torres del Paine, Patagonia

In late 2016 Geographx was asked to help develop a new trekking map for Torres del Paine National Park in Southern Chile. Roger Smith travelled to Patagonia and spent several days in the field at Torres del Paine. This was followed by 10 days working with a team in Santiago where an advanced draft of the new map was designed and drawn. The Chilean client is adding additional design elements and publication is expected in 2018.

Maps for the new Auckland iSITE and DOC Visitor Centre

In June 2017 Geographx was contracted to create five large format maps for the new Auckland Tamaki Makaurau Visitor Centre which is due to open on Princes Wharf at the beginning of September. The new centre is seen as an important gateway site for visitors to New Zealand.

First World War Centenary Projects

Geographx has worked on numerous WW1 projects in recent years. Many but not all have been commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage. Maps have been produced for the NZ History First World War website, the “War News” television documentary, exhibitions, and several illustrated print publications including military histories, biographies and guides. Geographx was also commissioned by the Australian War Memorial in Canberra to produce a large format wall map depicting the Anzac and Allied landings at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915.

New Zealand Wine Industry

Wine industry clients in recent years include New Zealand Winegrowers, the NZ School of Food and Wine, the biennial Pinot Noir Festival, the publishers of several wine atlases and books on New Zealand wine, and numerous individual New Zealand vineyards and wine producers. Geographx has also recently provided mapping services to wine industry players in British Columbia.

Maps for Magazines

Geographx has contributed more than 100 maps to New Zealand Wilderness magazine over the past ten years and has for a similar period provided cartographic services to New Zealand Geographic. The company’s work has also appeared in off-shore publications including National Geographic and the Australian Geographic.

Professional Affiliations / Memberships

New Zealand Cartographic Society (NZCS)

British Cartographic Society (BCS)

North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS)

International Map Industry Association (IMIA)

International Cartographic Association (ICA) Commission on Map Design

International Cartographic Association (ICA) Commission on Mountain Cartography

Product awards / Industry recognition

1. Atlases

The Geographic Atlas of New Zealand

2005 Special commendation, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Melbourne.

2006 Finalist in the Reference & Anthology category, Montana New Zealand Book Awards..

Earth Concise World Atlas (*contributor*)

2008 Best book-based product, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Hobart.

Earth Blue Limited Edition World Atlas (*contributor*)

2009 Best book-based product, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Darwin.

2009 Graham Stanton Prize. Best map product, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Darwin.

2009 Voted best world atlas, ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Santiago.

World Atlas – the Cartographic Encyclopedia of Planet Earth (*contributor*)

2010 Best book-based Product, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Melbourne.

2010 Graham Stanton Prize. Best map product, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Melbourne.

Earth Platinum World Atlas (*responsible for relief mapping, map production & coordination*)

2013 Best book-based product, IMIA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Sydney.

2013 Graham Stanton Prize. Best map product, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Sydney.

2013 Winner, IMTA Global Award for best map product, Boston.

2. Sheet Maps

The Adams Wilderness and Westland/Tai Poutini National Park

2010 2nd prize sheet map category, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Melbourne.

Tararua Range

2011 Highly commended, BCS Stanfords Award for Print Mapping, UK

2011 Winner, New Zealand Cartographic Society Map Awards.

2011 A New Zealand entry to the ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Paris.

Marlborough Sounds

2012 Featured in the NACIS Atlas of Design, Volume I.

2011 A New Zealand entry to the ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Paris.

Tongariro National Park

2012 Winner, sheet map category, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Brisbane.

2012 Graham Stanton Prize for best map product, IMTA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Brisbane.

2012 Finalist, IMTA Global Award for best map product, Albuquerque.

2012 Winner, New Zealand Cartographic Society Map Awards.

2013 3rd prize sheet map category, ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Dresden.

2014 Featured as Map of the Month, ICA International Cartographic Association website.

2014 Featured as Mapcarte #10/365, ICA Commission on Map Design.

2. Sheet Maps continued....

Central Otago

2013 A New Zealand entry to the ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Dresden.

Milford Track

2014 Commended, BCS Stanfords Award for Print Mapping, UK

2014 Featured in the NACIS Atlas of Design, Volume II.

2014 Winner, Sheet Map category, IMIA Asia Pacific Map Awards, Melbourne.

2014 Graham Stanton Prize for best map product, IMIA Asia Pacific Awards, Melbourne.

2014 Runner-up, IMIA Global Award for best map product, Denver.

2014 Featured as Mapcarte #274/365, ICA Commission on Map Design.

2014 Featured as "Map of the Day", GIS Day Expo, Brisbane.

2015 A New Zealand entry to the ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Rio de Janeiro.

West Coast of the Southern Alps

2014 Winner, New Zealand Cartographic Society Map Awards.

2015 A New Zealand entry to the ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Rio de Janeiro.

Te Ika-a-Maui and Te Waipounamu

2015 Runner-up, BCS Stanfords Award for Print Mapping, UK

2015 A New Zealand entry to the ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Rio de Janeiro.

2017 Highly commended. New Zealand Pride in Print Awards (*for Te Waipounamu map*).

The Olivine Wilderness

2017 2nd in sheet map category, ICA International Cartographic Exhibition, Washington DC.

3. Other award-winning books featuring Geographx maps

Landforms - the shaping of New Zealand

2003 Best use of illustrations, New Zealand Spectrum Print Book Design Awards.

Tramping in New Zealand

2007 Winner, Nielsen New Zealand Booksellers Choice Award.

New Zealand's Native Trees

2012 Winner, New Zealand Post Book of the Year.

Shelter from the Storm – The Story of New Zealand's Backcountry Huts

2013 Winner, Nielsen New Zealand Booksellers Choice Award.

Molesworth - Stories from New Zealand's Largest High-country Station

2014 Winner, Nielsen New Zealand Booksellers Choice Award.

Tangata Whenua: An Illustrated History

2016 Winner, Illustrated Non-fiction, Ockham New Zealand Book Awards.

4. Other awards

New Zealand Spatial Excellence Awards

2014 Geographx - finalist in the Technical Excellence category.

2014 Geographx - Special Commendation for work on the Earth Platinum World Atlas.

The judges commented:

“This was a big, complex project in every sense of the word and represented many challenges that few cartographic organisations in the world could have tackled. It was also a huge feat of coordination and design involving input from 88 contributing cartographers on 6 continents who contributed to various sections of the atlas. This is an immense achievement of global significance and truly worthy of special recognition.”

2017 Roger Smith – Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Spatial Industry

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