



Gapmaps now in 21 countries globally, with retail and fast-food sectors driving rapid growth.

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Despite the impact of COVID-19, the retail sector has both adapted to new customer demand patterns and built new channels to market.

In particular, GapMaps has seen strong growth in the fast-food delivery channel, which is creating demand for data and insights so brands can better plan for and capture the potential of growing markets. As a result, brands are actively monitoring pedestrian activity in these post-COVID times to better understand and plan for physical locations, particularly in data-challenged markets.

As a result, GapMaps continues to expand its international presence in South-East Asia and the Middle East, with operations now in 21 countries.

“Since 2018, we’ve been adding five new markets each year and experienced double-digit revenue growth year-on-year,” says Anthony Villanti, GapMaps Managing Director and Founder.

“This growth is due to the ease-of-use and sophistication of our mapping software, which uses the very latest demographic, government and industry data to help clients choose the right physical location specific to their business needs.”

GapMaps has approximately 500 brands using GapMaps in sectors where a physical location is required, such as aged care, childcare, general practice, allied health, fitness, fuel, grocery, quick service restaurants, shopping centres and convenience stores.

Tim Shaw, GapMap’s Director, Market Planning, says, “Many of our Australian customers, especially global brands, have encouraged us to enter new markets so they can use GapMaps overseas. This contributes to decisions on where we expand the business.”

Post-Pandemic Patterns

As countries emerge from COVID-19 lockdown restrictions GapMaps is observing and monitoring increases in pedestrian activity in central areas, shopping malls and other retail precincts.

“What’s been interesting is the variability in the COVID-19 recovery process,” adds Shaw.

“We expected to see variability between countries due to different lockdown restrictions and when those were loosened or removed. However, we see significant variation in the pace of recovery between large and small shopping malls and central precincts, an inconsistency observed across large urban centres when compared with smaller urban and regional centres.

“The ability for brands to access these insights enables them to more effectively manage their physical store networks through the recovery, and plan for what’s increasingly looking like a ‘new normal’ in a post-pandemic world,” continues Shaw.

Quality of Data

GapMap’s clients contributing to this international growth include Domino’s, KFC, Starbucks, Burger King, Subway and McDonalds. Eat’n’Go, the franchisee for Domino’s, Cold Stone and Pinkberry in Kenya and Nigeria are also benefitting from the data insights GapMaps is providing.

“GapMaps has a unique ability to create high quality location intelligence data and insights in some very data-challenged countries,” says Pat McMichael, Group Managing Director and CEO, Eat’n’Go.

“The quality of their data and simple to use platform has enabled me to introduce world class market and network planning processes to businesses where network planning had previously been quite rudimentary,” he says.

Growth Strategy

Where GapMaps foresees significant growth opportunity, the company backs itself and proactively enters a market and build a local client base.

“This combination has proven to be a good growth strategy for the business,” adds Shaw.

“In South-East Asia, quick service restaurants are one of the fastest growing sectors. Although population growth has slowed down in recent years, the consuming class growth can be up to four times that rate, which is driving store and shopping precinct investments from global brands.”

Access to demographic data in some markets has traditionally been challenging, with a reliance on census data that can be more than a decade old. That data is often too broad and not appropriate for local catchment analysis to support a location decision.

“With GapMaps we can analyse different local demographic, industry and government data to provide insights at a granular level, often drilling down to a 100 – 250 metre grid to pinpoint an optimum store catchment,” says Shaw. “That gives customers the same market planning processes and experience they get in Australia.”

Sector Expansion

Aside from retail, GapMaps will expand globally into some of its other key sectors already supported in Australia like aged care, medical and health, as data in these international countries becomes more accessible.

“For now, our focus is on retail and food delivery, which is where we can add immediate value to our clients,” continues Shaw.

“Although the pandemic has impacted retail categories like food and hospitality, it has created an environment where global and local brands are using the time to reset, rethink and reassess their network planning strategies and physical location decisions, in preparation for post-lockdown.”

A GapMaps Advisory team has been established to support customers in all markets. This team, which is the same people who built the GapMaps platform, provide consulting services, in-depth data analysis and research to help clients with new insights, strategies, and business plans.