

Pokémon Go Switches from Google Maps to OpenStreetMap



Pokémon Go, the location-based app which has reinvented the gaming world, has recently undergone a major overhaul by switching from Google Maps to OpenStreetMap (OSM) for its in-game display. The decision by its creator company, Niantic (which was previously an internal startup of Google), could possibly be motivated by efforts to save on API costs.

Prior to this update, OSM was only used behind the scenes, in particular, to influence 'spawn points' within the game, while Google Maps was used for overworld landscaping.

OSM is a collaborative project to create a free editable map of the world, which was founded by Steve Coast in 2004. The project allows volunteers to edit the map based on their knowledge of the local geographical features around them. Each update is

immediately visible to all other users and is version controlled. Other features of OSM include the fact that there are no corporate map cycle releases, approvals and KPIs which are typically associated with large commercial mapping products. OSM is used and supported by many organisations, including Mapbox, Carto, Foursquare, Craigslist, and even Apple Maps.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/pokemon-go-ditches-google-maps-for-openstreetmap>
