

Getting Your Business Online

How to List Your Business in a GPS-Point of Interest Database

Have you ever wondered how a particular business or point of interest (POI) shows up in your GPS mapping software?

Well, apparently there are a number of ways. Some businesses are added by the software manufacturer, and some are submitted through a variety of channels. In fact, in some cases, you can submit your own business as a point of interest to the GPS mapping software companies.

Basically, you have to be proactive in having your business listed in a POI database, especially in smaller communities. While larger urban centers are fortunate to be regularly scoured by these companies for new POI information; smaller communities and rural areas have to work a bit harder to have their businesses included. There are a number of GPS manufactures and databases that consumers are using. There is no magic bullet to ensure every traveler arriving in Antigonish will have a complete listing.

You have to submit your POI information to the owner of the database. Once your entry is approved, it will be added to the updated database that is then made available to GPS manufacturers who incorporate the database into their products.

If a consumer already owns a GPS unit, they won't have your newly added POI information unless they pro-actively update the GPS database (maps) in their unit. Sometimes the update service is included in the cost of the GPS unit, but more often the customer pays a fee for updates,

This means that it usually takes months before the information you have submitted is widely distributed via new GPS unit sales and those customers who like to keep their GPS database current.

It's important to remember that GPS units are now being incorporated into smart phones, which will make keeping a POI database up-to-date

much simpler. This means that adding your business information to these databases is increasingly valuable as the technology becomes more readily available and more widely accessed.

Most consumer GPS Units source their maps from two major companies; Naviteq and TeleAtlas. Here are instructions for submitting your POI information to these two mapping software companies (Note: this also works for correcting or updating information that already exists in these databases).

Naviteq: Uses a web-based interface to add POI information.

- Go to <http://mapreporter.navteq.com/#find>
- Click on the button labeled Point of Interest
- Type in the name and address of the POI you are interested in to make sure it is not already in the data base and click Search
- If the POI you have entered does not appear on the search list, scroll to the bottom of the screen and click on the button that says Add a New Item to the Map
- Then click on Add a New POI
- Complete the information submission form and click Next Step
- Add an image or document to your submission and click Submit.

TeleAtlas: The process for TeleAtlas is very similar to Naviteq.

- Go to <http://mapinsight.teleatlas.com>
- Select your preferred language by clicking on the appropriate button
- Click the Start button on the “report a change” screen
- Using the series of drop down lists provided, select the country and province where your POI is located (eg. where your business is located)
- Enter the address or GPS coordinates into the form provided and click Search. If your POI already exists in the database, you can now update it. If it doesn't, go to the next step by clicking Describe.
- Click on the icon that best represents what you want to do and follow the instructions
- When you have entered all the required information, click Submit
- You will be given a tracking number and asked to enter your email address if you'd like the tracking number sent to you by email.

Google Maps: You can update Google Maps at <http://www.Google.ca/LocalBusinessCentre>

You will need a Google account to do this. If you already have a Google account, sign in at the URL listed above and it will take you to Google Places, where you can add your business.

If you don't have an account, you will need to create one first by entering a valid email address and password and submitting them to set up your account.

Once you arrive at the Google Places main page

- Select add new listing
- Enter the location information of your business, your website address and a description
- As you enter location information, a pin will be placed on the map. If the location of the pin is wrong, click on the link "Fix incorrect marker location" and move the pin to the proper location on the map.
- Once you have entered all of the necessary information, click Next
- If your business is already listed, you will have to either claim the existing listing (take control of it), or add a new version of the listing. Click either Claim Listing or Add Listing accordingly. If your business has never been listed, only one option will appear - Add Listing.
- In the next screen you can add your business hours, customer payment options, videos, pictures and more.
- When you are finished adding your information, click Submit
- Once your listing has been submitted, you will be asked to select a verification option (mail or phone). This is how Google ensures that people do not post inaccurate information about businesses.
- Make a note of your Google account information because you will need it to login and finalize your business posting.
- Once your listing is verified, Google Places allows you to track how many people view and/or click on your business listing