

Getting More out of the Canal Experience

...with Modern Information Technology

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September 2010

The potential

- ▶ Inland waterways – major natural and cultural resources for Europe and in many other parts of the world



- ▶ Hundreds of thousands of small enterprises are totally dependent on income from waterways- related tourism and leisure

The potential

- ▶ Millions of visitors every year: boaters, walkers, cyclists, anglers,... many other casual visitors.



- ▶ They constitute a world-wide historical and cultural heritage often forgotten, particularly by our governments

The potential



- ▶ Significant potential for tourism and recreation
 - 40,000 km of waterway in the EU
 - over 60% of the population lives within 15 km of a river, canal or lake

However...

- ▶ Waterways require significant monitoring and maintenance to protect this natural resource from a variety of contaminants... including ourselves!



- ▶ To ensure success demands input and support from many disciplines, industry sectors and technologies, particularly Information Technology.



The benefits

- ▶ ***Economic***

- supporting recreation and tourism – generating employment
 - enhancing the value of waterside properties

- ▶ ***Environmental***

- sustaining/enhancing landscapes and natural habitats

- ▶ ***Social***

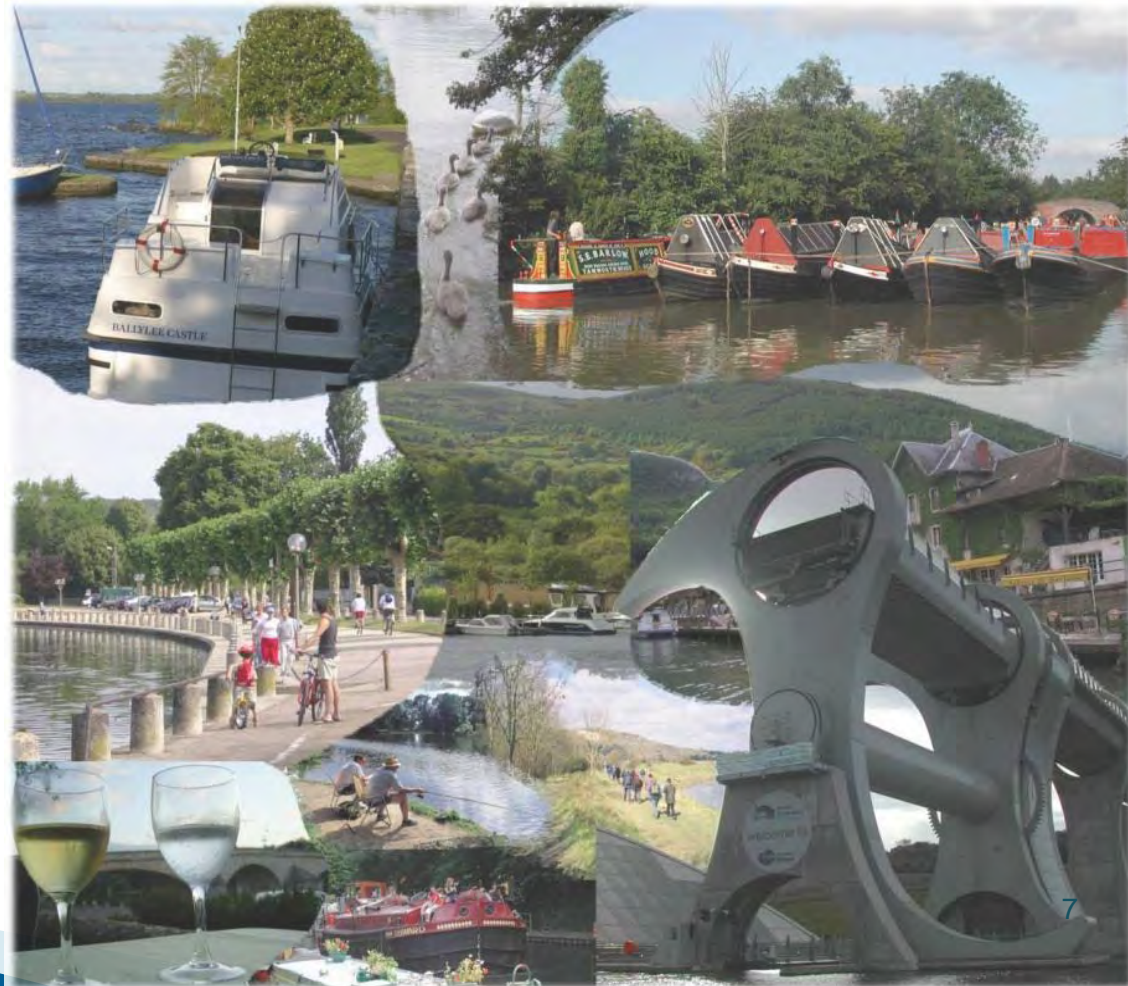
- providing recreation and community development opportunities close to where people live

- ▶ ***Cultural***

- sustaining the heritage of the built environment for present and future generations

Waterway users include...

- ▶ Boaters (permanent, residential, vacationers, small craft)
- ▶ Anglers
- ▶ Ramblers/walkers
- ▶ Cyclists
- ▶ Wildlife observers/
nature lovers
- ▶ Historical/archaeological
interests, etc.
- ▶ Urban dwellers living on/
near the water



Current status... heritage at risk

▶ *Economic*

waterways may not survive as 'commercially' viable

▶ *Environmental*

lack of use → degradation of the environment

▶ *Social*

- fewer young people participate in waterways leisure activities than in previous generations
- limited access to the waterways for the disabled and growing elderly population of Europe

▶ *Cultural*

erosion of the rich traditions and heritage of Europe's waterways.

Location-based mobile information systems

- ▶ ...or 'Sat Navs' !
- ▶ Most current products primarily Route Planners with some basic POI information
- ▶ State-of-the-market GIS technology allows much more...
 - ▶ Comprehensive Mobile Information System
 - ▶ Map Interactive Route Planner
 - ▶ GNSS (e.g. GPS, Galileo, GLONASS) location

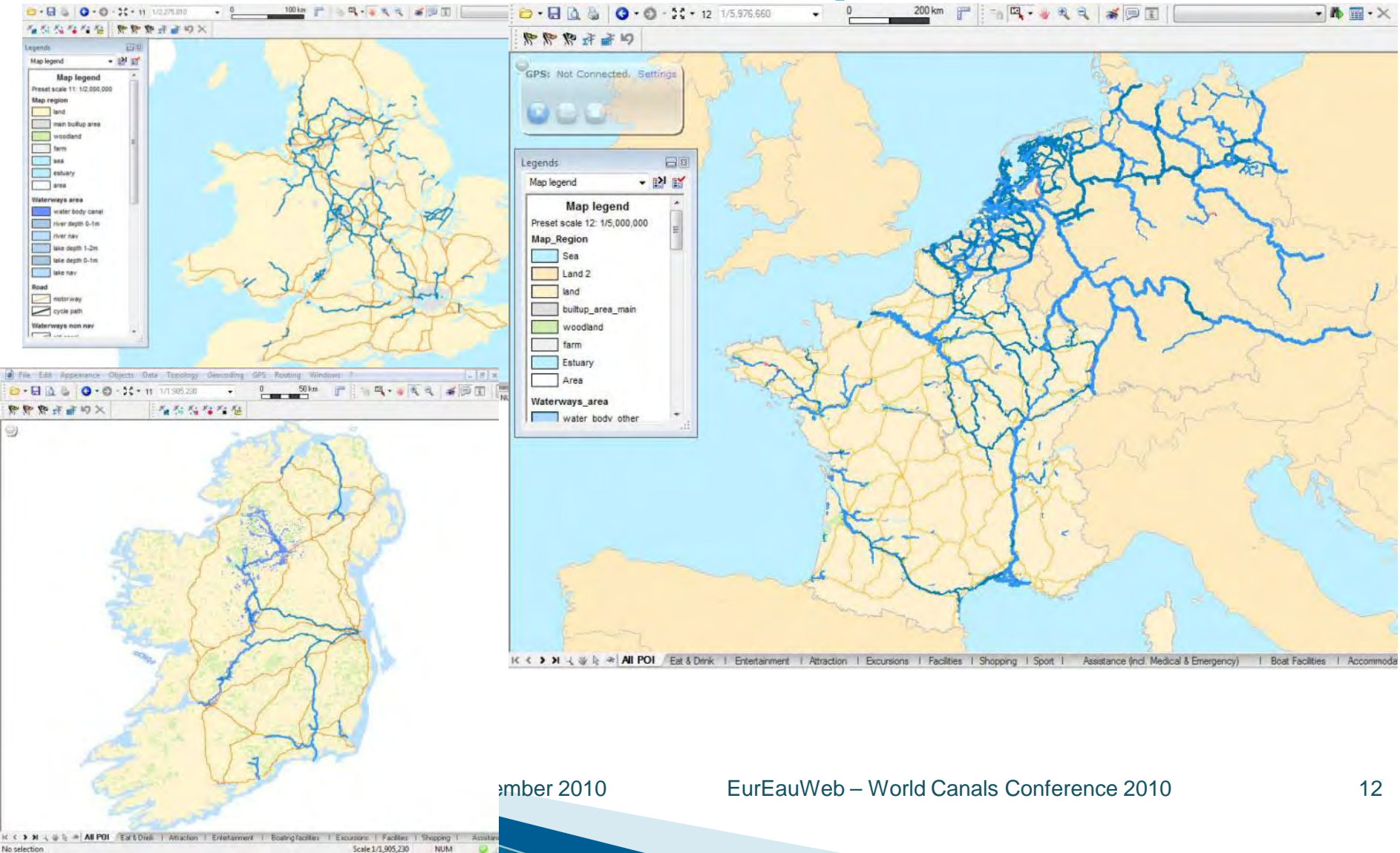
Information

- ▶ Users require greater and more detailed information rather than just how to get from A to B.
- ▶ New applications emphasise Location Based Services – accurate, up-to-date information provision is key.
- ▶ Introduction of iPhone, iPad and Android-based devices is rapidly increasing user perception of what is actually achievable.

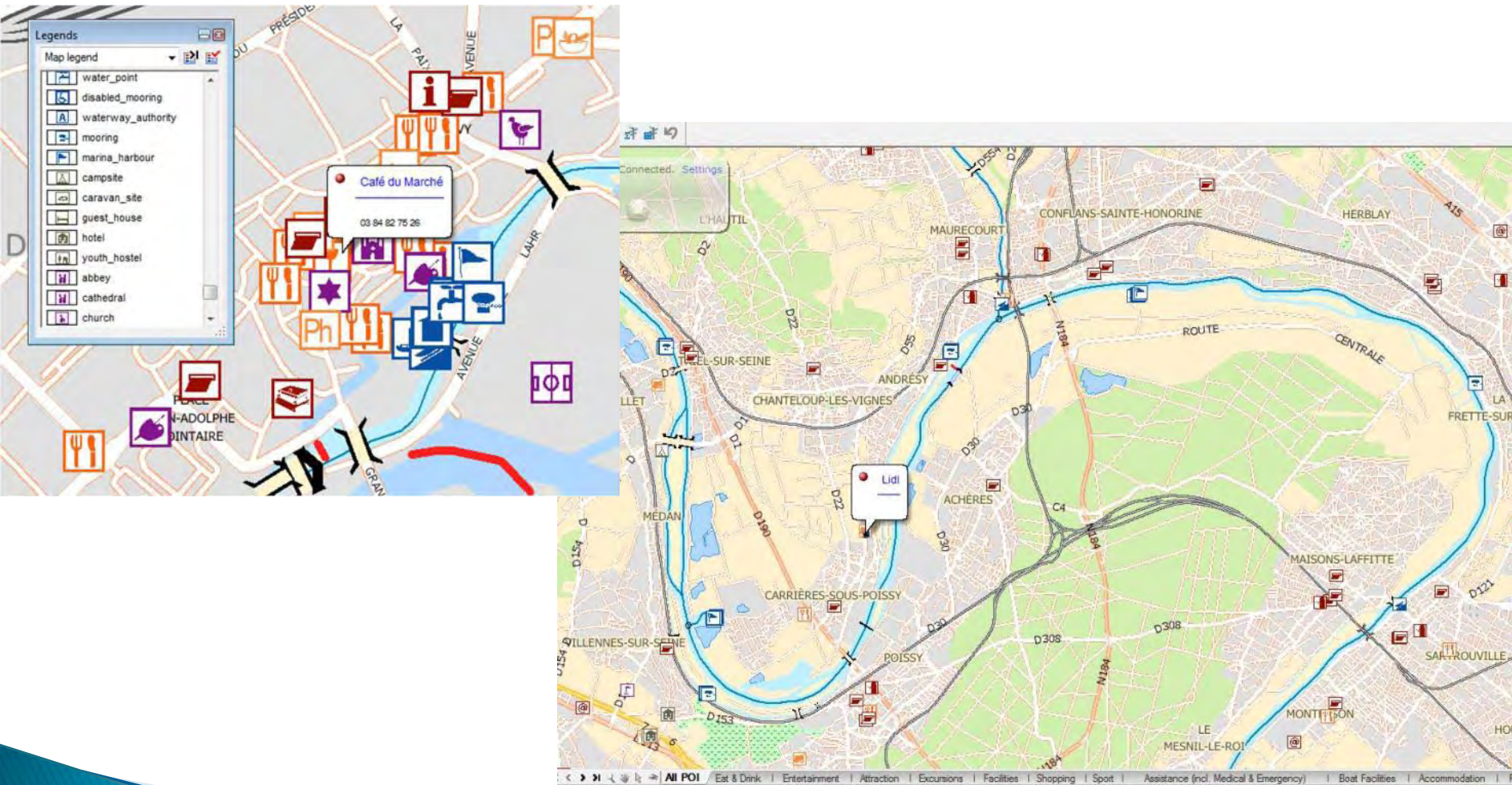
EurEauWeb – Water-Way®

- ▶ New integrated information system aimed specifically at waterway visitors
- ▶ Based on established State-of-the-art GIS
- ▶ Can be used to create electronic guides quickly and easily...
- ▶ Just add water!

Detailed and accurate maps



Detailed information



Route planning

Résumé : Itinéraire le plus court

Entre : Départ temporaire

Et : Arrivée temporaire

Distance : 212 km 122 m

Durée : 34 h 56 mn 55 s

Vitesse moyenne : 6 km/h

Feuille de route

Itinéraire

	Distance	Cumul	Durée	Vitesse
🚩 Départ temporaire				
📍 Canal du Rhône au Rhin - Boucle de Besançon (Doubs)	522 m	522 m	5 mn 3 s	6 km/h
📍 Canal du Rhône au Rhin	73 km 558 ...	74 km 80 m	15 h 47...	5 km/h
📍 Saône	9 km 651 m	83 km 731 m	1 h 4 m...	9 km/h
📍 Saône - Seurre diversion canal	10 km 39 m	93 km 770 m	1 h 6 m...	9 km/h
📍 Saône	8 km 642 m	102 km 412 m	57 mn 3...	9 km/h
📍 Saône - Écuelles diversion canal	2 km 146 m	104 km 558 m	1 h 7 m...	2 km/h
📍 Saône	68 km 789 ...	173 km 347 m	8 h 32 ...	8 km/h
📍 Entrance to Seille	126 m	173 km 473 m	1 mn 5 s	7 km/h
📍 Seille	38 km 649 ...	212 km 122 m	6 h 14 ...	6 km/h
🚩 Arrivée temporaire		212 km 122 m		

General conclusion

“The use of IT to help promote, maintain and manage Europe’s waterways and provide useful, even vital information to its visitors should be an accepted necessity by all interest groups – waterway authorities, government agencies, waterway associations and clubs, restoration groups, waterway-related service providers and of course the millions of members of the general public who make use of our waterways.

We need...

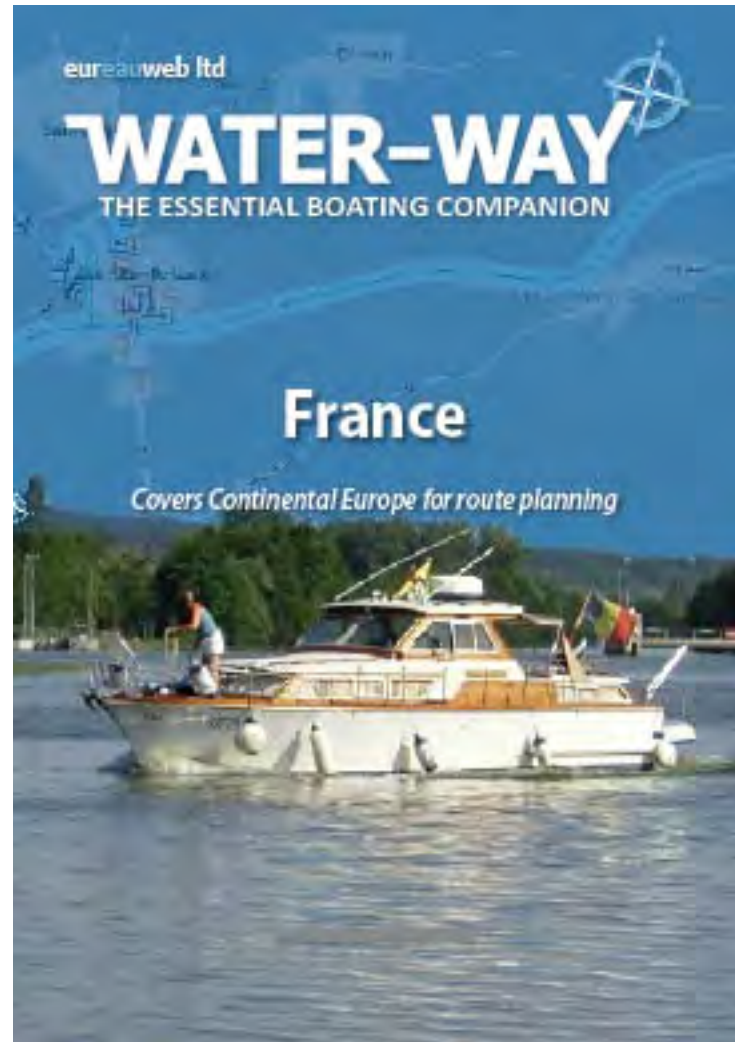
- ▶ More appreciation and understanding of how IT can help waterway tourism and leisure
- ▶ More investment in the waterway leisure infrastructure, such as selective wifi spots and mobile phone access

BUT this needs to be done sympathetically and in keeping with the fragile nature of the environment

We need...

- ▶ More and better facilities for all types of user
- ▶ More emphasis on the de-stressing nature of water, particularly for the highly-stressed business community of today
- ▶ More attention paid to the younger generation of potential 'user'

Demo?



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The author has been writing for 40 years about canals as heritage, as engineering achievements in their own right, and as an environmentally sound way of moving people and goods through the continents of our planet Earth. Part of this effort has been mapping the waterways, but the documents produced and published have so far have addressed only small niche markets, giving the overview. The revolution required to bring much more information to many more people is not just a business concern, to get more value from one company's investment in this field; it is also an issue for all waterway users, because the availability of reliable up-to-date information will encourage more use - and more sensible use - of our canals. This is the rationale behind the Water-Way SatNav product, which will be demonstrated, underlining its many functions and how the product itself will become a marketing tool for waterway sites and destinations, while assisting planners in designing and implementing investments on the network (presentation prepared jointly with EurEauWeb).