Maptitude 2016 South Africa review

Take home points:

- Cost effective
- Ease of use
- Extremely fast learning curve
- Very large number of file formats
- Lots of out-of-the-box modelling and analysis tools
- South African data included
- Incredible maps

Maptitude 2016 South Africa Overview

Maptitude GIS software for Windows is a powerful GIS tool that delivers high-end mapping and spatial analysis capabilities bundled in a user friendly interface attracting both novice and expert GIS users. Maptitude is developed by Caliper Corporation and was first released in 1995.

The graphical enhancements to the mapping interface combined with functionality improvements confirmed Maptitude 2016 as my preferred choice in GIS software.

I'll give an overview of the main advantages for me in using Maptitude. This link to the Caliper website will

provide all the details as to the capabilities of the software:

http://www.caliper.com/Video/ maptitude-mapping-software/ maptitude-demo/maptitude-mapping- software-demo-video.html

The standout feature of the software is the ease of use and the extremely quick learning curve. Time is money, so not much time is wasted learning to use the software. With a few clicks a complete novice user will be able to produce concise and "to the point" maps, charts, tables, and various other visualisations of data using Create-a-Map Wizard. This ease of use is evident from the start of the installation process. A Download Manager is used to download the software. This manager is robust. From there on the installation is very intuitive and by following the onscreen prompts you will be up and running in a very short space of time.

Caliper started to bundle South African data in previous releases. With this version HERE data is included. For a complete list of included data visit: http://www.caliper.com/Maptitude/ SouthAfrica.htm

Upon running Maptitude you are

immediately greeted by a "quick start" box and from there the user can open a South African map and either create maps or use built-in models for various analyses.
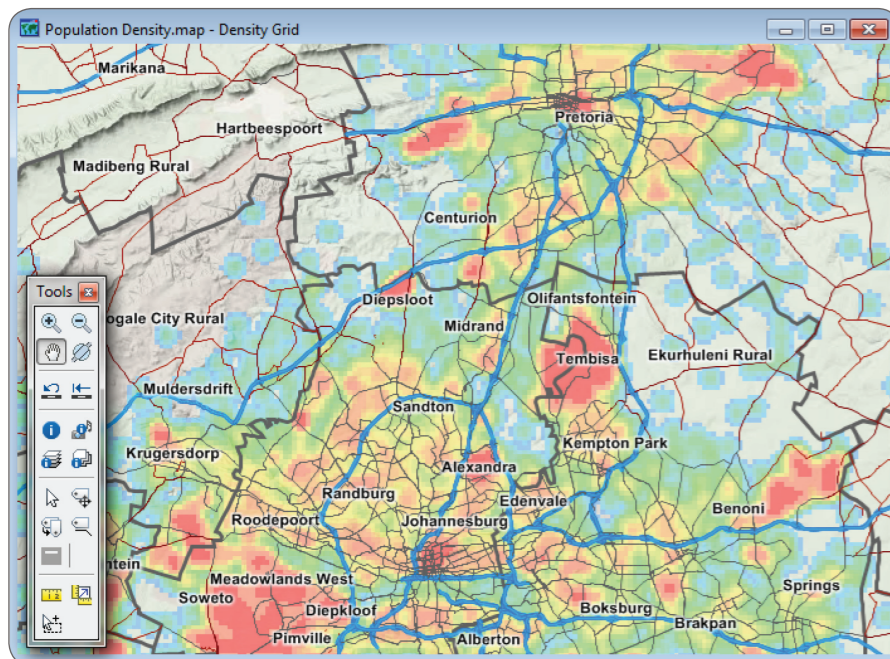
Maptitude handles a lot of tasks involved in working with vector data. There was always support for raster data, but file size was a challenge as was the availability of good data. In the last few releases Caliper added one of the most productive functions – WMS Web Map Service support. There are very user friendly functions available to get imagery as backdrops to your maps. There is a direct Google Earth Imagery tool that lets you download Google Earth images with one click.

Working with polygon and point data is powerful and easy. There are conversion tools between the different data types available and many data modelling functions have been included in this latest release. Overlays, Areas of influence, Desire lines and more are already built into the software. Routing tools also get better and more powerful with each new release; these include Drive Time Rings and Network Partitioning.

A big plus to any software package is customer support. Various tutorials and a very complete manual are available, but in the event where these avenues cannot answer a user question, the friendly support crew is just an e-mail away. Time zones sometimes do cause a delay, but in my experience answers were given in less than a day. If a deadline is looming phone support is incredible by very technical people. This is not just a call centre working from a pre-set "recipe," and these people know the software inside out! Not only can they tell you how to perform the task you have, they even come up with better solutions to your problem sometimes.

There is a very active user group available online.

For the more technically inclined users there is GISDK. This scripting tool allows you to do amazing things with Maptitude.
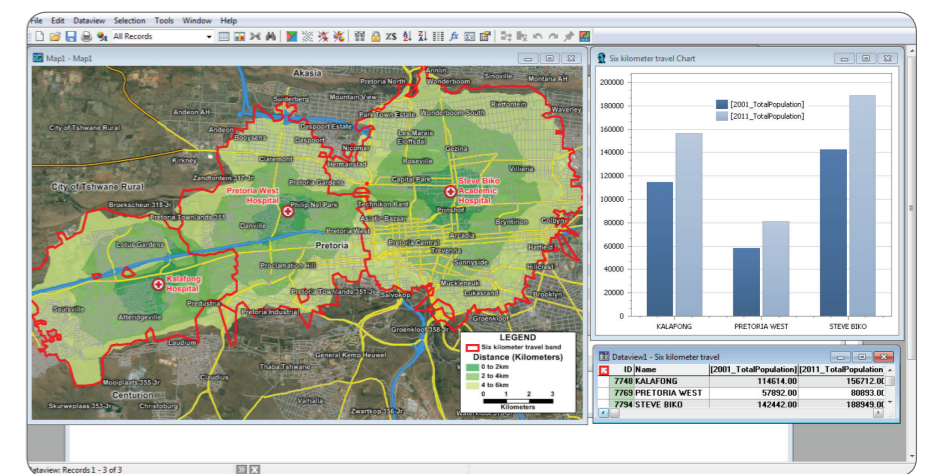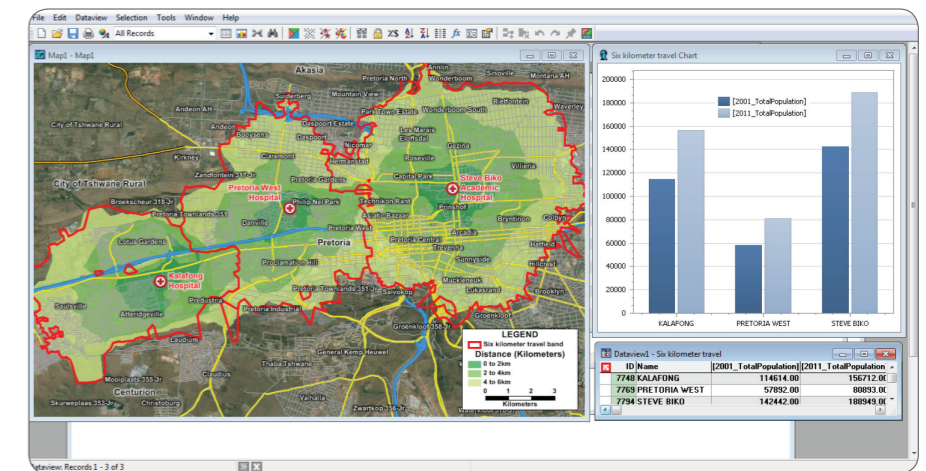
The best is saved for last. What is GIS software? My answer is: "Spreadsheets as maps." On the mapping side is where Maptitude really comes into its own. In the end, when all the technical work and analysis has been done and a GIS professional has the answers that were asked, it has to be delivered in a format that decision makers can use. In many cases these decision makers need an easy-to-understand visual representation of the answers that is concise and to the point. Here is where the true power of Maptitude comes to the forefront. Even technical, non-artistic users can create beautiful maps that admirers of these maps identify as art. Caliper includes various ways to present data, so that specific ways of mapping the data can present the same data to different audiences and get a point across.

In my opinion this is the best GIS software package at the lowest cost with the best included dataset available to the South African market. You will really have to search far and wide for a competitor that can beat Maptitude, and in the end the time and resources spent on searching for such a software package could already have paid for Maptitude and you could already have generated income from your first project!

Maptitude 2016 South Africa Wrap-up

Maptitude includes a wealth of spatial data, assisting users to start analysing locations as soon as Maptitude is installed.

- Optimized travel bands and network partitioning capabilities to generate demographic profiles.
- Improved charts with added capabilities to interact with the data.
- Updated layer styles with comprehensive label functionalities for impressive map displays.
- Improved Travelling Salesman functionality, to calculate shortest routes between multiple stopping points.
- Importing Google Earth documents.
- Microsoft Excel export capabilities.
- The modified drawing tools that enable a user to export spatial data located within the boundary

of a drawing object (i.e. a lasso, rectangle or circle) to Excel certainly simplifies selection and exporting of spatial features into external file formats.

Maptitude 2016 South Africa Summary

Maptitude 2016 is a powerful, all-inclusive GIS tool that is easy

to use, cost-effective and definitely my first choice in GIS software for South Africa.

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