Current Challenges in Atlas Cartography

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Keywords: atlas, storytelling, map design

Abstract:

After decades of prosperity, atlas producers are faced with a serious number of challenges. Those challenges are both external and internal, either due to shifted external conditions or because of internal shortcomings. Internal challenges include, inter alia, the missing Web presence and PR, traditional atlas concepts, static GUI design, an overload of atlas features, default atlas contents, and repetitive visualization, whereas external influences, such as user behaviour, technological advancement and content that reflects new ideas and methods intensify these challenges.

Three provocative statements – 1) atlases as mere collections of maps, 2) atlases rely on old-fashioned concepts, and 3) atlas map design is unattractive – are then picked in order to demonstrate possible approaches in rejuvenating atlas concepts.