Location Based Gaming – Pokémon Go

Location analytics and GIS techniques are evolving with many possibilities of its applications in fields like education, travel, even journalism. Here you will read about the benefits of GPS (Global Positioning System) being incorporated by mobile game developers and creating a whole new dimension into the field of mobile gaming.

Location analytics, GIS, Gaming, if you are into any of these fields or at least have an open eye into technology (or if you visit the app store or play store on your smartphone) you would be aware of the cult following Pokémon Go has garnered in a flash (just 3 weeks). I remember the time I first saw a map incorporated in a computer game for the first time, it was GTA and we all know where the franchise is now. Mostly all the games like Call of Duty series, GTA, Max Payne series etc. all use a game map to direct the player. But real world location with mobile gaming is a whole new ball game defined with this blockbuster Pokémon Go which is breaking all the records on application stores already earning more than $10 million in such a short period of time literally shooting up Ninetendo's market value sky high.

Why so much hype?

So, the question arises, what was new here that got it such an overwhelming response? Because many Pokémon games came and vanished. Here the Universal Selling Point was **real world location mapping** and incorporating it with the game elements such as XP, candies, points, credits etc. For example, In the game it will show the player on the map which is rendered according to the real location and map of the player (GPS), now it will show at this location there is a Pokémon that you need to catch, the player would actually have to get up and go to that location and catch it before anybody else does. People are actually driving to location and moving out of there of homes just to catch a Pokémon, sounds bizarre doesn't it? (Parents won't be fussing as the children would now actually get up and go to the backyard. Outdoors).

Previous Efforts

As a matter of fact Pokémon GO is not first of its kind, there are older games like Geocaching, Moqi, Ingress, that released as back as in 2000 but didn't take off because of the limited technology and GPS not being incorporated into devices on that scale and no or limited presence of the smartphone era. So the point is if applications such as the one above can create such a stutter in the mobile platform scene, what else can we conquer by including a mere aspect of game and real world location into a more concrete and contributing application. Such as we know there are many application who use the aspect of game for

kids to learn math and other subjects. For example, an application with travel points that would give credit and points for each landmark visited. Possibilities are endless.

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To Conclude, now just think location analytics and GPS being incorporated with VR (Virtual Reality) with VR still evolving with various products like Oculus Rift, and companies like Sony etc. gearing up for the gaming evolution. VR's applications into simulation and gaming is well known and debated, but what if location analytics comes into the picture and can it be used in other industries and fields.

Defense is an area where the fusion of these two amazing technologies can create huge waves. Simulation, training, scenario etc can be enhanced to a whole new level, increasing the trainees' or cadets' competence in various situation to a different level altogether that too without the risk of any casualties or mishaps as everything is virtual yet feels real! This is just the tip of the iceberg, what other possibilities can we talk about, is a whole new debatable topic.