

Dataset access and pricing policy. The objective of the PSMA access and pricing policy is to facilitate broad and sustainable access to datasets. The principles underpinning the policy are:

- Simplicity of concept;
- Equality of access to all users;
- Logical structure;
- Dual pricing structure, including access fees and licence fees;
- Ability to be flexible to as yet unknown applications;
- Supportive of existing revenues of individual member agencies;
- Non-exclusivity with respect to VAR Agreements; and
- Protection of intellectual property rights of PSMA and VARs.

Pricing reflects the value of each dataset in different applications. The intention is to ensure that high value products are reflected in the pricing matrix, while also facilitating opportunities to have the data used ubiquitously in low price digital products. A dual fee structure applies to PSMA datasets. Annual Access Fees and Royalties are based on a matrix of data type, data volume, user applications, and number of users.

Conclusion

Whether or not the PSMA business model can be applied elsewhere in the world is a difficult question to answer. It is likely to depend upon complex political, economic, environmental and cultural characteristics in a particular country. The circumstances are almost certainly likely to be different in different countries. The fact that the model has not surfaced elsewhere might suggest it is peculiar to Australia. If this is the case, what is it about Australia that allows such a model to prosper? The following Australian characteristics have all played their part:

- An economy and national infrastructure at a sufficient stage of development to be able to derive value from spatial data and technology;
- An industry base capable of supporting spatial data development and value-adding;
- A political environment that encourages public-private partnerships;
- A federal system of government where no single government controls national spatial datasets; and, most importantly
- A group of core stakeholders (i.e. government mapping agencies) whose interest in achieving a national outcome outweighs parochial self-interest.

A number of countries share these characteristics, but is this sufficient for a PSMA model to emerge elsewhere?

Another way to try to answer the question is to look at PSMA strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A short SWOT analysis of the Company is shown in Table 1.

Ultimately the answer to the question is likely to lie as much on happenstance as it does on a conscious plan. If there is an important national requirement, with no obvious solution, and a core group of stakeholders, who are willing to try something different, and to persevere through the good times and the bad – then the ingredients for a PSMA model are available. In Australia they were sufficient for the model to be successfully built.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with, and value returned to, key stakeholders; • Contribution to matters of national significance; • Commercial culture, and self-funding; • New and innovative national spatial datasets; and • Contribution to industry development. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When it comes to partnerships, being viewed as not quite government, and not quite industry; • Reliance on government agencies for source information; • Reliance on private sector suppliers; • Reliance on a small number of highly skilled employees; and • Carrying some of the administrative overheads of government.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapidly growing market for spatial datasets, technology and services; • Significant commercial and government partnerships; • Development of innovative solutions and best-practices; and • New and innovative national spatial datasets. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of government support, leading to withdrawal of shareholder(s); • Perception of competing unfairly against the private sector • Large internationally-based companies; and • Insufficient revenues to cover cost of maintenance of datasets.

Table 1. Short PSMA SWOT analysis

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