

Google announces Floor Plan app for venue owners

April 8 2012, by Nancy Owano



(Phys.org) -- This week the team from Google Maps launched its Floor Plan Marker for Android in a bid to improve the accuracy of its indoor maps. Inside and outside Google, developers have seen real opportunity in introducing indoor location apps; Google made its mark on indoor maps with a November 2011 launch of indoor maps for Android. In doing so, Google wanted the public to know that this step was only the

beginning. The indoor maps for Android were being made available at malls, airports, and some super-sized retailers -- but Google said the application could ideally expand to many more venues. “We’ll continually add new indoor maps to public buildings across the world,” said Google. The [November launch](#) was confined to venue partnerships in the U.S. and Japan.

This week’s launch carries a message to business venue participants in the U.S. that Google wants to finish the job by roping in information and getting more details so that it can improve the accuracy of its indoor maps.

As part of the launch, Google is “crowdsourcing” by asking [Android](#) venue owners who already uploaded their floor plans to please help.

“When we announced the availability of indoor maps for Android last November, we also introduced Google Maps Floor Plans as a tool for business owners to upload the floor plans for their venue and have them appear in Google Maps for Android. Today we’re releasing the Google Maps Floor Plan Marker app, which enables those who’ve uploaded floor plans to improve the indoor location accuracy their visitors experience when using indoor maps within their venue.”

Google is handing them some homework. When they install the new Google Maps Floor Plan Marker [app](#), they will be walked through the process of going round the site and collecting GPS, cell tower, and publicly broadcast WiFi information. Google says the information can help Google make the My Location feature’s blue dot icon accessible for Android users when indoors and looking for a specific place in the building.

“The time it takes to complete this process depends on the size of the venue, but you can pause and resume a marking task at any time if you

want to take breaks,” according to the announcement.

Indoor positioning accuracy does not come easily. Close-quarter confines and thick walls are just a few of the obstacles that place technology limits on navigation accuracy. Google knows it can improve and fine-tune indoor positioning with the help of its new [Google Maps Floor Plan Marker](#) for Android.

Not all business owners are finding the very idea of uploading detailed floor plans of their sites enticing. If New York City is any kind of harbinger, Google might find that some owners have security issues with that very idea.

News of the [Google launch](#) this week did not go down unanimously well with some at the NY Tech Meetup, where [New York](#) City’s tech companies meet monthly. In an e-mail thread among members of the group on Friday, one NY Tech Meetup member said, “Can’t wait for someone to upload a bank’s blue prints.”

More information: [google-latlong.blogspot.com/20 ... -dot-for-people.html](http://google-latlong.blogspot.com/2012/04/google-floor-plan-app-venue-owners.html)

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