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Denver - Virtual Earth
Microsoft

[New Virtual Earth 3D and Live Maps Releases Embrace Internet Explorer 8](#)

As they evolve

Live Maps and [Virtual Earth](#) have grown to a new stage in their evolution via an update Microsoft started implementing on April 10. The new versions of Virtual Earth and Live Maps are now available, delivering a wide range of enhancements starting with the graphical user interface. At the same time, the majority of improvements are under the hood, with the Redmond company having introduced new Geocoding capabilities - including reverse geocoding, parsing enhancements and a new beta build of Virtual Earth 3D. And on top of it all, the new Live Maps and Virtual Earth services are now fully compatible with Internet Explorer 8. "Our new 'Version 2' cities are much more densely modeled, feature higher resolution textures, and include rendered trees. Cities now have thousands more buildings than before especially noticeable as you move from a city core out to its suburbs. It all adds up to make Virtual Earth much less virtual and takes us a large step closer to delivering a truly impressive mirror world experience. Initially Las Vegas, Dallas, Denver and Phoenix have received the v2 face lift, but all future cities will get these enhancements with hundreds being online before the end of the year," [stated](#) a member of the Live Maps team. End users will be able to export Live Maps collections to their Navigation/GPS devices, with support added for KML, GPX and GeoRSS, and in this manner making the content play well with the vast majority of portable Navigation systems available on the market. Microsoft has also enhanced the 3DVIA editor, on top of the new level of three-dimensional interactivity offered by Virtual Earth. Users will also find that they will be able to toggle labels for bird's eye imagery in the same manner as they did with ortho content, or aerial imagery. The Redmond company is also playing the social networking aspect of Virtual Earth and Live Maps, permitting users to register raster maps and build map tiles for mashups that can be subsequently shared. This is now possible through the integration of MapCrunched layers to Collections. "This latest release of Virtual Earth provides organizations with a host of new features that deliver directions-in more languages-to get users where they're going faster. With enhanced tools that provide greater flexibility and control over the development of location solutions, organizations can continue to update and enhance their online experience to help them remain competitive and provide satisfying end-user experiences," added [Chris Pendleton](#), Virtual Earth Technical Evangelist. Microsoft Virtual Earth 3D 2.5 Beta can be downloaded from [here](#).