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## The Pentagon Bans Google Maps

### *Possible security liability?*

A Google team entered the Fort Sam Houston army base in Texas and mapped everything, but the Mountain View-based company spokesman, Larry Yu, said that it was only a mistake. Naturally, the army had to take measures towards this possible security threat in the future, so it banned Google map-makers from filming and conducting detailed studies of bases. I say naturally because the three-dimensional panoramas of the Texan base have found their way on the Internet, and are available for any terrorist with a plan of action, for further documentation. "Images include 360-degree views of the covered area to include access control points, barriers, headquarters, facilities and community areas," the AFP news agency quoted a defense department statement. In response, Yu said on behalf of Google that it was "not our policy to request access to military installations, but in this instance the operator of the vehicle with the camera on top - which is how we go about capturing imagery for Street-View - requested permission to access a military installation, was given access, and after learning of the incident we quickly removed the imagery." The Street View option that Google Maps offers has been the target of many privacy scandals, started by people who were captured by the cameras. None of them should be less important than the military problem, but the Mountain View-based company wanted to underline that in case somebody finds images he deems as dangerous about himself or his company, he only needs ask to have them removed, as did the US Army. In the past, similarly dangerous imagery was used by protesters that plotted their access to the roof of the Parliament building in London. Air Force General Gene Renuart said that: "Google was very appreciative of us letting them know that we had a concern. [...] They understand the security implications, and they have given us no indication that they would not be helpful to us if we asked." All worked out for the best, apparently.