



NEWS RELEASE

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Nextspace hosts expert panel for UN World Water Day

Panellists discuss how water can help fuel Auckland's growth

Public debate on Auckland's future has focused on transport, but what about other critical infrastructure that isn't in plain view?

To mark World Water Day, 3D visualisation specialist Nextspace hosted an expert panel of Auckland business and government leaders to learn how other fast-growing cities are using visual media to collectively solve critical urban planning issues, sustainably manage water resources, and create economic opportunities.

Four panellists discussed how to best manage water scarcity in an increasingly thirsty city, adopting best practices from other cities, how water infrastructure could be incorporated into the Auckland spatial plan, and how everyone – from policymakers, utility workers, to the wider community - could contribute to this plan and improve water conservation.

Nextspace's Richard Simpson demonstrated how interactive 3D models of Auckland's water infrastructure can lead to knowledge sharing, improved governance and greater transparency.

"The technology is available to visually present and share water usage data and community needs on top of an accurate, interactive view of the city we live in," said Mr Simpson. "We could view a digital ecology of maps, consents, development plans, utility assets, as well as a wide variety of economic, social, environmental and cultural data. From all of this, cities and communities can make better and more environmentally sustainable evidence-based decisions."

"This is a significant change from a traditional 2D document-centric planning approach to a more accessible and meaningful place-centric 3D digital platform."

Other panellists included the New Zealand Council for Sustainable Business Development's Heather Stonyer, Auckland Council water policy manager Dr Maggie Lawton and financial journalist Rod Oram. The discussion was moderated by Auckland Central MP Nikki Kaye.

Nextspace released a white paper at the event, *Water in the Visual City*, which highlights the challenges of managing water resources in fast-growing urban areas and demonstrates some innovative solutions and 3D tools. The paper also demonstrates how handheld devices such as the iPad can be used as an "underground eye" to get a better view and understanding of subsurface terrain and water infrastructure.

The theme for the 2011 UN World Water Day is *Water for cities: responding to the urban challenge*, which is aimed at encouraging governments, organizations, communities, and individuals to actively engage in addressing the challenges of urban water management.

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About Nextspace

Nextspace is an Auckland-based 3D visualisation technology developer. The company was established with government backing to increase productivity and economic opportunities for New Zealand.

For more information, please visit www.nextspace.co.nz

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