



Ontario Centres of
Excellence

Where Next Happens

Home-Grown Technology Moves into the Microsoft World

"It is an exciting moment when you see your innovation reach the marketplace, and even more exciting when it gets the attention of a company such as Microsoft. The Ontario Centres of Excellence were an important part of the GeoTango success."

Dr. Vincent Tao, Founder,
GeoTango, now a subsidiary of Microsoft

Technology for 3D Internet visualization, born at York University and brought to the marketplace with help from the Ontario Centres of Excellence Accelerator Investment Program, is now becoming part of the MSN experience at Microsoft.

OCE is one of the few publicly funded institutions that builds the bridges from university research to the marketplace. OCE helps provide what is needed for innovative science and technology to be transformed into profitable new businesses. Its Accelerator Investment Program is designed to accelerate the transition of research in Ontario's universities and colleges into viable business opportunities. It provides investment and support for academic researchers looking to commercialize their research results, and enables venture capitalists and other investors

to access new innovation-based companies that are primed for further investment and growth.

"The research by my team at York University in 3D geospatial visualization and modelling became the Toronto-based GeoTango company with help from OCE, Geomatics for Informed Decisions (GEOIDE) Network, and GEOIDE's Market Development Fund," says Dr. Vincent Tao of the University's Geospatial Information and Communications Technology Lab. "Once established, we caught the attention of Microsoft, and GeoTango was acquired by the corporation in December of 2005."

GeoTango is now a subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation. It is the developer of GlobeView™, an internet 3D visualization technology that allows online users to interactively explore the world in three dimensions. It also has created SilverEye™, the only software in the world for rapid 3D modeling and analysis using single satellite images or aerial photos.

GeoTango clients include organizations and

agencies in defense, intelligence, homeland security, visualization and simulation, emergency response, telecommunications, municipalities, health, media, utilities and energy, and the United Nations.

With its assets and expertise, GeoTango gives MSN the ability to deliver its experience in areas ranging from rich real-world visualization to location-centric community content. The product suite is being integrated into MSN's product and service offerings.

"MSN will now be able to create immersive mapping and a local search framework that allows users to easily find, explore and share information and content anywhere on earth," says Dr. Tao. "This acquisition is an important milestone in the Canadian geomatics industry and has propelled our technology into the vanguard of geospatial innovations worldwide."

It is a major career accomplishment, but also an example of what can happen when research and innovative ideas have the support they need to take the next steps toward commercialization.