

The importance of customer perceptions and expectations

Dr Samantha Lavender (Pixalytics Ltd)

Satellite Earth observation data has enormous potential, but there are also dangers as we move further away from the traditional informed customers. Public perception tends to come from press articles and feature films, accessible and easy-to-access sources such as Google Earth, and personal assumptions. This perception is coupled with overselling the benefits; what was sold didn't suit the customer's needs or was without context or explanation. These issues present challenges to the future development of the downstream industry, which is receiving publicity but also needs to gain sufficient paying customers.

Therefore, we must move beyond traditional purchasers and target new markets and customers. To do this, we need to make satellite data as easy to buy and use as music or books – addressing customer knowledge issues, demonstrating benefits and value for money, and making access and usage of the derived information easy. Also, there has been a strong focus on the technical side, but an often-overlooked step is dealing with customer perceptions, expectations, and reality.

Pixalytics is collaborating to deliver systems that bring Earth observation data together with modelling and other data-based collecting systems to tap into existing and new customer markets.