CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of operating a server processing system to enable obtaining map imagery, the method comprising:

accepting from a client processing system a definition of a set of one or more areas, each area having an associated area of interest (“AOI”) and one or more associated dates;

generating and sending to the client processing system an API for the set of one or more areas, or an API template for the set, the sent API or API template determined at the server, the effect of the sent API or API template being automatically updated whenever a respective AOI of a respective area of said set has new content made available by a survey provider,

(a) wherein the API is sent, such that using the sent API by a map service client provides a mechanism for the map service client to request from a map service server for the map service and to obtain from the map service server responsive to the request metadata that provides one or more respective map-display APIs for each area to obtain map imagery using the provided respective map-display API, or

(b) wherein the API template is sent, such that populating the sent API template forms one or more tiled map-display APIs for one or more respective areas in the set, the one or more map-display APIs usable to obtain tiled map imagery from a service providing tiled maps,

wherein using the API or API template provides for the map-display APIs the ability to display any of the new content in the areas of the set.

2. The method of claim 1,

wherein the accepted definition is of a user defined service for the set of for one or more areas including a service name for the user defined service using a user-specified naming convention for services ("service naming convention"),

wherein each area of the user-defined service has a named associated area of interest (AOI), and

wherein the one or more associated dates being a single associated date or an associated range of dates.

3. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein the API is sent, wherein the map service client is a Web Map Service (WMS) client, and wherein the map service server is a WMS server, such that using the sent API by the WMS client provides a mechanism for the WMS client to request

from the WMS server and obtain from the WMS server responsive to the request metadata that provides one or more respective map-display APIs for each area to obtain map imagery using the provided respective map-display API.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the sent API is in the form of a URL usable by the WMS client as a GetCapabilities request.

5. The method of any one of claims 3 or 4, wherein each respective map-display API is a respective URL for a WMS GetMap request.

6. The method of any one of claims 3 to 5, wherein the functionality of the WMS client is carried out at the client processing system.

7. The method of claim 2 or 3, wherein the API is sent, wherein the map service client is a Web Map Tile Service (WMTS) client, and wherein the map service server is a WMTS server, such that using the sent API by the WMTS client provides a mechanism for the WMTS client to request from the WMTS server and obtain from the WMTS server responsive to the request metadata that provides one or more respective tiled map-display APIs for each area to obtain tiled map imagery using the provided respective tiled map-display API.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the API is in the form of a URL usable by the WMTS client as a GetCapabilities request.

9. The method of any one of any one of claims 7 or 8, wherein each respective tiled map-display API is a respective URL for a WMTS GetTile request.

10. The method of any one of claims 7 to 9, wherein the functionality of the WMTS client is carried out at the client processing system.

11. The method of any one of claims 3 to 10, wherein the metadata is in the form of an XML structure.

12. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein the API template is sent from the server processing system, wherein the map service client is a Tile Map Service (TMS) client, and wherein the map service server is a TMS server, such that populating the accepted API template forms one or more tiled map-display APIs for one or more respective areas in the set, the one or more tiled map-display APIs usable to obtain tiled map imagery.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the sent API template is in the form of a URL template.

14. The method of any one of claims 12 or 13, wherein each respective tiled map-display API is a respective URL for a TMS tiled map display request.

15. The method of any one of claims to 12 to 14, wherein the functionality of the TMS client is carried out at the client processing system.

16. The method of any one of claims 1 to 15, wherein each area has one or more user-generated associated filters that are sent by the client processing system to the server processing system.

17. A non-transitory machine-readable medium comprising instructions that when executed on one or more processors of a processing system carry out a method as recited in any one of claims 1 to 16.

18. A processing system comprising one or more processors and a storage subsystem, the storage subsystem comprising instructions that when carried out by at least one or the processors carries out a method as recited in any one of claims 1 to 16.