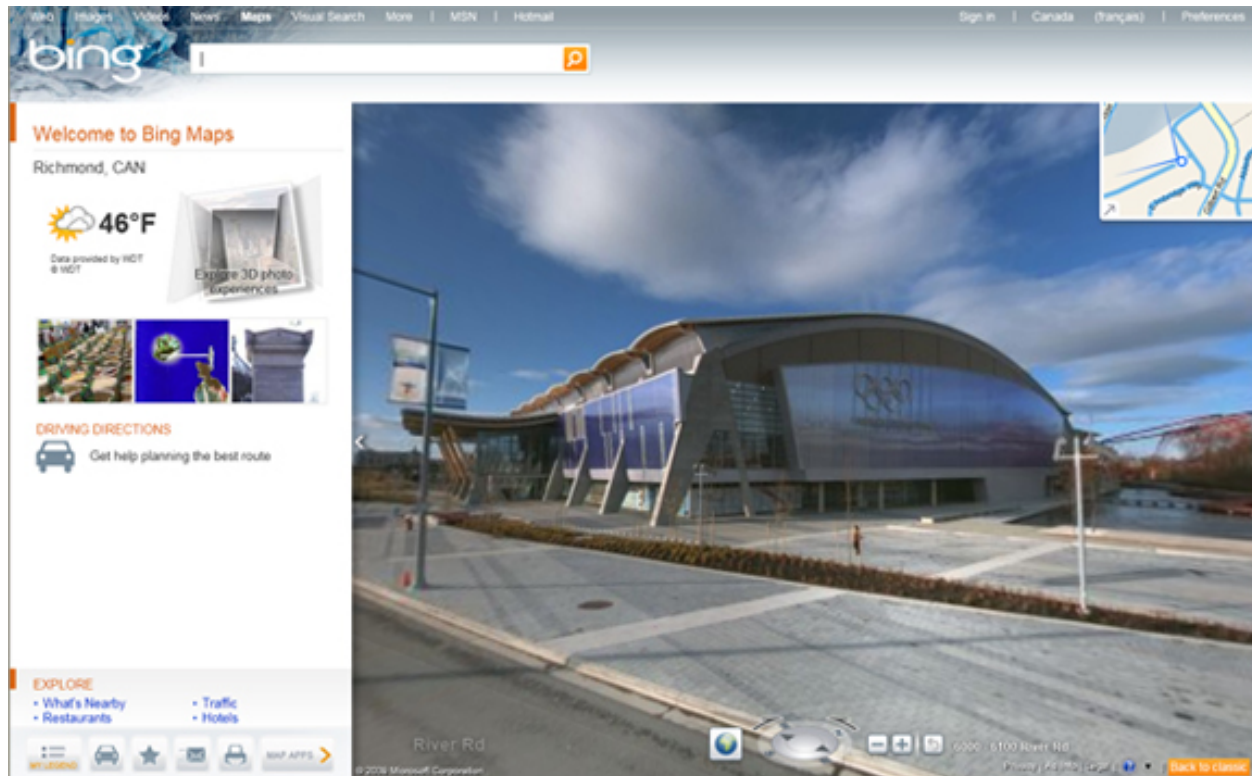


Coming to a street near you



Streetside

Launched by Microsoft in May 2009 the Bing search engine has recently broadened its horizon with the revamping of its Bing Maps Streetside service. The service that was launched to compete with Google's Streetview, provides users with the standard 180° 3-D like street views as well as additional information and interactive tools such as driving directions, live traffic information, geo-referenced PhotoSynths or web cam and twitter maps.

Designed by Austrian-based company WILD, the Bing Streetside system can feature up to 12 Prosilica GC1380C cameras, although eight cameras are more commonly used. Measuring only 33x46x43mm, the Prosilica GC1380C by Allied Vision Technologies are ultra-compact 1.4 megapixel machine vision cameras that feature the Sony ICX285 CCD sensor with ExView technology providing high-sensitivity, low noise, excellent anti-blooming and image quality, making them ideal for capturing image data in varying outdoor lighting conditions.



The cameras are set-up inside a custom-designed carbon fiber mount that is itself mounted on top of a vehicle. Six cameras are fitted inside the panoramic head to provide a 180° view of the street while two cameras are mounted on the rooflines for an overhead view. Each camera's field of view slightly overlaps with the others as to provide a sharp and homogenous final image at the post-processing stage. The system also features an integrated GPS as well as three SICK laser scanners that respectively match the current location to the image data captured and help create a 3D model of the targeted scenes.



The cameras are connected to two computers via standard ethernet cable. One PC operates the image capturing process (exposure metering, triggering, etc...) and image storage while the other runs the GPS system and provides location information to the driver.

The vehicle drives at the speed of traffic and the system captures images approximately every 2-4 meters at about 10 frames per second. All camera functions are software controlled and preset before each session. Once captured, the image data along with other coordinates are streamed on to

the PC's hard drive for storage before the post processing stage where they will be mosaiced to recreate the street image view and mapped to their exact location for the Bing Maps service. The system is powered via the vehicle electrical system.

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Microsoft recently announced its partnership with NAVTEQ, a Chicago based provider of digital map, traffic and location data that will provide the necessary tools, such as 3D map data and visuals, to power new mapping features and further enhance the functionalities of the Bing Map service. Bing Maps is looking to expand the service that currently features 56 metro areas in the United States to additional cities in North America and worldwide, including Vancouver, home to Allied Vision Technologies' Canadian office, to coincide with the winter Olympic Games in February 2010.

For further information:

Prosilica GC1380C by Allied Vision Technologies

<http://www.alliedvisiontec.com/emea/products/cameras/gigabit-ethernet/prosilica-gc-series/gc1380.html>

Bing Maps:

<http://www.bing.com/maps/>

WILD:

<http://www.wild.at/>

NAVTEQ:

<http://www.navteq.com/>

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