

Visual Fields

2007 CaGIS Map Design Competition Best of Category: Reference Map

Political Map of Maryland

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International Mapping has recently started a reference map series under the *Equator Maps* brand. The Political Map of Maryland is the first in a series of general reference state and country maps emphasizing political subdivisions. Colorized shaded relief, detailed road network and a city and town dataset complete the primary reference information.

During the design process for this map we needed to balance the desire for some continuity of informa-

tion with the goal of a strong figure for the political subject, in this case the state of Maryland. By continuing the strong relief shading into the surrounding states and maintaining some, but not all, of the highway and city/town data in those areas, we tied Maryland into its surrounding landscape. We used bold color fills for the Maryland counties and a wealth of detailed city/town data to draw the eye to the subject area and set it off. The map strongly says "Here's the state of Maryland" and at the same time provides a context of the surrounding states and waters.

The production process we used is a familiar one to today's production cartographer: data compilation and sorting and preliminary specifications in ArcGIS, export to Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop for final graphic enhancements, and shaded relief rendering using Natural Scene Designer. Our primary datasets were from the State of Maryland and the USGS but our cartographers played a prominent role in the refinement of the selection of features.



