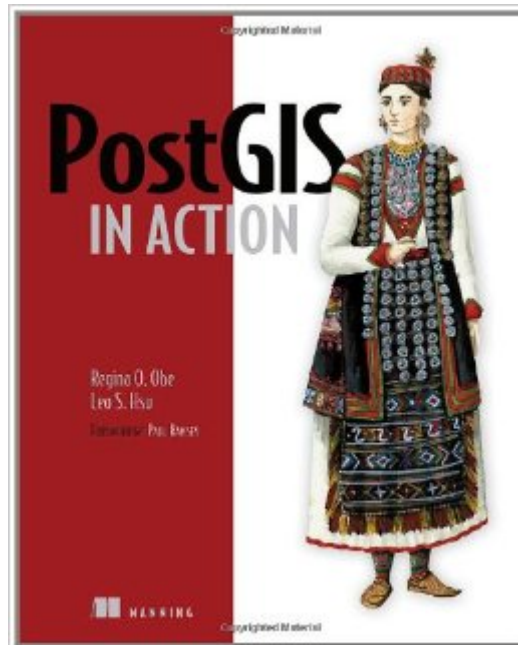


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# PostGIS In Action



## Synopsis

Whether you're canvassing a congressional district, managing a sales region, mapping city bus schedules, or analyzing local cancer rates, thinking spatially opens up limitless possibilities for database users. PostGIS, a freely available open-source spatial database extender, can help you answer questions that you could not answer using a mere relational database. Its feature set equals or surpasses proprietary alternatives, allowing you to create location-aware queries and features with just a few lines of SQL code. PostGIS in Action is the first book devoted entirely to PostGIS. It will help both new and experienced users write spatial queries to solve real-world problems. For those with experience in more traditional relational databases, this book provides a background in vector-based GIS so you can quickly move to analyzing, viewing, and mapping data. Advanced users will learn how to optimize queries for maximum speed, simplify geometries for greater efficiency, and create custom functions suited specifically to their applications. It also discusses the new features available in PostgreSQL 9.0 /9.1 and PostGIS 2.0 and provides tutorials on using additional open source GIS tools in conjunction with PostGIS.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PostGIS in action has landed: finally a book about PostGIS, we were all missing it! A software project that has a public visibility since almost 10 years, with a large community and a long series of use cases, finally has its deserved book. I started using PostGIS in 2006 in a situation where the

company I were working for at that time had to cut the cost of licenses and maintenance. Opting for FOSS gave us also the possibility to eliminate long administrative times needed to change any of the requirements in the licenses. But above all, we knew to select a technology that could provide more sustainable conditions as only Open Source software can provide. With all this in my mind, I identified in PostGIS (and Postgres) a perfect replacement for the system that was in production at that time (based on ArcSDE and MS SQL Server): we would have never switch back. At that time the software was already excellent, but the documentation was not yet at the current level. Though, there was (and it is still there) an indispensable resource that came handy for requiring help: the mailing list. And you could count on the fact that at any time of the day, Regina and Leo, the authors of the "PostGIS in Action" book, were there to try to give you an answer or helping you to find one. Now I have to admit that having this book at that time it would have been a dream! But even now, after five years of experience and hacks on the best open source spatial database out there, I can safely say that reading the book has given me (and will give me) many benefits.

PostGIS in Action is a very comprehensive introduction to PostGIS for developers of all levels of experience. The book is split into three parts, with the first part containing an excellent overview of PostGIS, explaining the whys and hows of spatial data and geometries. The second part then takes the developer through the details of using PostGIS, including some good coverage of performance pitfalls and optimisation techniques. Finally, the third part of the book shows how to integrate PostGIS with other tools. Part 1 of PostGIS starts off nice and slow, taking the reader through the basics of what a spatial database is, what geometry data types are and how they are used in PostGIS. As a traditional SQL developer, I found this introduction to be very easy to follow. The first part is rounded out by a useful summary of the tools available to load data from other, third-party systems into PostGIS and various export options which are available. Part 2 of the book is where you learn how to put PostGIS to work. Techniques discussed include proximity analysis, geocoding addresses, manipulating polygons and lines, and scaling and rotating geometries. There is also a very good chapter on performance tuning, which covers how the PostGIS query planner works, giving very useful information on how to write efficient queries and how to tune your database and selection of appropriate indexes and keys for your data. A discussion on common SQL patterns and their performance implications is included here and the advice provided is very welcome. Part 3 covers most of the tools commonly used to build PostGIS applications.

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