

BACKROAD MAPS

From Paper to Pixels

The Evolution of Mapping

IMIA Mapping Leaders Forum 2026



STATIC

PRINTED

ISOLATED



DYNAMIC

SEARCHABLE

CONNECTED

Company Origins

Founded in 1993 by Russ and his brother Wesley Mussio

THE PROBLEM

Backroad Maps started as a response to the lack of **reliable, recreation-focused backcountry maps** in BC.

THE SOLUTION

The First Product: Backroad and Outdoor Recreation Mapbook – Volume I: Southwestern BC focused on on **practical, field-usable mapping**.





Company **Expansion**

From BC → to Western Canada → and eventually nationwide.

ALL-IN-ONE CONCEPT

Development of multi-use recreation mapping for

- Fishing
- Paddling
- Hiking
- ATV
- Camping

REPUTATION

Built a reputation for accuracy, field-verified content, and local expertise.

The growth was driven by **real user needs**.



Milestones & Evolution



1993–1999

First regional **Mapbooks** and expansion across BC and Alberta



2000s

National series established. Partnerships with tourism boards and government agencies



2010

Launch of Backroad **GPS Maps**: one of the first recreation-focused GPS products in Canada



2015–2018

Major updates to GPS maps: integration with Garmin and other platforms



2019–2022

Development of the Backroad Maps **App** and digital ecosystem



2023–present

Unified paper + digital workflow: live updates; expanded POI database; enhanced imagery and cartography

From Paper to GPS: The First Digital Leap

REMOTE-USE

DYNAMIC

SEARCHABLE

SAME DATA, NEW FORMAT

Demand grew for digital navigation as handheld GPS units became mainstream.

Backroad Maps built in-house GIS and cartography capacity to produce routable, recreation-focused GPS maps.

Early GPS products included detailed trails, FSRs, fishing lakes, campsites, and backcountry features not found on government maps.

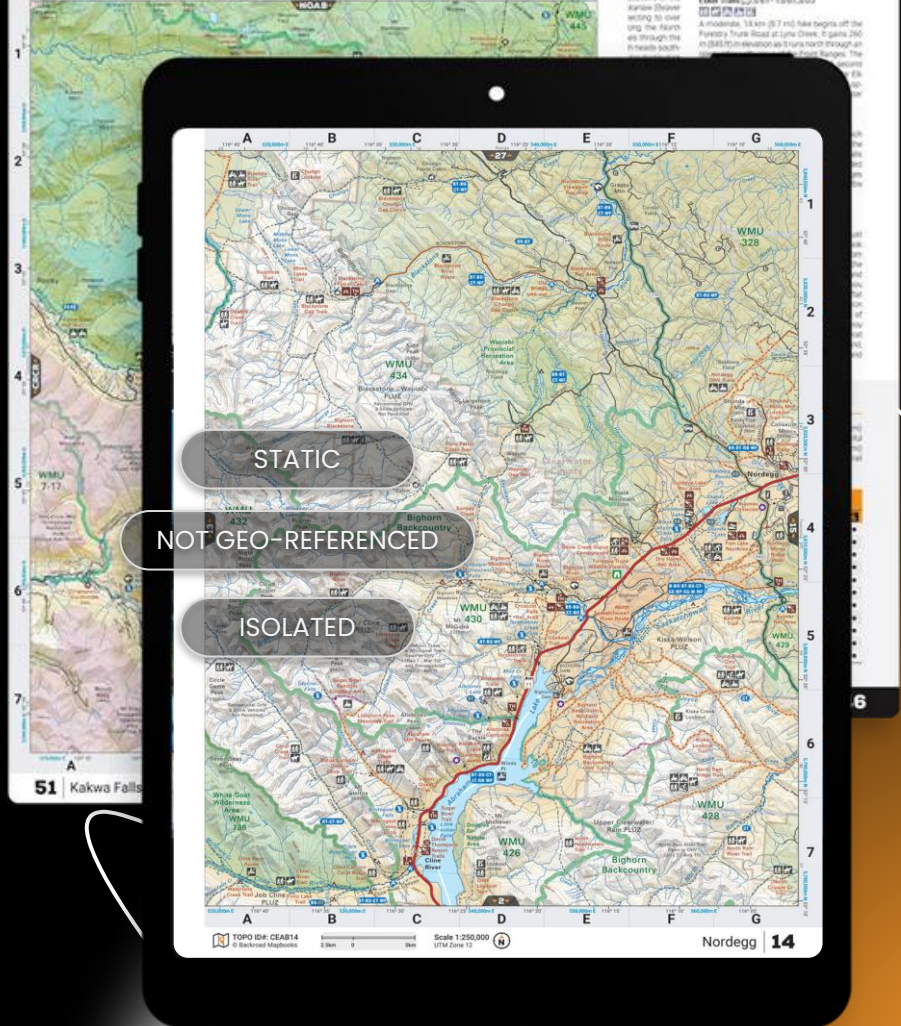
This positioned Backroad Maps as **one of the first Canadian companies to deliver true backcountry GPS navigation.**

Where Mapping Gets Stuck

Most traditional mapping workflows stop at print or PDF versions.

Meanwhile, user experiences have changed to expect:

- Dynamic Search
- GPS positioning
- Real-time updates
- Mobile-first experiences



From GPS to APP: The Modern Digital Platform



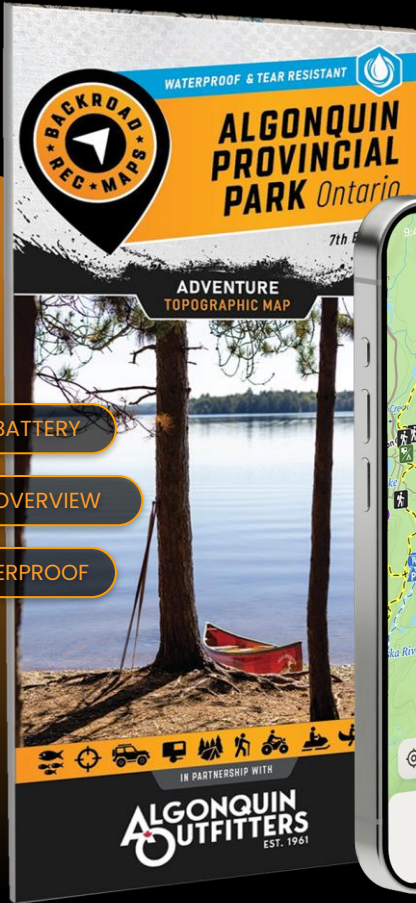
OWN THE EXPERIENCE

Smartphones changed user expectations: maps needed to be portable, searchable, and constantly updated.

The Backroad Maps App integrates:

- Offline maps
- GPS tracking
- POI search
- Recreation layers
- Real-time updates

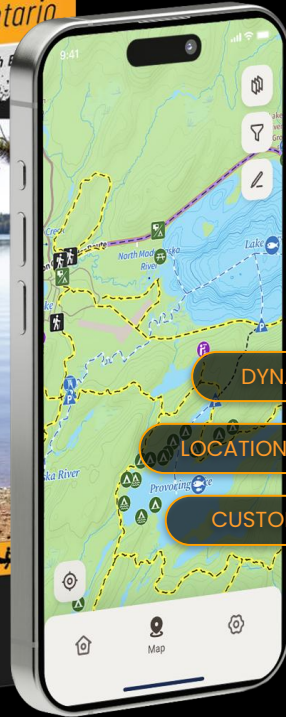
The app complements - not replaces - paper maps, giving users multiple ways to navigate.



NO BATTERY

PARK OVERVIEW

WATERPROOF



DYNAMIC

LOCATION TRACKING

CUSTOMIZABLE

Taking Apps to the Next Level

We're not just building one general app anymore. We're converting best-selling maps into focused digital experiences.

The Algonquin app is the first example:

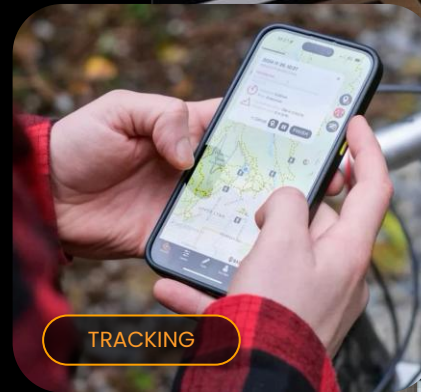
- Developed with international partner team in Prague
- Released **this week**
- Repeatable model for future regional apps

Why Mapping is Changing

There is a shift in user behaviour and expectations.

- Simplicity and ease of use
- Instant positioning and navigation
- Reduced reliance on traditional tools
- Accessibility and convenience

The goal is lowering the barrier to exploration and enable more people to confidently access outdoor spaces.

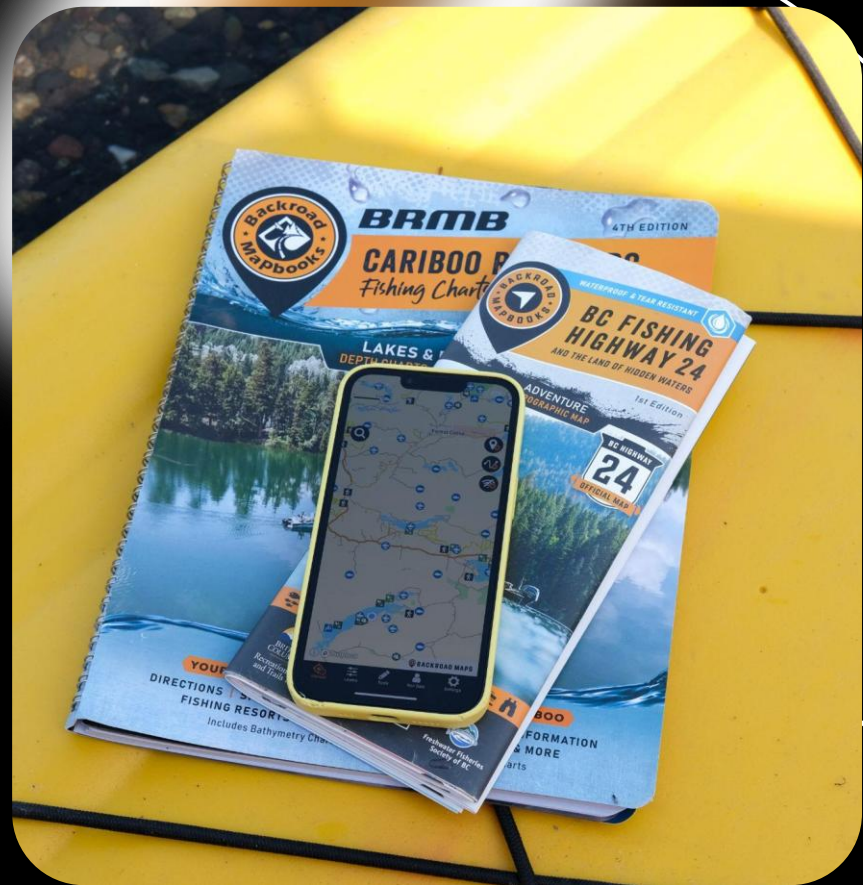


Why Our App is Different

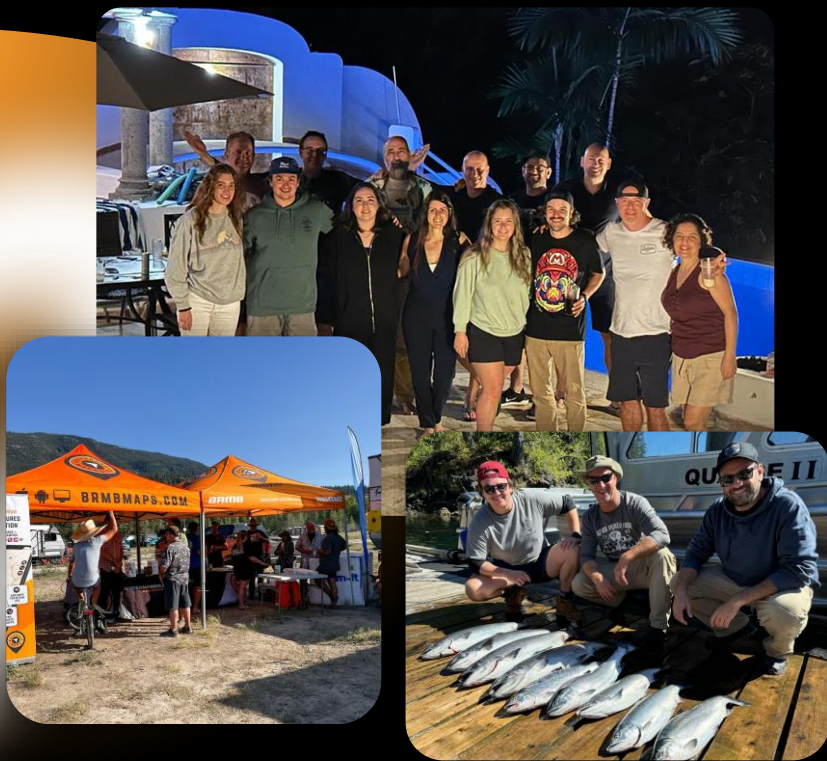
Full control over the app development and user experience. This allows for:

- Quick update cycles
- Real-world outdoor usage
- Deep recreation-focused layers
- Flexibility to adapt to new technologies

All maps are developed from a unified core data system, which promotes robust brand recognition and an exceptional cross-product experience.



What Makes Backroad Maps Unique



Team includes GIS, cartography, development, and operations



Global support structure
(Canada, Italy, India, Prague)



Fully integrated production pipeline:
All products built from a single core dataset



Transition from map publishing company
→ technology-driven platform



Deep local knowledge & connections

Global Partnerships & Reach

To do what we're doing, partnerships have always been important. We're now working with teams across:

- USA
- India
- China
- Italy
- Prague

These new collaborations enable speed, scalability, and new opportunities for mapping beyond Canada.





The Opportunity Ahead



Digitize
mapping across
regions and
sectors



Real-time,
interactive
mapping
solutions



New levels
of detail and
accessibility



External
partners and
datasets



Data expanding
from Canada
to Global



Tech + Outdoor
Integrations

The Backroad Maps **Promise**



NEW FORMATS, SAME GOAL

We began as a small publisher and transformed into a national mapping company, now venturing into innovative digital mapping platforms.

We've embraced new formats and expanded our reach, but our unwavering commitment remains: delivering **accurate, reliable, and field-tested backcountry maps for outdoor enthusiasts.**

BACKROAD  MAPS

Thank you!

Want to collaborate with us on your next project?

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