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Storytelling with Cesium Stories Application

I love storytelling with maps and data. I think one of the best storytelling application is ArcGIS StoryMaps product (see ArcGIS StoryMaps licensing [here](#)). However, if you are looking for an alternative, Cesium Stories is a good one to explore. I was looking for a simple storytelling application with the capability to easily use OSM 3D buildings and I came across Cesium Stories.

You will need to have a Cesium Ion account to use Cesium Stories. There is a community/personal tier account that you can use for free. You can sign up for Cesium Ion account [here](#) and check out the pricing plan [here](#).

There are already some good [tutorials](#) on Cesium's site if you want to learn how to create your own stories, so I won't write one up here. Instead I will just give some of my thoughts on it.

I've embedded my Cesium Stories example below. Click the Play Slideshow button (monitor icon in lower left corner) to start presentation or you can view the slides individually. This is a very simple example - I'm sure there are some way cooler 3D visualizations you can do. I'm looking forward to seeing what else I can do in 3D.

Diamond Head Summit Trail

Created Using Cesium Stories

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To me, Cesium Stories feels like a cross between PowerPoint and Google Earth. My first impression after exploring the application is that It's easy to use (no coding is required) and it meets my need for being able to easily view OSM 3D buildings.

Below are some things I like about it and some things I wish it had. I'm not sure what's in the works for future capabilities but I'm looking forward to exploring Cesium apps in depth. These are just some initial thoughts on the the application.

What I like:

- Easy to use
- Presentation mode with timing option (each slide can have a different time)
- OSM 3D Buildings included as a core asset for free use (OSM Bldg as of August 28, 2020)
- Can import your own assets as well as “subscribe” to commercial assets (via Asset Depot tab)
- Can add either a full screen (e.g. static images) slide or a map (e.g.interactive map) slide
- Can measure height and distances using the Measuring toolset (when viewing slides in presentation mode)

What I wish it had:

- Option to add/import zipped shapefile and other format besides KML and GeoJson as part of assets
- Better labeling/annotation options
- Export “slides” to pdf
- Have “red-lining” options (e.g. draw line, point, poly, and add text directly on map) similar to measuring toolset

If you are looking for a simple 2D and 3D storytelling application, I encourage you to explore Cesium's various apps , especially Cesium Stories.

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