

Internet Voice Portal uses IBM WebSphere technology



Overview

- **Application:**
*Total Messaging Solution
Voice Portal, CRM*
- **Software**
Windows NT, AIX*, DB2*
WebSphere* Voice Server*
- **Hardware:**
*Being Java**-based, this solution
can be run on most hardware
platforms*
- **Services:**
*IBM Voice Systems specialists
from the IBM Hursley Software
laboratory provide ongoing
support and advice*

Voice portals will give cellular device users around the world instant access to the World Wide Web.

Voice set to dominate Internet access

There are now around 1.5 billion fixed-line phones and 450 million mobile phone users around the world. So it is hardly surprising that the telephone is well on its way to becoming the most popular method of accessing the Internet. Consultancy group, Nomura Research Institute, is already predicting that, by 2002, there will be more mobile phones connected to the Internet than personal computers.

So how will these millions of cellular devices physically interact with the World Wide Web? The answer is via voice portals provided by carriers and application service providers, similar in many respects to the Web portals currently used to browse the Internet from a PC. A voice portal is simply an interface between the telephone caller and the information source – the point of entry for anyone using an Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) system.

When augmented by the industry standard VoiceXML (an XML-based markup language for distributed voice applications, much the same as HTML is a language for distributed visual applications), the voice portal becomes capable of hosting an even wider variety of information – literally funnelling any type of Web-based data from servers out to callers.

“Millions of consumers today use PCs to access the Internet for information. Tomorrow they will reach for their phones instead.”

– Jürgen Schaar Chief Executive Officer intrix AG

The Kelsey Group, a leading provider of authoritative research into e-commerce, predicts that there will be more than 128 million voice portal users by the end of 2005, creating a \$12.3 billion industry.

intrix takes the initiative

One company that was quick to identify the potential of the burgeoning trend towards wireless Internet access was the German Internet software solutions specialist, intrix AG. By adopting IBM's WebSphere Voice Server technology, intrix has now added a voice portal capability to its existing multi-channel access solution, known as the Total Messaging Solution.

The intrix solution is not in itself a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, but rather a means of synchronising and streamlining the various channels that customers can use to access on-line services. Today, consumers use various methods and devices to communicate with their suppliers, presenting service providers with the problem of synchronising all their CRM and service delivery channels. intrix's multi-channel access solution is designed to overcome precisely this problem.

The addition of a voice portal capability to intrix's multi-channel solution dramatically broadens the scope of the applications that Information Service Providers (ISPs) can offer and presents them with new high-growth revenue opportunities to win new customers, as well as retaining existing ones.

Seamless integration

intrix's Total Messaging Solution is designed to complement an ISP's existing voice portal by offering more 'sticky' functionality. For instance, its Voice Dialler and Address Book applications can be synchronised with the caller's address book, thereby enabling ISPs to offer their customers a highly personalised application that leads to more frequent useage and increased customer retention.

"There are endless examples of how our voice portal can save people time

and effort in their everyday lives," says Jürgen Schaar. "For example, if you were to receive voice notification that your flight had been cancelled, you can simply voice activate flight information for details of the next available flight, then voice dial the airline and have them rebook you."

Voice-enabled e-mail means users can listen to their electronic mail wherever they are and reply by simply speaking a message.

Traffic solution

The automotive industry is already showing great interest in the intrix solution because it means drivers need only use their voices to receive information on the move. A recent study by General Motors indicated that 75 percent of wireless phone users want turn-by-turn driving directions and 72 percent want real-time traffic updates. The intrix voice portal solution utilises IBM WebSphere Voice Server technology for accurately recognising street names, addresses and landmarks using voice input.

Improving corporate productivity

Many enterprises are also using intrix 's Total Messaging Solution as part of corporate voice portals to enhance employee connectivity to their work environments. The intrix platform provides employees with a corporate directory using any phone, so an employee can reach anyone else within the company by simply pronouncing their name. In addition, mobile employees can have access to

information such as work calendars, email and voice alerts, thereby improving productivity.

"Implementing the solution within our own company was a real challenge for our employees because they had previously only worked with Microsoft products," says Jürgen Schaar. "However, they have reacted very positively to the new IBM-based product because they realise that they are gaining expert knowledge of an extremely interesting and competitive platform. They also feel very comfortable knowing that intrix is working in close collaboration with a major player like IBM," he concludes.

About intrix

intrix AG is a young and expanding software organisation specialising in customised solutions for Internet communication involving database-supported Web portals. It offers analysis, concept development, implementation and management of customers' platform-independent Internet, Intranet and Extranet solutions. The company employs an experienced team of programmers, designers, editors, technicians and training specialists. For more information on intrix visit the Web site: www.intrix.de.

To learn more

For more information about IBM voice solutions visit our Web site: ibm.com/software/speech.



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