VoiceObjects
simplifying voice technologies

Press Release

VoiceObjects Establishes New Voice User Interface Design Group

A service unit specializing in the design of user-friendly voice applications will provide fresh input for further technological developments.

Cologne, Germany, September 04, 2003. VoiceObjects AG, the leader in Voice Application Management Systems (VAMS) for developing and operating automated telephone services, announces the establishment of its new VUI Group. This service unit, specialized in Voice User Interface professional services, helps customers and users get the most out of the unique capabilities of the VAMS *VoiceObjects Factory* which drastically lowers design and development costs for user-friendly voice applications.

By combining its mature server technology with the latest VUI design principles, VoiceObjects has pioneered the next generation of tools for effective voice applications. The VUI group will help VoiceObjects' customers to design applications that callers will accept as equal to human telephone interactions.

VoiceObjects has combined the knowledge and experience of its international experts in designing user interfaces for voice applications in the new VUI Group. Good VUI design creates a comfortable and productive telephone dialog. Crucially, callers should have easy access to the information they want while enjoying positive and natural interaction with the voice application. Callers want to feel they are controlling the application, not that the application is bossing them around. Systems that deliver a pleasant "Hear & Feel" get the most out of the intuitive nature of spoken language.



But without the right tools and real-world experience, designing a good VUI is expensive and time consuming. To minimize development costs, *VoiceObjects Factory* offers a wide range of features that give designers direct access to important design elements. One key feature is *Layer Technology* which makes it easy to create multilingual applications or to provide multiple telephone "personalities" (also known as personas). Another is the *Random Prompting* feature that varies the dialog elements for similar tasks, such as greetings, to keep callers from experiencing boredom or monotony during the call. The *Inheritance* feature allows the best practice in VUI design to be easily distributed throughout an application or even throughout a whole suite of applications.

Tom Houwing, Head of the new VUI Group at VoiceObjects, summed up the importance of this innovative design approach saying, "User-friendly interfaces determine whether or not users will accept the voice application." In his view, "a user-centered design is a key requirement for making the interface user-friendly. This requires many years' worth of experience and a detailed knowledge of different fields – all the way from communication psychology to audio engineering."
Karl-Heinz Land, CEO of VoiceObjects, was emphatic about the problems faced by today's designers: "Even the best know-how can't help if it doesn't have the right technological foundation. The user interface must be designed freely and at minimal expense. *VoiceObjects Factory* provides mature technology with well conceived functions that enable professional VUI design on today's restricted budgets."

VUI-Group - Professional Services for User-friendly Design

Dialog Designers develop natural dialog flow for easy navigation and combine it with an interesting storyboard to keep callers involved in the process all the way through to a final "happy ending".

Persona Designers create virtual telephone contact personalities suited to specific roles and tasks that reflect the demographic preferences of the intended target group.

Prompt Designers write dialog scripts that are tailored to the target groups and contain dialog elements that can range from engagingly informal to practical and informative. Dialog elements that are frequently repeated are

scripted in different variants to keep monotony from creeping into the conversation.

Recording Specialists find the right human voice to use (voice selection). Real actors and familiar voices are used and trained to speak in an appropriate tone for different dialog segments (voice coaching).

Sound Designers create a comfortable and natural sound environment before, after, and during the voice segments. Sound effects support the voice application and help generate a virtual world in the mind of the caller.

For detailed information on the VoiceObjects VUI Group, visit the VoiceObjects website at www.VoiceObjects.com.

The product: VoiceObjects Factory
V*oiceObjects Factory* is the leading Voice Application Management System (VAMS) for the development and operation of personalized voice and DTMF applications. The concept is based on the dynamic generation of speech dialogs from objects – the *VoiceObjects*. Following the Lego principle, *VoiceObjects* can be assembled into interactive dialogs of any complexity using integrated tools and modular elements without complex programming. The software is independent of manufacturer and supports such standards as VoiceXML and SALT. *VoiceObjects Factory* consists of the scalable *VoiceObjects Server,* for dynamic dialog deployment, and the browser-based *VoiceObjects Desktop* for design, development, administration and management. *VoiceObjects Factory* integrates operational tools with functions for generation, administration, maintenance, and dialog analysis. The software is available for the Web Application Servers Apache Tomcat, BEA WebLogic, Caucho Resin, IBM WebSphere Application Server, JBoss, and Jetty.

VoiceObjects AG: the Company
VoiceObjects AG develops and markets *VoiceObjects Factory*, a management system for creating automated voice services for telephone customer contact. *VoiceObjects Factory* provides private firms and public bodies with an efficient communication channel for transactions, information, and information services. VoiceObjects also provides its customers with comprehensive services, including consulting, design, training, and support.

Headquartered near Cologne, Germany, the privately owned company has 45 employees. See www.VoiceObjects.com for more details.

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