

Interfacing the ODT VISION VRU to Sensors and Devices to Monitor and Control Systems

In previous newsletters, we have discussed using the ODT VISION Voice Response Unit's feature of being able to make 3rd party program calls through a Visual Basic interface. This allows the ODT VISION unit to connect to a variety of sensors and devices as well to interact with other programs to perform functions and applications.

ODT is currently in discussions with a major national distributor of propane gas. Initial plans were for the ODT VISION to be used in conjunction with their IBM iSeries payment transaction system which features the Curbstone Credit/Debit Card middleware product. This client has brought to us a new future application which is now more critical than the payment transaction system. A new government requirement calls for propane distributors to report daily tank levels and to compare those levels to see if fuel is missing. It seems that the drug underworld needs propane in the manufacturing of the drug "Meth". The new policy requires all propane distributors to be able to account for all tank levels. In phase 1, the remote personnel will be calling into the ODT VISION and reporting tank

levels to the corporate office. This is no small undertaking because this firm has hundreds of remote tank sites with multiple tanks per site. In the future, plans are to implement electronic tank sensors for sites which are connected via the firm's corporate Wide Area Network. By using the ODT VISION control window ([scheduling feature where a scripted routine is tied to a clock time](#)) and by making program calls through a Visual Basic API, the unit will be able to collect the daily tank level readings automatically without personnel at those sites. Any



sites that are not on the WAN will still have to have employees to manually call the ODT VI-

SION VRU to report levels.

This type of connectivity enables the ODT VISION VRU to function in new ways. The type of sensors and devices used in conjunction with the ODT VISION may provide information from:

- Production Sensors
- Environment or Building Sensors
- Security Sensors
- Tank or Storage Sensors

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Systems can be created which monitor an environment, provide real-time production counts, or automatically provide notifications if sensors report that any benchmark level is out of range. This emergency notification may be in forms of a call out, a text message or an e-mail. In some cases, a remote user can call into the ODT VISION VRU to monitor conditions or even to exercise some control over a device or process.

We are working with a number of new business partners who are using these 3rd party

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program calls in interesting ways. Some of our new applications fall under the new Homeland Security areas. One of our most recent relationships is with KohlTek LLC. Here is their story.

KohlTek LLC

Kohltek LLC's present products break into two distinct categories, components and systems. The component portion includes Wireless Modems and Accessories, Industrial Computers, Embedded Computers, Kiosk Computers, and Automation Controls. On the system side Kohltek has Vision Systems, Security Systems, and Telephony Systems. Kohltek clients benefit from their expertise in networks, systems and various components as this one vendor is able to blend it all to meet the client's needs and the application's requirements. A typical customer may be using the vision system to monitor and control an assembly line. A security system customer could use their wireless products to remotely monitor a checkpoint or to see if there has been some form of security breach.

Nothing says security like "Fort Knox". Kohltek is currently working in partnership with a company in Louisville, Ky. on Fort Knox's HVAC system. Recently, Kohltek installed over fifty wireless Ethernet Modems, connecting their new web enabled controllers to this HVAC system. These are Ethernet based controllers. The Fort's security requirements made it mandatory that this network be independent to the Fort's own network. Generally, this type of HVAC

application would use a web-base gateway for access and control. Since this is an Intranet with no remote web access, the ODT VISION VRU will provide the required remote access. A user will be able to receive alarms, check conditions, and make adjustments without a remote web connection. They will also be able to check alarms with their mobile phones. Historical logs are kept in a database which the ODT VISION VRU accesses through an ODBC link so the user can even recall the environment history.

The ODT VISION can be used in the industrial area to monitor and troubleshoot equipment from a remote or mobile location. Many current control systems don't have the ability for a user to dial up a piece of equipment, check



the status, or make changes over the phone. This is especially important to people on-call or working with a critical process where it might be impossible to access a computer. In the industrial world, timing is everything. The loss of a system or an unexpected change in the process could cost ten thousand, a hundred thousand, or even more. Then there is the safety factor where people need to be warned even when there is no operator working. The uses are endless, and the cost is low. With more and more companies looking to the web, we offer a valid alternative when a web solution is not possible.

There are many other areas where Kohltek offers their expertise to help companies to integrate VRU's and Interactive Remote Terminals. Some areas where Kohltek LLC is concentrating are Automation, HVAC, Security, Dispatching, Federal, State, and Municipal Applications, Sports and Entertainment, and even the Sales and Retail Markets. Because Kohltek is primarily a technical sales

organization, they approach the market not by whom the customer is but by what the customers needs. This product has a huge market potential and they expect to support a wide variety of applications.

Over the next couple months, Kohltek will be expanding their roll with the ODT VISION VRU in some new and exciting ways. Kohltek will have more news about this very soon. Until then, they of course welcome any inquiries about how to tie into your system and application needs. Even if it is not an industrial or commercial application, remember, it's the solution that they are interested in providing. Kohltek is a technical sales organization with over 30 years of experience, if you have a problem or want to talk about a solution, feel free to contact KohlTek. ■

Fort Knox Security Requirements

For security reasons, the HVAC web enabled controller at Fort Knox runs on an independent network. Since this is an Intranet with no remote web access, the ODT VISION VRU will provide the required remote access. A user will be able to receive alarms, check conditions, and make adjustments without a remote web connection.

Potpourri of Specialized Applications

This month's "Application In the Spotlight" article is the ninth of an ongoing series called, "Potpourri of Specialized Applications." Frequently, a client will install the ODT VISION Voice Response Unit for a specific large application, but its ease-of-use and simple customization will later allow for new functions to be added that provide even greater customer service flexibility. Some of these applications have already been done at our clients' sites and some are in the planning stage.

Locating an Agent or Service Company

We just began work this month on a project for a national money order firm which works nationally with local agent storefronts. This firm has an existing VRU, but is switching to the ODT VISION VRU for its ease of in-house customization, current technology, low costs, and ability to connect to multiple platforms including their IBM host system. Phase one is a combination of cloning the current applications and using the new ability to connect to a sequel database to provide an **800 number agent locating system**. These agents are independent contractors who sell money orders and various products and services offered by this national firm. A caller can use this application to find a location in their area that provides this service by either entering the phone area code or their local zip code. We have other clients with similar applications for the location of restaurants, service centers, distributors, stores, repair centers, and a host of various providers of services and products.



Working with 401K or Retirement Account

You probably have already begun dreaming of your golden years and planning what your retirement will be. The ODT VISION VRU allows 24/7 access to account information and the ability to make changes to the profile while providing:

- Privacy
- Security
- Real-time information
- Logging and Audit Trails of all Activities

The ability to change the level of your contribution, to get today's balance, to change funds within the 401K, or perform a host of other activities are just a phone call away. Gone is the cost of providing expensive live customer service personnel to support these functions. In addition, enhanced security keeps others from having access to private information which will ensure the security associated with the funds. A comprehensive logging and audit trail will show all activities. Parameters in regards to what changes can be made, by whom, and at what times can be built within the application. The security of the profile's security pin can be monitored and handled by the user. This is a self-service solution which lowers the cost associated with providing improved customer service while ensuring the security of the account and the owner's personal information. ■



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Get Your Own Demo Today

Go to www.ODTVISION.com to get your own demonstration of the ODT VISION Voice Response Unit which will run on any Windows based PC of Windows 98 or later with sound card and speakers. This is a simplistic order entry and shipment status system which is running off a Microsoft Access database. The demo is in the test mode and you will be using the "Test Phone" feature of the ODT VISION VRU to simulate a phone call to the data. Manuals and case studies are also available on the web site.

Improving Customer Service Affordability

Submit your technical questions or get free project analysis regarding your telephony application to:
TechSupport@ODTVISION.com
Or Call: 614-985-3814

HOW DO THEY DO THAT? Phone 800 Number Locator System

Look up with either Phone Area Code or Local Zip Code

```

menu:
;=====
; MAIN MENU
; Get the option number. 1 = AreaCode, 2 = ZipCode
;=====
ClearDigits
Rtn = Play "typemenu.vox",0,"@" ; "1 to look up store with an area
code"
OptionInput = GetDigits 1,"@",15 ; "2 to look up store with an Zip
code"
;-----
; No option selected....Cancel the Call.
;-----
If OptionInput = "#" then
    GoTo EndScript
Elseif OptionInput = "1" Then
    GoTo DoAreaCode
Elseif OptionInput = "2" Then
    GoTo DoZipCode
Else
    Play "OptionEr.vox" ; "Option # in error"
    GoTo Menu
Endif

```

Look up with Phone Area Code

```

DoAreaCode:
OpenDb storefile, "Areacode"

callfunctiontype = "Look up with AreaCode"
OpenDb Storefile, "AreaCode"
Areacode:

```

```

;-----
; Get Area Code Number
;-----
ClearDigits
Rtn = Play "AreaCode.vox",0,"@" ; "Enter 3 digit area code #."
Rtn = GetDigits 3,"#",15 ; "or just # to end."
AreacodeInput = DigitBuffer
w = Length AreacodeInput
If w = 0 then GoTo Menu
if w <> 3 then GoTo GetAreaCode1Error ; Not 3 long
;-----
; Look for item number in database
;-----
Seekdb StoreFile, =, AreacodeInput
If MatchDB Then
    GoSub SpeakStore
else
    GetAreaCode1Error:
    Rtn = Play "AreacodeEr.vox" ; "Areacode entered is in
error."
Endif

```

Sub-routine to Speak Information

```

SpeakStore:

addressvalue = storefile.address & " "
Addressvalue = addressvalue & storefile.city
addressvalue = addressvalue & ", "
addressvalue = addressvalue & storefile.state
addressvalue = addressvalue & " "
addressvalue = addressvalue & storefile.zip
Repeatinfo:
voicetext "There is a store for your selection which is "
voicexml "Silence", 1000
voicetext storefile.store
voicexml "Silence", 500
voicetext "the phone number for this store is"
voicexml "Phone", storefile.phone
voicexml "Silence", 1000
voicetext "this store is located at,"
voicexml "address", addressvalue
rtn = voicespeak
ClearDigits
Rtn = Play "repeatmenu.vox",0,"@" ; "Please press 1 to
repeat this information"
RepeatInput = GetDigits 1,"@",5 ;
If RepeatInput = "1" then goto Repeatinfo
nextdb storefile
If eofdb then GoTo endsub
return

```