

Voice Browser Working Group

Its Goals and You
12 Feb 2010

The problem (or, “why this talk?”)

Voice is underutilized in web applications today because many web developers aren't aware of its potential

Why should you care?

“As HTML is to the visual user interface for the web, VoiceXML is to the verbal user interface for the web”

- While visual is often the best output, for many apps voice is the best input
 - Voice form filling cuts through menu trees (“I’d like to use my MasterCard”)
 - Mobile voice search (“Sweaters near the coliseum”)
 - Broad disambiguation capability (“The blue one *with* the ruffles”)
- Accessibility needs == eyes/hands busy?

VBWG Goals

- Enable Voice on the Web
- Make the simple easy and the complex possible

Historically (10+ yrs!)

- VBWG driven by Call Center Telephony needs
 - Initially lack of standards
 - Scalability crucial
 - (Expensive) UI rendering must live in the network
 - Voice standards based on web architecture was novel

Today

- VBWG driven by mobile device needs
 - Multimodal apps (small screen, eyes/hands busy)
 - Local context (location, local search)
 - Greater flexibility with easier coding

Unique

- VBWG uniquely suited to address voice needs
 - We are the experts on existing widely used web standards around voice
 - Familiar with network constraints for voice
 - Understand imprecision of the technology (think Geo) and the medium (“um, like, you know?”)

Widely-believed lies

- *Lie: Speech reco is too error-prone*
 - **Truth: Speech reco is surprisingly and increasingly accurate**
- *Lie: Mobile devices will be primarily visual, with voice as a limited add-on*
 - **Truth: Voice is a rich natural user interface for most mobile devices**
- *Lie: Web developers can't/won't learn this stuff*
 - **Truth: Web developers already write voice applications today**

Our Initiatives

- Get the message out: voice is a core part of the current and future web
- Make HTML, VoiceXML, and other W3C specs play well together
- Broaden VoiceXML flexibility to
 - allow for simpler targeted profiles
 - simplify UI customization

We need YOU

- to learn about voice by using it
 - try it out free at evolution.voxeo.com, cafe.bevocal.com, or studio.tellme.com
- to join us in building a task force of HTML and VXML experts
 - determine how to develop multimodal apps
 - resolve technical issues for integration on mobile devices