



**2008 European Fixed Mobile Convergence Technology
Innovation of the Year Award**



“We accelerate growth”

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Award Description

Frost & Sullivan's Technology Innovation Award is bestowed upon a company (or individual) that has carried out new research, which has resulted in innovation(s) that have or are expected to bring significant contributions to the industry in terms of adoption, change, and competitive posture. This award recognizes the quality and depth of a company's research and development program as well as the vision and risk-taking that enabled it to undertake such an endeavor.

Research Methodology

To choose the award recipient, Frost & Sullivan's analyst team tracks innovation in key hi-tech markets. The selection process includes primary participant interviews and extensive primary and secondary research via the bottom-up approach. The analyst team shortlists candidates on the basis of a set of qualitative and quantitative measurements. The analysts also consider the pace of research and technology innovation, and the significance or potential relevance of the innovation to the overall industry. The ultimate award recipient is chosen after a thorough evaluation of this research.

Measurement Criteria

In addition to the methodology described above, there are specific criteria used to determine the final rankings. The recipient of this award has excelled based on one or more of the following criteria:

- Significance of the innovation(s) in the industry, and across industries (if applicable)
- Potential of the products of innovation(s) to become industry standard(s)
- Competitive advantage of innovation vis-à-vis other related innovations
- Impact (or potential impact) of innovation(s) on company or industry mind share and/or company bottom line
- Breadth of intellectual property related to the innovation(s), that is, patents, scientific publications, papers in peer-reviewed journals.



The 2008 European Fixed Mobile Convergence Technology Innovation of the Year Award goes to SPEECH DESIGN GmbH based in Germering, Germany for its innovative business FMC platform. The company has approached FMC in a unique fashion focusing exclusively on the emerging demands from business customers. SPEECH DESIGN has developed an innovative concept which allows the enterprise to keep its existing devices and service plans while at the same time, enabling the enterprise to gain significant business, economic, and strategic benefits.

Company Background

Since its inception in 1982, SPEECH DESIGN has been developing and providing messaging and mobility solutions and products which include hardware and software, wireline and wireless, time division multiple access (TDMA), and Internet protocol (IP) catering to both the corporate and carrier markets. The company is a subsidiary of Bogen Communications International, Inc., headquartered in Ramsey, New Jersey, which is an audio communications company. SPEECH DESIGN's offering to the corporate market includes systems and solutions with capabilities such as FMC, voice mail, auto attendant, unified messaging, and music-on-hold. Their products and services covering voice and video call completion, next generation messaging, message center solutions, interactive video, and music are offered in the carrier systems front. SPEECH DESIGN currently has about 100 employees.

Technology Relevance in the Market Place

FMC, as a concept, has been around for a few years now but it still hasn't managed to capture as strong a customer base as originally anticipated. Also, the hype associated with FMC has failed to live up to the expectations. Most small and medium enterprises (SME) and large enterprises across Europe today have not done away with their ISDN-based telephone infrastructure. Such enterprises still find it comfortable and largely employ private branch eXchange (PBX). Furthermore, due to the technological advances in the field of communications, enterprises and businesses have not restricted themselves to one communication medium/network but different ones such as wireless, wireline, and internet technologies. Often, cross connecting such networks is challenging as it is associated with issues such as cost, efficiency, and complication. The industry hopes that a business FMC solution will be able to work over any network such as wireless, wireline, and IP based while, at the same time, will be able to adapt to any existing PBX infrastructure and simultaneously, can offer an economic and strategic advantage to the customer.

How the Technology Works

SPEECH DESIGN has focused its technology and product roadmap based on the challenges related with business FMC, as mentioned above. The company has effectively leveraged its vast experience in the field of mobility solutions and FMC while also managing a method that suits the current demands and challenges faced by business FMC customers in Europe. SPEECH DESIGN has developed an innovative approach, the Transparent Mobility Gateway, which makes its business FMC solution a PBX autonomous system. The company's FMC application is connected

between the customers' on-site PBX and the PSTN, making it a complete PBX independent system that also gets rid of any need for proprietary PBX integration common with other FMC solutions. Such a solution can be easily employed in a pre-existing PBX infrastructure without requiring any technical knowledge of the particular PBX model as well as PBX programming.

This novel technology is a good fit for international service providers and has been successfully implemented by T-Systems, one of Europe's leading business carriers, in its Octopus Mobility Services. This service is being offered by T-Systems as a per-month/per-user subscription package to all business customers on its national ISDN network. This offers good proof that such a solution can benefit fixed-line carriers both economically and strategically. Also, since the SPEECH DESIGN solution requires no prior PBX knowledge, IT system integrators are better positioned to dive into the voice communication market with the help of this FMC solution. Additionally, PBX dealers could also benefit from this FMC solution as it opens up an excellent opportunity to develop new customer relationships. Since this is a PBX independent solution, dealers could offer SPEECH DESIGN's FMC solution to almost any prospective customer regardless of the nature of the PBX system already in use.

SPEECH DESIGN has also promoted the concept of "One Number, Any Device" in order to facilitate the functioning of its FMC solution with any mobile and any fixed-line phone. To enable virtual control of the system by any phone, the company has opted for the universal touch-tone (DTMF) protocol. Smartphone users further benefit from an optional GUI-driven Mobility Client Software which is available for all popular BlackBerry, Nokia, and Windows Mobile terminals. Furthermore, SPEECH DESIGN has managed to provide a competitive cost offering around its FMC solution. Additionally, the company's decision to develop its own ISDN boards resulted in significant cost reduction for this solution.

Business & Partnerships

As of today, over 140,000 companies employ SPEECH DESIGN's products and services of which over a 1,000 are associated with its FMC solutions. Its customers and distribution partners comprise of top communications companies such as Avaya, HP, Deutsche Telekom, Orange, Siemens, Swisscom, and Vodafone as well as independent telecom resellers and IT-system integrators. The company, with help of its engineers, research team, and partnerships, is dedicated to help propagate business FMC solutions by providing a product that fits the current and future enterprise communications needs. Recently, SPEECH DESIGN has managed to build FMC based partnerships with ITC distributors such as Herweck AG and Allnet, both based in Germany.

Conclusion

SPEECH DESIGN's efforts in designing an innovative business FMC approach that caters to small and medium enterprise as well as large enterprise needs across Europe are highly commendable. The novel technology and product development that SPEECH DESIGN GmbH has brought about is a long awaited solution that clearly addresses current enterprise communication challenges. Hence, Frost & Sullivan is pleased to present the 2008 European Fixed Mobile Convergence Technology Innovation of the Year Award to SPEECH DESIGN.

About Best Practices

Frost & Sullivan Best Practices Awards recognize companies in a variety of regional and global markets for demonstrating outstanding achievement and superior performance in areas such as leadership, technological innovation, customer service, and strategic product development. Industry analysts compare market participants and measure performance through in-depth interviews, analysis, and extensive secondary research in order to identify best practices in the industry.



About Frost & Sullivan

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