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SAFIR

Work Package 8

**DELIVRABLE D8.2.2.1: 6 Monthly City Guide
Beijing Pilot activity report M24**

13-04-2006

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Author(s):	Zhang TONG
Organization(s):	CAPINFO
Contributor(s) author(s):	Chen DAOXIN, Zhai QUNFENG
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Abstract: This document describes the CAPINFO efforts in WP8 according "Deliverable 0.2.3 Detail Work Planning for M19>M30". The service contents for the English language version have been updated, and the City Guide Beijing GIS architecture has been improved for working well with the VQL. Meantime, we investigated the application of SAFIR technology in 2008 Olympics and tourist market in Beijing. Chinese non-voice version has been developed and adapted for Chinese-speaking tourists. We continue our work with Voice-insight on voice-activation in Chinese (integration of Chinese in VQL is in process).

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Executive Introduction


This report is compiled to summarize the WP8.2 activities of CAPINFO carrying out during the period M19 to M24. Based on the first 18 months collaborative result of SAFIR partners on City Guide Beijing, which integrating the VQL voice technology and travel information of Beijing municipality into a mobile device, in this WP, CAPINFO continued to improve this basic result by validating assumption, updating the service contents and optimizing the architecture. The aim of this pilot is to provide comprehensive public information services to the 2008 Olympic users and regular tourists in Beijing, thus, the City Guide Beijing will provide the functions like multilingual human-machine interface (English, French and Chinese), location-based information services (GIS) and automatic translations. This WP brings together the R&D persons, the service content providers, the GIS developers, and the Beijing tourism practitioners. The development and iteration support is executed in WP11 (Pilot Support) & WP12 (Development Support) and the multilingual aspect was supported by WP11 (Pilot Support) & WP13 (Data Support).

1.2 Executive Analysis

We have developed a new version City Guide running in a different PDA mobile device. The GIS component of this version adopted the same hierarchical structure as the key information component which is convenient and robust for voice query and worked well with the VQL layer. This new version also passed the overall test, especially on the correctness and practicability of VQL/ASR-driven page linkage and the VQL/TTS-enabled page description.

1.3 Executive Conclusions

The development and test iteration have fashioned a stable version for SAFIR version City Guide, the preliminary market survey and business exploitation showed a potential application perspective for 2008 Olympics and regular tourism service in Beijing. In this period, we devoted to the optimization of architecture, the suitability of content and the match of VQL and Beijing travel information within the framework of City Guide, we will continue in these aspects and pay more attention to the different requirements of users.

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2 Overview of pilot

This WP is a sequel of the R&D result of the first 18 months. We continued to improve the former City Guide Beijing version in the following aspects:

2.1 Enhancing the architecture and adjusting the contents of the service

The preliminary prototype of M18 has been found that the VQL was not best integrated in City guide. In particular, due to the fact that the hierarchical structure is not convenient and robust for voice query, the ASR functions for City Guide Beijing GIS needs to improve to have a better performance. We adopted the similar directory structure of the Key Information part, because the two parts share the same data basis, the Key Information part has a clear hierarchical partition and work well with the ASR. Meantime, we adjusted the contents for a better service to foreigners.

2.2 Optimizing the multilingual version


Apart from the original English and French versions, CAPINFO created and maintained the Chinese version to provide multilingual information service, not only for foreign tourists, but also to Chinese-speakers tourists. The three versions share the same architects and functions, but loaded different service contents/travel information resources in corresponding languages.

2.3 Reporting difficulties

The City Guide prototype system underwent the iteration of executing the pilot, and reporting difficulties and raised technical resolution to enhance performance.

2.4 Correcting bugs

The code contained bugs when development, this seriously influenced the robustness and usefulness of the City Guide prototype system, we have been correcting existing bugs by the iteration of test and modification to provide more robust products.

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3 Significant accomplishments

3.1 Achievements

During the period M19-M24, the main achievements of the work package are as follows:

- Updated English/French version City Guide;
- Created and optimized Chinese version City Guide;
- Redesign GIS system for Beijing City sharing Key Information hierarchies to go well with the VQL;
- Made City Guide automatic installation file for PDAs;
- Made City Guide automatic installation file for PDAs with storage card;
- Changed the project organization (including persons, responsibility, etc.);
- Made planning modifications mainly to take the holiday period into consideration;
- Analyzed important technology concepts;
- Performed user-enquiries in the form of questionnaires;
- Redesign the interface (more user friendly) and could be shared by different types of mobile devices

3.2 Main events/activities

During the period M19-M24, CAPINFO has the following activities in order to carry our the task;


- Having participated in several meetings (Conference calls and meeting with Hong Xu in Beijing) and possible solutions for the problems for pilot development.
- Meeting with a Beijing based tourist company, For further user requirements and potential market promotion; and
- Meeting with partners (two hotels in Beijing) for launching the rent of city guide in the market.

3.3 Publications/Documentations/Demonstration results up to date

During period M19-M24, the following documents are delivered

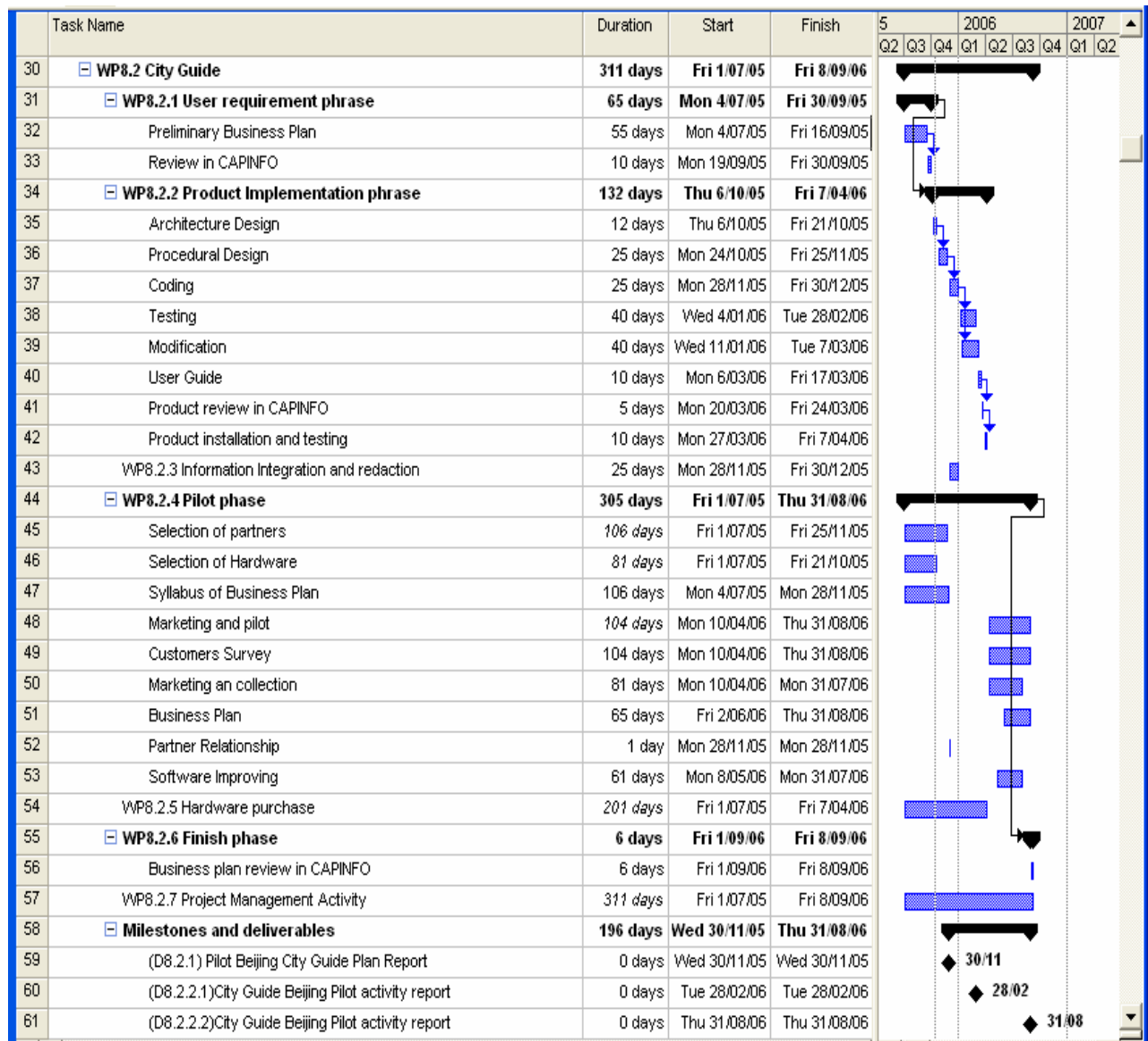
Delivered Chinese TTS and ASR components, City Guide prototypes, and related documentation and publications as schedule:


- D8.2.1 City Guide Pilot Plan; due M24
- D8.2.2.1 6 Monthly city Guide Beijing pilot activity report M24; due M24
- The Preliminary Procedure to be Implement the City Guide;
- Pilot Beijing City Guide Plan Report.
- City Guide channel in Embracing Beijing website and related electronic documentations herein.

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4 Status of pilot according to Gantt

The pilot CAPINFO involved has been running in time according to schedule:



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5 Open Issues and strategy to resolve the open issues

- ❑ The Beijing pilot application needs IBM and/or CAPINFO voice engine (including TTS and ASR) for Chinese language on the PDA, which will effect the special users application in Beijing seriously. The current status is in developing and debugging phase.
- ❑ We need European partner(s)' help for the translation task for the City Guide multilingual version.
- ❑ For the research and development of technology, the major problems foreseeable consist in the integration of VQL and the City Guide/GIS components. Though we have organized the tourism information into a hierarchical structure, and the number of word list for every node is not too many, but the recognition accuracy still have room for improvement yet.
- ❑ For the market promotion of City Guide in Beijing and other main tourist cities, one important premise is there are many foreign tourists interested in the service of City Guide, and choose it as their assistant tools when they live in Beijing, another is we can purchase and deploy enough hardware (PDAs) for such demands.

6 Next Steps

6.1 Actions by Partners

- ❑ The VI is now debugging the VQL integrated the IBM embedded TTS and ASR in Chinese; it should be integrated into City Guide when available. This will fulfill the performance of the Chinese version prototype.
- ❑ The Synergiums will help for multilingual support for finalizing French version and possible other European languages.


6.2 Planning Impacts

The original plan specified applying ontology technology to Beijing GIS data, but the ontology is not available for PDA, which the City Guide Beijing built in. So this task has to change to French version translation for the new version City Guide.
Other tasks proceeded as planned.

7 Conclusions

We can summarize the voice-enabled City Guide Beijing pilot as:

- ❑ By using voice-enabled devices, the foreign tourists may access easily local information of Beijing, and the City Guide will provide multilingual information service in Beijing 2008 Digital Olympics.
- ❑ The next step of technology research and development of City Guide should emphasize robustness, functionality and practicability.
- ❑ The user requirement survey and primary business applications conducted in Beijing tourist market showed that the SAFIR version City Guide is well expected by the users.

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