

## Yahoo! Improves Voice Quality and Customer Satisfaction through Integration of GIPS VoiceEngine Multimedia

*Yahoo! Messenger with Voice leverages GIPS' world class voice processing technology to become a market leading VoIP solution*

When Yahoo! decided to improve the voice quality in its Yahoo! Messenger with Voice instant messaging (IM) client, it chose to implement GIPS VoiceEngine Multimedia. By choosing this market leading solution, Yahoo! made sure that its product not only matched the quality of existing VoIP solutions, but exceeded expectations by delivering a user experience that was unparalleled.

Voice based services were nothing new to Yahoo!, since its IM client had utilized proprietary technology since the late 1990's. The voice processing software in the early versions of Yahoo Messenger, based on a codec suited for low bandwidth and dial up scenarios, was sufficient for the state of VoIP communications at the time. However, as the market evolved, Yahoo! found that it needed to re-evaluate its offering and reinvest in voice technology in order to meet customer expectations. To remain competitive, the company decided to license third party technology that was based on SIP and designed to support PC to PSTN communications. Though the chosen solution met the stated criteria, it did not appropriately support Yahoo!'s comprehensive suite of voice solutions. As PC to PC calls became more popular, and many people began to use Yahoo! Messenger with Voice to keep in touch with family and friends living abroad, many users were experiencing problems with delay, jitter, and acoustic echo.

In order to resolve these quality issues, Yahoo! again decided to evaluate third party technology. This time, however, the company was determined to find a permanent solution that could give its Yahoo! Messenger with Voice product high quality voice in almost any scenario. Additionally, the company wanted a platform on which it could develop more features and greater media processing capabilities in the future. Yahoo!'s engineering team evaluated multiple solutions, including GIPS VoiceEngine Multimedia, to find the best technology available on the market. The team found that the GIPS solution outperformed the competition and delivered outstanding results for the designated voice quality parameters. Graeme Dollar, Manager of Yahoo's Voice Products group, explains, "When we integrated VoiceEngine Multimedia into Yahoo! Messenger with Voice, we saw huge improvements in delay and jitter, as well as improved performance in acoustic echo cancellation. Since these quality metrics were of the utmost importance to us and our users, we made the strategic decision to choose GIPS as the provider of our voice-processing technology."

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Once the decision was made to license VoiceEngine Multimedia, Yahoo! found that GIPS' knowledgeable engineering team made the integration of the complex voice-processing technology incredibly easy. The teams developed a strong working relationship, and participated in joint innovation efforts. The result of this close collaboration was the addition of features such as the ability for Yahoo! Messenger with Voice to switch codecs to respond to changing network conditions.

When Yahoo! launched the new IM client in March of 2006, the product received critical acclaim for its voice quality. More important, Yahoo! saw a substantial decrease in customer care calls and an increase in positive feedback from satisfied users. Dollar attributes these results to VoiceEngine Multimedia. "The integration of GIPS' technology definitely contributed to the increase in user satisfaction with our voice quality." he says. "Our customers have tough requirements, especially those who use Yahoo! Messenger with Voice to stay in touch with friends and family living abroad. VoiceEngine Multimedia exceeded these requirements by delivering the best voice quality available."

Since the launch of Yahoo! Messenger with Voice integrated with GIPS, Yahoo! has remained a major player in the VoIP market, and continues to innovate around voice related services. Furthermore, the two companies continue to collaborate to improve Yahoo's product offering as well as push the VoIP market forward. Today, GIPS plays a major role in product development, and is helping to add new functionality and improve the performance of features, such as conferencing. Yahoo! is also looking to help proliferate GIPS technology throughout the market by encouraging the use of GIPS codecs, such as iLBC and iSAC, in gateways and hardware devices. This would ensure high quality communications between Yahoo! Messenger with Voice and non-Yahoo! endpoints, regardless of the end user platform.

This type of cooperation is indicative of the mutually beneficial relationship that the two companies enjoy. According to GIPS CEO Gary Hermansen, "Our relationship with Yahoo! has proven to be a shining example of what can happen when two world class companies enter into a cooperative relationship. We look forward to continuing to help Yahoo! innovate and provide some of the best voice based products and services available."

