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## Jaduka Adds Voice to Web Apps

By Oliver Starr

Jaduka, a subsidiary of NetworkIP, the Dallas, TX-based company that currently serves up some 15 billion voice minutes per year, would have little excuse for failing to deliver a suite of innovative and reliable services. With a parent company that is reputed to offer best-in-class services in an ultra-competitive marketplace, Jaduka represents an important point of differentiation and a potential strategic advantage to NetworkIP.

Strategic value aside, Jaduka itself is proving to be both innovative and interesting to the telecom ecosystem. By taking the idea of click-to-call Web to Phone telephony and expanding on it by creating a menu of options from social to service oriented, the company is blazing its own trail while opening the eyes of developers to the potential of adding voice connectivity to web applications.

One of Jaduka's key differentiating factors is the company's ability to push web-originated calls directly into the PSTN or cellular networks. With the mere click of a button, users can instantly communicate by phone - saving time, saving transactions, saving frustration and ultimately saving money.

At its simplest, Jaduka offers Click and Connect, a service that integrates the basic click-to-call technology that has been pioneered by companies like eStara, the brilliantly named Click-to-Call, and even an aborted effort by Google. However, while this is the extent of most company's click-to-call efforts, this is Jaduka's jumping off point.

Other offerings include MyPrivateLine - a portable toll-free number that allows forwarding on the fly to other numbers you choose, helping you keep your real number confidential and your privacy intact. Another service that is certain to be a hit for the holidays is Jaduka's eGreetings application. Just like it sounds, this application features a click-to-call button inside an email message. Perfect for reminders, greeting cards, promotional messages and more; the only downside I see is that an annoyed recipient of an unsolicited email message could conceivably call you back and give you an earful on your own dime.

I guess that would make you think twice about using that option on anything but the cleanest of opt-in mailing lists for that reason.

As novel as these functions are, what got people excited at O'Reilly's recent eTel conference was Jaduka's API. This extensively documented and extremely flexible interface allows developers to integrate things like calling and voice mail retrieval into virtually any web-based application using technologies with which most developers are already very familiar such as HTTP, SOAP and soon XML.

Because Jaduka is OS independent, the client side of the equation doesn't influence the application or its functionality at all. Better still, it requires no client-side installation - a step that sends a huge percentage of prospective users running the other direction.



Another interesting feature of the Jaduka API is the fact that it lends itself to white label use. Because the API incorporates the full functionality to create new user accounts as well as to recharge existing customer accounts, it becomes all that much more attractive to enterprise customers looking for out-of-the-box functionality with seamless integration into an existing website or company identity.

As an analyst, one of the key things that I look for are the forerunners of developing trends. In particular, I look for companies that are positioned by virtue of their place in the market, their technology, their pedigree and the strategic depth of their management teams as well as the ability of that team to execute. When I see a company that has all the requisite strength that I feel are key success indicators AND I see that this company is positioned atop a market that I believe has unusually strong growth prospects over the next five years, that's the kind of company that I get excited about.

Rarely do I see companies that fire on all those cylinders. Generally speaking three of the five core prerequisites is a strong showing and well above average, four and above is exceptional. Jaduka looks to be a four to five in my book - my lack of familiarity with their management team being the one question I have - although I must say that my meeting with Jaduka President Jack Rynes impressed me as did the fact that he's sold services to a mutual friend who may just be the toughest customer on the planet.

The other members of Jaduka's management team look every bit as strong on paper as Jack does, so it is perfectly reasonable to expect that they can do the jobs they've been hired to do. All in all, I'd say that Jaduka is a company that bears watching - if it were a publicly listed company, it's one I'd rate a 'buy' at this time. Incidentally, I am not a gambling man.