

Diverse Kiosk Applications in the French Market

Le kiosk, c'est ici!

By Chantal Wright



Since 1993 Ultimedia has developed its range of specialist interactive technology skills to meet the diverse needs of a wide range of customers, from the town hall to the Eiffel Tower.

Established in 1993 by Eric Dumouchel, French company Ultimedia is now an international leader in the design and construction of interactive systems. Its success is due primarily to the wide variety of related systems and services that it can provide, from over 100 models of interactive kiosk to the ESPOT secure browser, the *Agora Studio* dynamic presentation software and other applications and accessories dedicated to the interactive kiosk. Ultimedia bases its kiosk solutions on a comprehensive range of in-house activities; including consultancy, design, production, programming, content preparation, software security level management, mastering, deployment, maintenance and remote maintenance. Over the years the company has developed its range of specialist interactive technology skills to meet the diverse needs a wide range of customers, and some of some of its recent projects are described below.

The Citoyenne Valoise

The Citoyenne kiosk is a revolutionary way for users to access local authority services by inserting their ID card and typing in a unique PIN number. Currently installed in four pilot town halls, but due to be extended to other local authorities in the near future, the *Citoyenne Valoise* enables Valoise card holders to access services for young children and school meals, and in particular to

register on line with the canteen card system. The kiosk also incorporates an electronic payment terminal and an A4 document scanner.

216 Kiosks in Six Weeks

Carrefour, Europe's largest hypermarket chain, selected Ultimedia to install interactive kiosks in all its shops in France. Although this was a major challenge for Ultimedia, as only six weeks elapsed from accepting the order to completing development, Ultimedia managed to deliver everything in time, from coaching, consultancy, production, programming, content, mastering and delivery to final installation. The order was part of the 'Operation Beauty' game that Carrefour organised in April 2005, and the kiosks were primarily a means of voting to gather statistical data for market research, in agreement with various FMCG companies such as Colgate/Palmolive, and L'Oréal. At the end of the operation, Ultimedia collated the statistics collected and sent a comprehensive summary to the management of Carrefour France. The kiosk was in the form of a ballot box, but Ultimedia made it a far more comprehensive machine, with the dual function of collecting statistics and running a draw for one of 900 available prizes.



Ultimedia designs
kiosk enclosures to suit
all applications

Tickets for the Tower


In response to a call from SNTE (The New Eiffel Tower Company) to equip the Eiffel Tower with ticket machines, Ultimedia was selected to set up a global interactive kiosk system to issue entrance tickets. As Ultimedia had no practical experience of ticket machines, it collaborated with Rodrigue S.A, a company specialising in computerised ticketing supply and services flow management. Together the two companies developed the *Athena* kiosk: a multi-purpose, robust terminal with unsurpassed capacity for housing hardware in a relatively compact, brushed stainless steel enclosure. The *Athena* features a sliding closure panel that also acts as a tablet, and also has a concealed ventilation system and lighting for the niche. An electronic payment solution has been built in for secure payment using a PIN, then a ticket is printed by a dedicated thermal printer. Two of the kiosks also have very high capacity cash systems to accept cash and give change.

Fingerprint Immigration

Since 1st June 2005, Air France has been experimenting with biometric passenger checks to optimise immigration control at Roissy-Charles-de-Gaulle airport. The project, carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior, also operates as a police check. The

system was produced by Sagem, who asked Ultimedia to build all the biometric hardware into the new Pegasus kiosk.

Passengers leaving the European Union from at Roissy-Charles-de-Gaulle can voluntarily go to the immigration office for digital fingerprinting and to record their personal data. They are then given a card confirming that they are taking part in the Pegasus experiment. Subsequently, whenever they enter or leave the country, they no longer have to queue to enter the boarding area – using their card, they enter an automatic security gate and simply have to place their index finger on one of the three Pegasus kiosks with a biometric sensor that recognises their fingerprint. This test is the first practical use of the Pegasus project, which was started in 2003 by Air France, and the initial trial period will last for about six months.

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