

E-Tourisme: The new travel companions

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Making the most of new information technology, France Télécom is helping to develop various travel and discovery tools, for both the tourist world and the professional world.

These tools are called *Mémoire de Voyage*, *Mobiguide*, *Connect One*, *Pilot Expo* and *Portail Tourisme*. Their common ingenuity facilitates everyday life and liberty of movement...in terms of travel, tourism, anything that can be managed from a simple pocket computer, a mobile phone or a high speed internet connection...it's unbelievable!

→ What ?

Travel Memoir, both guide and companion, permanent source of documentation, travel diary and souvenir album, enhances travel with a cultural and emotional dimension... Travel Memoir allows a tourist to compile a multimedia travel log during his travels by simple use of his mobile phone. By simply calling a server and composing a code on the mobile phone which corresponds to a monument or tourist site one can listen to information concerning the site. Apart from this, descriptions, commentaries, photos, panoramic views, contextual data such as the weather and topline news are automatically sent to a personal site and added to the travel diary. Via internet the user can personalise his travel log by adding his own notes, comments and impressions, insert numeric photos and organising the information to suit himself. Once the travel diary is reconstituted on a website it is accessible in real time via internet using a password. When the tourist comes back from his holiday he can consult the information, add to it, share it with others, prolong the pleasure of the trip...

Mobiguide is a round the clock travel companion, discreet and efficient, a kind of minigenie for today's tourist...

A veritable communicating travel guide, it centralises the kind of information on your pocket computer (types of palm pilot or other mobile multimedia terminal) that a tourist might need to optimise his stay in a town or region. Apart from the regular tourist information that is traditionally available in print, it can provide much practical information - events, emergency services, banks, car parking and access to previously unpublished communication services such as telephone connection to a selected restaurant, sending SMS to friends or an electronic postcard by mail...

A multimedia tourist guide, Mobiguide provides personalised content by responding instantaneously and simply to diverse questions that are typically asked in an unknown place: locating the closest hotels, checking restaurant prices, preparing the following day's excursion, finding out about local culture...it can even offer a guided tour with sound and images in museums...



Connect One is a new orientation and information service designed to promote mobility of professionals, particularly at trade shows or public salons. This small software, whose content is specific to each event, allows owners of palm pilots on Palm OS to look for and locate stands which interest them and to find their way around easily in trade shows. It simply requires a specific application to be loaded onto the Palm PDA on internet or at the reception of a salon. Thanks to this service, the visitor can access all kinds of information which is relevant to the salon program. Apart from this classic information, the service offers all kinds of useful information about the town where the salon is situated: transport, restaurants, shows, cultural events... The visitor can update the information by connecting via an internet stand, to the salon data. Connect One also provides the means to set up simple interactive animations between visitors, organisers and speakers

Pilot Expo is a mobile information service which is destined for the professional salons of tomorrow. Using a numeric personal assistant, PDA colour screen type, the visitor disposes of the real time information that he needs to facilitate his salon visit and personalise the information according to his centres of interest. Diverse rubrics, accessible via Web portal, put a variety of information and services at the visitor's fingertips. The visitor can find his way around the salon site (plan of the exhibition stands, car park...), find out about the surrounding area (hotels, shopping, transport...), get information about the exhibitors, access the events program (alert service for conferences, discussion groups...), consult documents relative to the salon theme, access exhibitors. Web sites and benefit from numerous practical services (consultation of the menus proposed on site, reservations in selected restaurants, lost and found service...).

Portail Tourisme: The Tourism Portal is a tool of a new type conceived for use by foreign tourists to facilitate their stay in France. Accessible via internet, the navigation prioritises images from a .hub. which allows the tourist to prepare his trip or obtain help once he's arrived. This tool can be used to organise the trip before setting off, but also during the trip. The Tourism Portal provides translations in real time via .chat. or mail, high speed webcams to view future destinations, a shared dialogue zone for setting up trips with several people without meeting up physically ... Even a collage .board. where it's possible to stick video images, animations or photos, sounds or texts, in order to create a real travel diary.



→ How ?

Travel memoir: situated in the convergence of the internet and mobile telephony, the operation of this service is straightforward. Based on mature and reliable technology, it can be entirely configured. To create a travel diary as one goes along, two possibilities are open to the user: call the vocal server and compose an I.D. code on the mobile phone which corresponds to the monument in which the user is interested. A commentary concerning the chosen monument is provided. The other option is to send a minimessage (SMS) to the server which furnishes return info via SMS. In parallel, the data, proposed by the tourism profession is inserted chronologically into the Travel Memoir on the tourist's personal site. In test phase in Nice until the 15th January 2003, the service is free of charge. Only the calls made from the mobile phone and the internet connection are charged.



Mobiguide: The service, as tested with volunteer French tourists and foreigners, works on a PDA with a colour screen and a telephone function (GPRS). Various consultation modes are proposed depending on the visit situations; in off-line mode for preloaded selected information (e.g. non-exhaustive list of hotels and restaurants), or on on-line mode for more complete information. Each piece of data provided can be localised dynamically on a map. The updated content comes from multiple information sources from various partners. These services are based on new editorial content formatted to suit the consultation constraints of mobile terminals (screen size, ergonomics...) and also available in English and Spanish.



Connect One: The service is accessible from personal assistants of the brand PALM or by using a PALM OS exploitation system, the most widely used in the world. In the near future, it could be accessible via any PDA, no matter the exploitation system. No supplementary equipment is needed to use it. The system is based on a simple material architecture. It allows you to connect via any type of network to an applications server and several units of serial concentrations, on which the PDA Palm can be connected with the help of the infrared IrDA port? The serial concentrations send data to the applications server which interprets them and then sends the appropriate data to the PDA Palm. This system is administrable from any terminal with a simple Web browser. Born from research carried out by the France Télécom R&D Creative studio, this project was awarded to Getronics, who created the platform

Pilot Expo: The material chosen for the development of services proposed by Pilot Expo is based on i-pack from Compaq, to this day the best selling pocket computer. Visitors are helped by a multilingual contextual aid, in the form of an avatar, which presents the services and sends reminders about event start times to which the user has subscribed. The mobile access to information is based on high speed wireless technology (Wifi), deployed in the whole salon.

Tourism Portal: The importance of the content, particularly in terms of video or sound, requires a high speed internet connection, cable or ADSL. With the Tourism Portal, utilisation of a series of tools has been facilitated for a maximum amount of users by prioritising the accessibility. The presentation is simple and the summary rubrics are refined progressively as the user navigates. Certain functions rely on new tools such as a translation motor or an online intelligent dialogue, the analysis of multimedia content thanks to a content indexing system (the MPEG-7), as well as the exchange platforms in real time.

→ When ?


Travel Memoir: Currently being tested in Nice, the service is available on simple request to the local France Télécom agency. Partnering France Télécom in this experiment are the Office of tourism and congresses of Nice and the Hotel syndicate of Nice Côte d'Azur. A pre-commercialisation offer will also be tested in Corsica and in the region Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur in the Summer of 2003.

In the long term, the service will be enriched and available in France on colour terminals and a high speed mobile telephony network (GPRS), with the objective of rolling out the service in other countries, via subsidiaries of France Télécom. It is particularly well adapted to European cities with a strong cultural dimension. Europe represents 60% of the global tourism market. With 76.5 million foreign visitors in 2001, France is the number one destination in the world. On the 4 million Francophile Web pages generated on the internet since the beginning of 2002, a large part, is dedicated to personal travel stories. Enough indicators to assure a bright future for this new service.



Mobiguide: This new concept in interactive electronic guide based on a PDA was tested by France Télécom R&D, for the first time in France in October and November 2002 in the city of Lyon. For two months, 500 volunteer tourists, both French and foreign, recruited in different hotels and in the town's tourist office, benefited from the lend of a PDA with colour screen and telephone function (GPRS) during their stay. The city of Lyon, via the tourism office and the Fine Arts Museum, the Departmental committee of tourism in the Rhône as well as the Accor group and the Hilton hotel, participated in this test. This service precedes the development of future high speed multimedia services and heralds the arrival of new mobile uses.

Connect One: The Connect One salon was tested successfully in a real situation last October in Saint-Etienne, during the Saga 2002, a trade salon for new technologies. It is now operational. Created originally for professional mobility, the application has also been deployed in the logistics sector and warehouse management. Connect One logistics allow the visualisation in real time of a warehouse and its stocks as well as their movements and associated value. It offers warehouse managers an interface with an installed local application and direct access to a collection of information on any PDA working off PALM OS.



Pilot Expo: This new localised and interactive information service, developed for visitors and accessible via mobile terminals - was tested on the initiative of France Télécom R&D, the town hall of Paris and the League of education - during the Educatec salon (professionals in the domain of education), which was held in Paris from the 20th to the 23rd November in the Parc des Expositions at the Porte de Versailles. 400 visitors were recruited to be the pioneers of this previously unseen tool... (This experiment regrouped Hewlett-Packard, Paris Expo, the EDUCADEC organisers and the Parisian regional direction of France Télécom). In the short term, the objective was to optimise new information technology in order to offer event organisers a complete package of interactive services. These constitute a short term added value for the professional trade, but could, in the long term be deployed across the general public in places such as exhibition centres, congresses, salons...

Tourism Portal: The extent of the content as well as the use of tools never previously developed for a project of this size does not lend itself to the precision of a publication date this new kind of portal. Certain parts of the Tourism Portal, such as instant translation and intelligent dialogue, could be put on line quite rapidly (1 or 2 years) but in a .light. version. It will take 5 years, or more, for the completion of the more advanced and reliable functionalities such as the analysis of multimedia content with the MPEG-7.