

Window to Services

Touch screen displays provide shop window access to public sector services



Business Web Software, develops E-Government solutions for local authorities, Director Brett Husbands believes that making relevant information available in shopping centres and other public places will increase acceptance of e-government initiatives. 'Many councils are experimenting with client facing systems on their web sites, using techniques such as Frequently Asked Questions or guided questionnaires to lead people to the information they require. Our 'Window to Services' takes this a step further.

'By using Visual Planet's broadscreen interactivity we can help the public sector deliver a wide variety of information to a holographic screen positioned behind the window of a shop, library or council building. Someone in the street can touch the glass and gain access to information about anything from after school clubs to waste recycling.'

'The benefit over a kiosk is that there is nothing to steal – as there is no computer incorporated within the 'street furniture' – it can be used in all light conditions and the screen is robust and weather proof.'

According to Vernon Spencer, Technical Director of Visual Planet, interactive screens will soon be common place in the high street. 'Estate agents are among those who have been quick to see the potential of a shop window that is open for business 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is no technology barrier, members of the public of all ages have been prepared to touch the window to gain the information they need.

'Web based content such a bold graphics, photographs and large text, increase accessibility to ethnic minorities, the elderly and others who have difficulty in reading printed materials. In addition, the information is quick to update and cheaper to disseminate,' he adds.

Brett Husbands sees the 'Window to Services' solution as one of a number of initiatives by the Business Web Software to help councils deliver services electronically. 'We don't envisage that members of the public will want to complete personal forms in the street, but anything that increases access and prepares the way for web based fulfilment will help councils to meet their e-gov targets.'

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