

Success Stories: Ideas for Potential Players

ICT / Software



Sales / Services

GeoVector

Pointing-based mobile search solutions for Japan's tech-savvy consumers



Applications powered by GeoVector's patented technologies provide users with entertainment, dining, and other information specific to their current location.

GeoVector's many patents utilize such existing technologies as GPS, electro-optic devices, microprocessors, digital signal processors, and motion and heading sensors to support 3-D search engine applications. These

allow cellphone and personal digital assistant users to "click on the real world®." While walking through town, cellphone users will be able to purchase movie tickets by pointing to a theater, obtain a listing of the nearest cafes in any direction they choose, and even locate their friends on city streets.

Opportunities in Japan

The decision to enter the Japanese market to develop its cellphone-based technology was an easy one for GeoVector. "Japan was really our only option. It is the only place where carriers work closely with the manufacturers to incorporate imaginative new features in their phones," says GeoVector President and CEO John Ellenby. There are currently about 2 million handsets in use in Japan that incorporate both GPS and a compass. The hardware necessary for

GeoVector's 3-D search engine application is soon likely to be standard on the majority of phones in Japan.

Market Entry

GeoVector realized it needed a Japanese presence to be closer to the market and to establish trust with Japanese partners, so in 2005 it set up a *kabushiki kaisha*, a subsidiary most resembling a US corporation, in Japan. "By setting up in Japan we are gaining the privilege and ability to work with the most technologically advanced companies in our field in the world," remarks Mr. Ellenby.

To expedite the logistical aspects of establishing an office in Japan, GeoVector Senior Manager of International Operations Patrick Bray took advantage of the services offered through JETRO's Invest Japan Business

- 1991 Research started on pointing-based systems
- 1993 First patents filed
- 1998 GeoVector Corporation begins operations
- 2003 First application, "Real Spectator," developed and fielded
- 2005 GeoVector KK established
- 2006 First Japanese application launched
- 2006 GeoVector's nineteenth patent issued



Support Center (IBSC) in Tokyo. Using the free office space, GeoVector temporarily set up operations while working with JETRO's in-house tax, legal, and accounting consultants. In addition, GeoVector used JETRO's business network to initiate key relationships.

mobile search engine technology. Recently, KDDI, one of Japan's leading telecommunications companies, has requested cellphone manufacturers to include such hardware in their phones. In addition, new applications in the tourism, directory assistance, community advertising, and gaming markets are attracting the interest of other major wireless carriers and portals.



"Click on the real world®" technology allows cellphone users to point and click at restaurants, billboards, and other objects or locations to receive information about them.

"GeoVector's growth is going to be fast and exciting," says Mr. Ellenby. "We will change the way people interact with their phones, make them more secure in their environment, and give them information they need when they need it the most. With GeoVector the mobile handset becomes a mouse with the world as your desktop."

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"JETRO is a great name. When we needed an introduction, JETRO was there," says Mr. Bray. "It is usually difficult for a small start-up company to get time with service providers like banks, but with JETRO, they came to us!"

Results and Outlook

Working closely with Japanese partners, like KDDI, Mapion, and NEC Magnus, GeoVector was able to obtain a large base of phones with the necessary embedded hardware and build an extensive database of location-specific information required for its pointing applications. As early as December 2006, Japanese cellphone users will be able to point their phones at a monument and instantly have access to its history.

As features like heading sensors (electronic compasses) that GeoVector's 3-D search engine applications require become increasingly standard in cellphones and PDAs, GeoVector seeks to become the global standard of

Japanese Operation

Established : September 2005
Capital : ¥10 million
Business : Software and service development for location-based services and sales
Location : Ark Mori Bldg, 12th Floor, 1-12-32, Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-6006
URL : <http://www.geovector.com/jp>
Parent company : GeoVector Corporation (San Francisco, CA, USA)

