



Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility

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Project Proposal

FITA is asking interested researchers for assistance in overcoming a major technical issue which will severely impair the independence and employability of a number of disabled persons should their existing computer setup fail.

The problem

Some of our employees and clients use a computer in order to manage voice phone calls and faxes. Their computers are becoming dated and will eventually fail. We need to future proof this functionality.

The current situation

FITA has set up a number of individuals using external Windows XP computers and FaxTalk V.4.5.4 on computers using old 56K serial or USB modems, so that from their computer they can make phone calls and answer incoming calls. This system works fine but there is a pending problem in that, if they upgrade the operating system, change modem or other hardware, their working setup cannot be guaranteed on more modern operating systems and computers.

Past attempts

FITA purchased and tried a HIRO V.92 56K USB Modem, Model Number: H50113, P/N: 638B56021004, S/N:1423001083 which the Amazon.co.uk website said would support voice communication. In practice this was not the case and it did not work. The modem remains at FITA and can be made available for testing. FITA also contacted FaxTalk who told us that because modern modem hardware no longer supports full duplex voice communication, they no longer support this function in their more recent software.

Some local suppliers suggested moving away from computers and using VOIP enabled headsets. Although possible for some, this is not possible for many who because of mobility impairments, cannot navigate a separate handset, phone base station and computer keyboard and the inferred switching between these devices.

Required objective

FITA needs a combination hardware and software which can emulate the functionality which already exists through dated (7 year old) computer equipment. We need the ability to make and receive phone calls via a Windows based computer. Exclusive use of keyboard is also a key requirement.

Contact Details

Relevant FITA contact persons are Mr. Stanley M. Debono (stanley.debono@gov.mt) and Mr. Michael Micallef (michael.micallef@gov.mt) They can also be reached on tel: 25992343.



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