



## **TRAVELLINGWAVE TO COLLABORATE WITH CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE TECHNOLOGY CENTER UNDER A GRANT-AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

### ***VoicePredict™ to address accessible technology for the elderly and disabled***

**SEATTLE, WA –Tuesday, June 23, 2009** – TravellingWave, a leader in next generation multimodal input technology, today announced its collaboration with the Quality of Life Technology Center (QoLT), led by Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and the University of Pittsburgh, to integrate TravellingWave's patent-pending VoicePredict™ product into advanced speech solutions – such as robotic mobility assistants - for the elderly and disabled. The VoicePredict interface, together with the accessible technology-based products developed by QoLT, will enable seamless voice recognition and text prediction for a new class of mobile, assistive devices. The joint project will be funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) under the Small Business Investigation Research (SBIR) supplemental awards program. This marks the fourth NSF SBIR award that TravellingWave has received in recent years. The collaboration with CMU is the first commercial product integration of VoicePredict for TravellingWave.

There have been several attempts to eliminate the keyboard and other hand/finger-based inputs using speech recognition. Unfortunately, owing to the problem's complexity, the technology has - for the most part - fallen short of expectations. TravellingWave's novel approach - combining a highly noise robust command-and-control solution with the first multimodal input method to seamlessly combine voice recognition with text prediction – enables the VoicePredict product to elegantly switch between recognition of keyboard input and speech input. This solution offers end-users a seamless multimodal experience, resulting in a voice recognition interface with near 100% task-completion-accuracy.

"We view VoicePredict as a pervasive voice interface, which naturally leads to an important assistive technology," says Dr. Ashwin Rao, TravellingWave's CEO. "The opportunity to collaborate with outstanding and highly distinguished professors and researchers will enable us to combine VoicePredict with QoLT's products and, subsequently, benefit the elderly and disabled".

"This collaborative field project is an opportunity to inject our participatory design process into development of a commercial product aimed at people with disabilities," says Dr. Daniel P. Siewiorek, Director of the CMU Human-Computer Interaction institute, and Buhl University Professor of Computer Science and Electrical and Computer Engineering, who heads up QoLT's research in Human-System Interaction. "This project plans to incorporate TravellingWave's predictive speech-to-text technology into a suite of human-system interaction technologies for users who have concomitant dexterity and/or cognitive impairments. Such interactions are central to a number of QoLT systems our center is currently developing, including wheelchair usage coaches and robotic mobility/manipulation assistants, as well as future envisioned systems, such as household management and personal safety coaches."

TravellingWave further added that its VoicePredict interface for mobile devices is also on schedule for a beta release in the coming months.

"The past few years has seen an influx of new interface technologies, including the iPhone's Touch interface, Palm-Pre's gesture input, and the RIM-Blackberry's mini qwerty keyboard. In addition to faster and better input methods, accessible technology extensions continue to be of prime importance," said Todd Achilles, former handsets director for T-Mobile USA and former general manager for HTC. "TravellingWave is well-positioned at this juncture with its revolutionary interface, VoicePredict, which has the potential to extend ubiquitously across platforms, devices, and languages."

#### **About The National Science Foundation**

The **National Science Foundation** is a United States federal government agency. The agency's overall mission is to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; with a clear goal of innovation that can benefit society through commercialization. Under its well-known small business innovative research (SBIR) program, NSF supports market-driven topics such as Biotechnology, Electronics, Information-Based Technologies, Chemical-Based Technologies and Advanced Materials and Manufacturing.

**About TravellingWave**

TravellingWave is an early-stage company that develops software, using speech recognition technology, for entering text into mobile devices. The predictive speech-to-text technology combines traditional predictive text input with speech recognition. The result is an extremely simple, fast, and enhanced interface for mobile users. Founded in Seattle in 2004, TravellingWave is based in Seattle, Washington. The company has been privately funded by the company founder, Dr. Ashwin Rao, and prominent Seattle-based angel investors. TravellingWave has also been partially supported by grant-awards from the National Science Foundation. For more information, please visit the company Web site at [www.travellingwave.com](http://www.travellingwave.com).

**About the Quality of Life Technology Center**

The Quality of Life Technology (QoLT) Center is a National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center whose mission is to create intelligent systems that enable older adults and people with disabilities to live more independently. Future compassionate intelligent QoLT systems will monitor and communicate with a person, understand her daily needs and tasks, and provide reliable and happily-accepted assistance by compensating and substituting for diminished capabilities.

QoLT is a unique partnership between Carnegie Mellon and the University of Pittsburgh that brings together a cross-disciplinary team of technologists, clinicians, industry partners, end users, and other stakeholders to create revolutionary technologies that will improve and sustain the quality of life for all people. For more information, please visit the company Web site at [www.qolt.org](http://www.qolt.org)

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