

Press Release

Clarion, Microsoft and SVOX simplify in-car navigation

The Clarion, Microsoft Windows Automotive and SVOX cooperation strives to enhance drivers' safety by developing first class navigation products converging sound, information, and human interaction.

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Redmond, Morfelden-Walldorf and Zurich – (29 August 2006) As navigation devices evolve and the number of such devices built on Windows Automotive operating system and SVOX Automotive text-to-speech engine increases, consumers are experiencing new levels of in-car navigation. Today's technology advancements allow drivers to enjoy direction announcements in the car safely and seamlessly unlike anything ever used before.

Motorists can enjoy sound and navigation announcements in their cars with comfort and satisfaction. Clarion's Multimedia Stations bring the benefits of excellent speech output and robust software integration within the automobile to the next level. The brand new navigation device NAX963HD is powered by the Windows Automotive and SVOX Automotive software package.

"Microsoft and SVOX have done a great deal of work to understand what we expect from our technology partners. As a result, Clarion is gaining momentum, and we are proud to rely on these two leading automotive software providers," said Mr. Andreas Augsten, Manager Engineering with Clarion Europe. "We are pleased to expand our relationship with Microsoft Automotive and SVOX. When we decided to work with these strong partners, we were confident that Clarion would achieve a highly successful product roll-out."

Most notable about the new generation of aftermarket navigation products is the high quality speech interface for hands-free and eyes free operation. The

SVOX Automotive solution based on a Windows Automotive platform makes Clarion's Multimedia Station easy to control.

"Consumers are demanding real added value from in-car infotainment devices and SVOX speech output technology is all about improving HMI. The intuitive, speech-enabled user interface guides the driver through the navigation menu with the highest comfort level," said Stephan Scharf, Partner Manager, Microsoft Automotive Business Unit.

"Porting our text-to-speech technology to the Windows Automotive platform has been a positive experience and we look forward to build further innovative applications for Clarion," said Volker Jantzen, CEO of SVOX. "Together with Microsoft, we could make Clarion's groundbreaking navigation system possible. Our advances in speech technology are all focused on in-car safety and convenience issues."

About Clarion

Clarion has been a leader of in-car infotainment throughout its history. We introduced Japan's first car radio in 1951, Japan's first in-car stereo in 1963, and the world's first AutoPC in 1998. Our world has shifted dramatically from the early days of analogue audio to the very latest advances in digital audio and multimedia, plus in-car navigation and now, the new technology domain of IVCS (In Vehicle Computing System).

Since the earliest days of Clarion - some 60 years ago - we have continued to open up new opportunities in in-car entertainment, to exceed customer expectations, through forward-thinking design and the latest technology, with a perspective that focuses one step beyond the present.

As stated in our corporate philosophy; "Clarion strives to improve society by seeking to develop the relationship between sound, information and human interaction, and by creating products to meet those needs".

In the future, as in the past, Clarion will continue to develop the finest in-car information and entertainment products, based on expertise, experience and foresight."

About Microsoft In-Vehicle Technology

For more than a decade, Microsoft has been working collaboratively with the auto industry to deliver in-car infotainment solutions that help drivers and passengers more safely and reliably communicate, navigate and enjoy digital entertainment on the road.

Whether through Windows Mobile® for Automotive solution or Windows Automotive software platform, Microsoft is dedicated to helping automakers and suppliers reduce time and cost to development so they can more easily deliver a wide range of OEM and aftermarket in-car communication, information, and entertainment experiences. Microsoft's Windows-powered solutions are on the road today enabling advanced communication, navigation and digital entertainment experiences in more than 60 OEM and aftermarket devices from 18 automakers and suppliers, including BMW, Fiat Auto, Volvo, Honda/Acura, Toyota, and DaimlerChrysler. More than 30 electronics suppliers worldwide including Alpine, Pioneer, Clarion and Kenwood,

are developing next-generation in-car infotainment systems based on Microsoft's in-vehicle technologies.

Microsoft's Automotive Business Unit is a multidisciplinary group composed of product developers and business leaders in Redmond, Washington; Detroit, Michigan; Tokyo, Japan; and Munich, Germany. The Automotive Business Unit works collaboratively with automakers, tier-one suppliers, systems integrators, and internal groups to deliver technologies that will enable automaker to deliver rich in-car experiences for drivers and passengers.

About SVOX AG

SVOX AG is the leading provider of embedded speech output solutions for the automotive and mobile device industries. The SVOX Text-to-Speech system, the company's signature product, is part of a full product suite of small, fast and multilingual applications that enable computers and other electronic devices to convert written text into natural-sounding and easily comprehensible speech. SVOX's focus on embedded speech allows for specifically optimized solutions, and its software architecture provides customers with a speech engine that can be easily tailored to their technical requirements and market needs.

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