



Mobile Services for Citizens

The Office in a Box



A mobile office of citizen services

Citizen Services Get Mobile

In the future, it will be possible to meet mobile citizen consultants in shopping malls, on weekly markets, in hospitals or in residential homes for the elderly. One will be able to let there renew one's passport, to declare a new domicile, or to let modify one's wage tax card. For such kind of services Fraunhofer HHI developed, among other things, an "office of citizen services suitcase". This suitcase contains all terminal components required for mobile citizen services.

A Wireless System for Citizen Services

Fraunhofer HHI is researching novel possibilities for offering citizen services at different and changing locations by exploiting mobile/wireless networks and terminals.

In particular, HHI has developed together with a software company and two administrative districts of the city of Berlin as pilot users a wireless system that can offer the same services that are available in a stationary office of citizen services.

This system supports the entire work flow, from consultancy through application and payment to the final delivery of (hard) documents to the citizen. By means of the system, also sensitive personal data can be transferred via a wireless interface (GPRS, WLAN, UMTS). Hence, special emphasis is put on a secure connection (VPN based on IPsec).

Mobile offices of citizen services will be present in residential homes for the elderly, in hospitals, in shopping malls, at weekly markets, etc. They will offer a new quality of public service by "taking the office/service to the citizen".

A field/pilot trial has started in two hospitals and a neighborhood center in Berlin. Within the framework of that trial, an „office for citizen services suitcase“, developed at Fraunhofer HHI, is used and tested, which contains all components required for mobile citizen services (notebook computer, printer, chipcard reader, payment terminal, network interface, etc.) in an ergonomically sound arrangement.



A prototype of a "mobile office for citizen services suitcase"

Preliminary test results (based on approx. 150 test subjects) indicate that the service is highly appreciated by the citizens.

In spring 2004, the field trial will be broadened to more test sites (approx. eight) and a more detailed data collection will be applied.

After the end of the test period, the system will be applicable as an all-purpose system for wireless citizen services. Among other things, its employment is expected as being particularly beneficial in sparsely populated regions (e.g. rural areas) and/or locations with no stationary telecommunications network (e.g. developing countries).

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