



Flashy New Model Grabs Attention

Alert Device for Hearing Impaired Communications -- CSDVRS

When CSDVRS, a communication services provider for the deaf, needed a low-cost device to alert its subscribers to incoming video phone calls, they turned to Egret Technologies for design, development, and manufacturing expertise.

Situation: For the 4-6 million hearing-impaired people in the United States, the everyday need to receive and make phone calls requires special technology and support. Video relay service (VRS), is a video-telecommunications service that provides deaf, hard-of-hearing and speech-impaired people with access to sign-language interpreters who relay the two-way communications. Communication between people with full hearing and those who are hearing-impaired is facilitated through use of a video phone and the VRS provider who furnishes a sign-language interpreter through a call center.

CSDVRS is a leader in providing subscription VRS services and markets a range of video phone units for the hearing-impaired under its "Z Series" brand. One of the first companies to embrace this industry, CSDVRS offers its subscribers several full-feature videophones, smartphone applications and VRS services in English and Spanish.

A challenge when using commercial video phones for VRS is alerting a hearing-impaired person to an incoming call. While many video phone designs include a display and sound capability, for the person who has limited or no hearing, this is insufficient catch their attention

unless they happen to glance at their video phone screen as a call comes in. The result: many calls go unnoticed and unanswered.



Solution: Egret Technologies set to work on innovative designs for a low-cost flasher unit that would appeal to CSDVRS' subscribers, help deliver more call connects resulting in more subscriber minutes, and complement the company's Z Series video phones. Within a few short weeks, a prototype was delivered with many innovative features that impressed CSDVRS product development and senior management:

- A large curved top-mounted lens with dual-side LED brightness made it easy for the

flashing alert of an incoming call to be noticed from longer distances or across a room. This would increase inbound call acceptance.

- The familiar size and shape (similar to a desktop computer speaker) and the lower base weighting construction, helped reinforce the flasher unit as a convenient, high-quality and durable accessory.
- A visible on/off power indicator
- The function of the headphone socket on the Z Series video phones was modified for a software upgrade to process signals by emitting light (bright, quick-flash) in addition to sound (timed, ring tone). This change provided full compatibility within the designated Z Series models.
- The attractive packaging of the new flasher unit enhanced a seamless family look and feel to the Z-Series brand of video phone designs.

Upon seeing the proposed design and specifications for the new flasher unit, Lydia Runnels, the VP of Product Development commented, "Egret Technologies has been an absolute pleasure to work with. You've given us

a breakthrough design to improve communication accessibility for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities. Your work has delivered a practical, low-cost approach to a very precise set of needs. With this new flasher unit, we can improve service and subscriber loyalty at the same time."

With a successful prototype defined, Egret Technologies was requested to complete the entire project through fulfillment. This included arranging for top-quality offshore manufacturing, defining and monitoring test and quality assurance specifications, and coordinating the delivery of thousands of packaged flasher units on behalf of CSDVRS. Egret Technologies completed this entire project – design, prototype, manufacturing, and delivery, in less than six months.

"Turning Innovation into Profit" Results:

CSDVRS surpassed all of its development goals -
- improved functionality, increased subscriber service, and a strengthened product line with the low-cost flasher unit accessory developed by Egret Technologies.

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