

Procurement of Wayfinding: A Comprehensive Guide for Decision-Makers

Introduction

The rise of digital wayfinding solutions is transforming how we navigate public spaces, making them more accessible and user-friendly. However, not all solutions are created equal. This white paper aims to guide you through important considerations such as the Wayfindr Open Standard, user accessibility, language support, privacy, device compatibility, and security. In doing so, we offer a roadmap for decision-makers to select a solution that best serves their needs and those of the community.

Wayfindr Open Standard: A Seal of Approval

The International Telecommunications Union's approval of the Wayfindr Open Standard as ITU-T F.921 sets the gold standard in wayfinding solutions. Any technology you procure should comply with these internationally recognized guidelines. This ensures that you are implementing a system that has been rigorously tested and approved for universal application.

No "Disability Taxes": Free to the End User

Accessibility shouldn't come with an additional financial burden. Ensure that your chosen wayfinding solution is completely free to the end users, both within the facility and beyond. By removing "disability taxes", you create an inclusive environment that respects the dignity and independence of all individuals.

Language Inclusivity

A wayfinding solution that supports multiple languages is an ethical imperative. A multi-language interface means that you can serve a diverse community effectively, thus widening the scope and utility of your services.

Security First

Separate the wayfinding system from the building's existing systems to ensure a high standard of security. An isolated system is less vulnerable to potential cyber-attacks and ensures the integrity and reliability of the wayfinding service.

Protecting User Privacy

Prioritize end-user privacy and anonymity to build trust and encourage widespread adoption. A transparent data policy will assure users that their personal information remains secure and confidential.

Cross-Platform and Device Compatibility

Your chosen solution should be available on both iOS and Android and be compatible with Braille screen devices for the deaf-blind community. A truly inclusive system embraces all kinds of devices and platforms, ensuring that no one is left out.

Low-Maintenance and User Control: A Sustainable Approach

Opt for a system requiring minimal upkeep and that allows for in-house control over audio descriptions. Being able to make quick changes to the system without relying on the vendor gives you more flexibility and assures that the system remains up-to-date.

Resilience: Independence from WiFi, Cellular, and Electrical Grids

Choose a system that remains functional in airplane mode, ensuring uninterrupted accessibility in various scenarios. This resilience ensures that users have reliable access to the system, even in emergencies or during service outages.

Understanding Navigation vs. Orientation

While 'navigation' often gets the spotlight for helping people get from point A to B, 'orientation' plays an equally vital role. Orientation allows users to understand their current location and what's around them, enriching their experience and autonomy. A well-rounded wayfinding solution should offer both, with a strong focus on empowering users through orientation.

The Cost Factor: Subscription vs. One-Time Fee

The payment model you choose has long-term implications. A subscription model holds the vendor accountable, as they have to continuously prove their value. Opting for a long-term subscription usually reduces the annual cost and signals stability to the end users. This ensures a committed relationship between you and the vendor and fosters continuous improvement and updates.

Conclusion

Procurement is not just a financial decision; it's a commitment to accessibility, inclusivity, and security. By considering globally accepted standards, user costs, privacy, device compatibility, maintenance, utility independence, the nuances of orientation, and the advantages of subscription pricing, you create an environment that welcomes everyone. Make a wise procurement choice and open your doors to a more inclusive and accessible world. This is not just good practice; it's good business.

Procurement Checklist: Your Quick Evaluation Guide

Wayfindr Open Standard Compliance

- Is the solution in line with ITU-T F.921?

Free to End Users

- Does the solution come at no additional cost to the user?

Multi-Language Support

- Is the interface available in multiple languages?

Security Measures

- Is the system separate from the building's existing infrastructure for enhanced security?

User Privacy

- Does the solution have a transparent data policy that ensures user privacy?

Device Compatibility

- Is it compatible with iOS, Android, and Braille screen devices?

Low Maintenance

- Does the system allow for easy in-house updates and minimal upkeep?

Operational Resilience

- Can the system function without WiFi, cellular reception, or electricity?

Orientation Features

- Does the solution offer both navigation and orientation capabilities?

Payment Model

- Does the vendor offer a subscription model for sustained quality and service?