

Proposal for Futel phone installations

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Objective

Futel will provide free, open-access telephone service for use by community members, along with access to interactive features and community participation in creating new audio content.

Motivation

Futel works with individuals and community groups to install telephones and telephone booths with free public access. Futel phones offer the user local calls and access to a variety of community resources. Through a pushbutton menu, our phones also offer the possibility of interacting with operators or listening to creative audio such as podcasts and interactive art. Supported by grants and donations, our goal is to combine public service with creativity.

Description

Futel can install one to three telephones at each site, giving the community a range of options. For example, we could install any combination of

- A desk phone under administrative control, perhaps kept by a gatekeeper and used for meetings or lent to residents
- A payphone in a public or semipublic location, for resident or public use, protected with an access code or shut down at night
- A payphone in a public location, providing unrestricted access to residents and the public

Futel is committed to working with each community to serve their specific needs. Each phone will provide free domestic calls and emergency service. Additionally, an audio menu customized for the location and phone type can be accessed by the user, providing a directory of social services along with other creative options or interactions. Services can be enabled or disabled by administration.

Community Engagement

Futel phones provide the opportunity for further creative engagement with community members. We will work with you to design and facilitate resident participation, at a level which fits your community's goals.

These interactions could include:

- Contributions to Village Coalition themed call-in shows recorded through the phone's pushbutton menu
- Gathering material for a podcast, such as interviews, using loaned recording equipment, to be edited with Futel producers
- Workshops facilitated by Futel artists to create and edit audio content
- The contribution of writing and artwork to *Party Line*, our annual zine

All content would be made freely available from any Futel phone, and on the internet, with sites and contributors also being granted ownership rights. Pending grant acceptance, contributors would receive a small stipend.

Logistics

Futel phones and service will be provided for one year free of charge, with the possibility of renegotiating the service at the end of that time. Damaged equipment will be repaired or replaced by Futel. All hardware remains the property of Futel and must be returned at the end of service.

Low power phones may be available in some locations, others will require household current peaking at 12 watts while in use.

Network provisioning may be available in some locations, others will require wired or wireless internet connectivity peaking at 115 KBPS while in use.

References

For more information, see our website:

<http://futel.net>

This OPB article describes the Futel phone at Right 2 Dream Too, and a Futel phone at a sidewalk location:

<http://www.opb.org/news/article/old-hardware-a-new-twist-the-no-pay-phone/>

This Oregonian article describes a Futel phone at a sidewalk location:

http://www.oregonlive.com/multimedia/index.ssf/2015/04/futels_free_phone_service_give.html/