

## Rosetta Stone: Changing the Way the World Learns Language

Bryan Pellom and Kadri Hacioglu

Rosetta Stone, Inc.

Rosetta Stone provides interactive solutions that are acclaimed for the speed and power with which they unlock the natural language-learning ability in everyone. Available in more than 30 languages, Rosetta Stone language-learning solutions are used by schools, organizations and millions of individuals in over 150 countries throughout the world. The company was founded in 1992 on the core beliefs that learning a language should be natural and instinctive and that interactive technology can replicate and activate the immersion method powerfully for learners of any age.

In this talk we provide an inside look into Rosetta Stone focusing on the transformation of the company from its inception in 1992 to its more recent public offering in 2008 and beyond. After giving a video-tour of the business, we then provide a deep dive on its latest TOTALe language learning solution, which is founded on the core principle of language learning without the use of translation. TOTALe immerses language learners using a software-based course that emphasizes reading, writing and speaking skills. In addition to incorporating speech-recognition technology, our solution provides connections to live human coaches that help students review and master course materials. Interactive social games and mobile devices for language learning are discussed as recent game-changers for the field. Finally, the talk provides a unique opportunity to gain insight into the roles of linguists within the company, as well as how technology is viewed and leveraged by one of the most successful language-learning solutions on the market today.

### About the Speakers:

**Bryan Pellom** has been an active researcher in the speech technology field for over 15 years. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Duke University (Durham, NC) in 1996 and 1998 respectively. He joined the University of Colorado's Center for Spoken Language Research (CSLR) in 1999. While at CU, his research focused on large vocabulary multilingual speech recognition, spoken dialog systems, and interactive speech technologies for children. In 2002 he was the technical chair of the International Conference on Spoken Language Processing (ICSLP) and in 2004 he was a visiting Fulbright lecturer at the Helsinki University of Technology (Espoo, Finland). Dr. Pellom is the author of over 50 publications in the speech technology field and co-inventor of SONIC, a state-of-the-art large vocabulary speech-recognition platform. In 2006 he co-founded the Boulder, Colorado R&D office of Rosetta Stone, where he currently serves as Vice President of Speech Development.

**Kadri Hacıoglu** received his Ph.D. degree in electrical and electronic engineering from the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, in 1990. After his military service, in 1992, he joined the faculty of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU), Magosa, North Cyprus, as an Assistant Professor, and became an Associate Professor in 1997. From 1998 to 2000, he was a Visiting Professor in the Department of Computer Science (CS), University of Colorado (CU), Boulder. Later, he joined the Center for Spoken Language Research (CSLR) at CU. His research interests were speech recognition, information extraction, semantic parsing and machine learning for Natural Language Processing (NLP). At CSLR, Dr. Hacıoglu co-developed the SONIC speech recognition engine and several NLP tools for text processing. While he was at CSLR, he co-founded Audiolocity Inc., in 2005, and took its Chief Technology Officer role, focusing on the development of a platform for efficient and effective indexing, searching and browsing of audio data using speech recognition and NLP technologies. In April 2006, he joined Rosetta Stone, where he currently serves as Vice President of Speech Research.