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## **Online Students Say Listening Equals Learning**

*NextUp.com Finds Listening via Text-to-Speech is a Great Way to Learn*

CLEMMONS, NC – Text-to-Speech (TTS) software leader **NextUp.com**

([www.NextUp.com](http://www.NextUp.com)) has released its **Customer Survey**, which focused on users who utilize its text-to-speech software *TextAloud*<sup>™</sup> for online learning purposes.

The **2005 TextAloud Online Learning Customer Survey** was conducted over a two-week period in May 2005, and turns a spotlight on one of today's fastest-growing phenomena – online, or remote, learning. Using the power of voice synthesis to “speak aloud” documents, web pages, e-mail and more, *TextAloud* allows its users to convert text seamlessly into spoken audio for easy listening, study, and comprehension. Thanks to *TextAloud*, users can not only learn remotely on their PC, far from any brick-and-mortar school – but they can now carry those lessons with them. *TextAloud* saves to MP3/Windows Media files for easy playback on portables like the iPod®, Rio®, iRiver®, PocketPC®, and dozens more, for learning and enhanced study wherever they may go. With nearly 95% of survey respondents using *TextAloud* as a vital part of their study routines, the Online Survey makes a powerful case for text-to-speech software as a valuable learning tool.

Previous NextUp customer feedback showed that *TextAloud* users included a large number of people who were pursuing their studies via online learning institutions. NextUp's new survey is designed to learn more about how *TextAloud* is helping its users get more out of their educational goals and pursuits.

“Online Learning takes learning out of the classroom: *TextAloud* takes it out into the world,” comments **Ken White**, CEO of NextUp.com. “*TextAloud* proves to be the perfect accompaniment to the freedom and flexibility of online learning.”

## 2005 Survey Results at a Glance

NextUp’s survey of *TextAloud* customers who utilize the product for online learning covered a wide array of learning situations and subjects, with user answers proving surprisingly diverse when it came to ages, degrees, areas of interest, and more.

The Survey results showed:

- **Online Learning is Truly for All Ages** – The online world is often considered to be the territory of the very young – yet the vast majority of *TextAloud* users in an online learning setting are 36 and older (at 83%)! 39% of respondents were age 46-55, while a respectable 8% were 56 or older.
- **University of Phoenix Leading Online Learning Provider** – The leader in surveyed online learning providers was University of Phoenix by a significant margin (nearly 60%) – followed by a rich assortment of learning institutions from all across America – and beyond.
- **Text-to-Speech is an Essential Part of Study** – A whopping 94% responded that *TextAloud* is an essential study tool, helping users to read and retain knowledge no matter where they are. Meanwhile, **Reading** was the overwhelming choice of over 50% of respondents when asked in what aspect of their studies *TextAloud* proved most helpful.
- **Convenience and Flexibility** – The majority of respondents chose online learning for its convenience (50%), with (in a similar vein) many respondents holding down full-time work schedules (22%). Learning remotely is for many the only opportunity to learn and work at the same time.
- **Brave New World (27% New to Online Learning)** – A surprisingly large percentage of the respondents to our survey were new to online learning, with over 27 percent enrolled for less than one year.

- **Classloads** – Nearly 40% of survey respondents are enrolled at significant levels, taking between 6-15 hours of study per week. Further, about 40% more take part in *more* than 16 hours of formal classwork per week.
- **Education Levels in Survey Respondents** – Over 50% of *TextAloud*'s Online Learning Survey respondents report having achieved a Master's Degree level of education or higher.
- **Area of Emphasis** – Not surprisingly, the majority of respondents to the online learning survey are using *TextAloud* to pursue educations in **Computer/IT** (27%), with **Education** at 19%, and Business and Science rounding out the top choices at 11% apiece.

The results speak loud and clear: Text-to-Speech Programs like *TextAloud* can be an essential part of the online learning process – and may significantly contribute to productivity, knowledge retention, and success in the remote classroom.

### About *TextAloud* 2.0

Recently nominated for a **2005 Shareware Industry Association Award**, *TextAloud* is a full-featured Text-to-Speech tool offering direct support for Word, PDF and HTML formats, as well as advanced pronunciation tools, an Internet Explorer Plug-In for easy listening of favorite web pages – and more.

Hailed by critics and users alike, *TextAloud* is priced at just \$29.95, and is compatible with systems using Windows® 98, NT, 2000 and XP. The program is available for fast, safe and secure purchase via <http://www.NextUp.com>. NextUp.com also offers *TextAloud* with optional premium voices from **AT&T Natural Voices™**, **NeoSpeech** and **Cepstral®** for the most natural-sounding computer speech anywhere.

### About NextUp.com

**NextUp.com**, a division of NextUp Technologies, LLC, provides award-winning Text-to-Speech software for consumers, business customers, educators, and those with visual impairment or learning disabilities.

In addition to *TextAloud*, NextUp.com markets other innovative Windows software designed to save time and deliver vital information. *NewsAloud*<sup>™</sup> is a talking personal “news agent” that finds the stories users want, and then reads them aloud or to portable MP3 files. *WeatherAloud*<sup>™</sup> is a weather application that lets users select and listen to personalized weather forecasts, while *StocksAloud*<sup>™</sup> reads stock updates and related news headlines aloud for specific companies of interest. Most recently, NextUp also released *NextUp Talker 1.0*, an easy and affordable program that allows people who have lost their voices to use the latest in high-quality computer voices to communicate with others.

**Note to Editors:**

Evaluation copies of *TextAloud 2.0* are currently available upon request. To receive a review copy, or for more information on NextUp.com or *TextAloud*, please contact **Rick Ellis** at [rdellis@nextup.com](mailto:rdellis@nextup.com). Meanwhile, for images, logos, box shots, or other information or artwork on *TextAloud 2.0*, please contact publicist Angela Mitchell at **(904) 982-8043** or [admitchell@nextup.com](mailto:admitchell@nextup.com).

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