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TextAloud Helps Scrabble Champ Spell V-I-C-T-O-R-Y
High-Quality Voices and Superb Text to Speech Enrich Reading and Listening

CLEMMONS, NC and OXFORD, ENGLAND – **David S.** is a retired U.K. computer programmer and successful tournament Scrabble™ player who has recently discovered Text to Speech program *TextAloud* as one of the secrets to his success. An easy and budget-friendly software program from **NextUp Technologies (www.NextUp.com)**, *TextAloud* converts text into spoken audio files for listening on a PC or portable device. The program has proven popular with a rich and varied assortment of users worldwide – users like David, who found their own unique value in the program.

David, a United Kingdom user who lives not far from Oxford, likes to prepare for matches by listening to words and Scrabble practices via sound files, while he's out walking or driving in the car. Now, thanks to *TextAloud*, he can create those sound files more easily than ever, and using his favorite voice (AT&T Natural Voices™ "Audrey," complete with familiar British accent).

The standout aspects of *TextAloud* for David include the program's quick and easy interface, its ability to import text by cut-and-paste as well as by file, and (most of all) its ability to direct the text's spoken output to a sound file for downloading to an MP3 player. "My favorite aspect by far is the ease and speed with which one can generate MP3 files." He adds, "I also really like the fact that *TextAloud*'s simple interface is supported by a powerful pronunciation editor that lets you 'tune' your chosen voice or voices for greater accuracy." He also appreciates the way the program allows users the option of having the words literally spelled out for them where necessary. "It's an important feature in my case, where the text I want to record for Scrabble purposes tends to include a lot of words that are sometimes very weird, indeed."

Before discovering *TextAloud*, David had long been in the habit of improvising his own Scrabble practice sound files by recording to cassette and then converting from cassette to MP3

file on the computer. "One day I thought, 'Wouldn't it be nice if there was a decent not-too-expensive bit of software that let one create MP3 files very quickly from an imported text file of the kind that I could easily generate from my Scrabble database, such that I could generate an endless variety of supplementary files?'" he commented. "After all, the quality wouldn't have to be perfect as long as the words were clear and reasonably recognizable."

David was pessimistic about his chance for success, but after a quick online search, he discovered *TextAloud*, and was pleasantly surprised at the level of accuracy available from the program on everyday vocabulary. "This, coupled with the potential for dealing with quite way-out vocabulary with a little effort on the Pronunciation Editor front, quickly made me see the possibilities," adds David. "I took it from there, receiving extremely prompt and helpful support from the team at NextUp when I had a few queries at the start on how to achieve certain effects with Pronunciation Editor."

He's now a faithful user, and continues to do well in tournaments. "*TextAloud* certainly helps me stay in practice!" he says. "My own usage needs typically involve fairly short single files, however my requirements, though simple, are also very demanding due to the nature of the vocabulary, and I make heavy use of some of the more sophisticated things you can do with Pronunciation Editor."

David uses *TextAloud* on his desktop PC and then transfers them to his MP3 player, a Nomad Zen. He chose his AT&T Natural Voices™ premium voice "Audrey" after sampling the assortment of voices available for preview at the NextUp website. "I tried quite a few before I thought, 'That's the one'," he adds.

"The way I use *TextAloud* is somewhat specialized and requires a fair amount of computer literacy, but of course it is the strength of a software package that it can serve many types of requirements and appeal to many different types of users. I wholly recommend the software for those seeking an enjoyable and realistic Text to Speech experience."

About *TextAloud*

TextAloud has been featured in *The New York Times, PC Magazine, Writer's Digest*, on CNN, 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, XP and Vista. The program is available for fast, safe and secure purchase via **http://www.NextUp.com**.

About NextUp.com

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

In addition to *TextAloud*, NextUp.com markets other innovative Windows software designed to save time and deliver vital information. *NewsAloud*™ is a talking personal "news agent" that finds the stories users want, and then reads them aloud or to portable audio files. *WeatherAloud*™ is a weather application that lets users select and listen to personalized weather forecasts, while *StocksAloud*™ reads stock updates and related news headlines aloud for specific companies of interest. NextUp *Talker* is 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. Most recently, NextUp introduced a new text reader, *AbleReader*, available with the AT&T Natural Voices™ for use on Mac computers. Information on *AbleReader* is available at **http://www.AbleReader.com**.

NextUp.com also offers *TextAloud* with optional premium voices from **AT&T Natural Voices™, NeoSpeech®, Nuance®, Acapela®** and **Cepstral®** for the most natural-sounding computer speech anywhere. Available languages include U.S. English, U.K. English, Indian Accent English, Scottish Accent English, French, Canadian French, Latin American Spanish, Castilian (European) Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese Chinese, Korean, Japanese, German, Italian, Dutch, Belgian Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish, and Arabic.

Evaluation copies of *TextAloud* are available upon request. For more information on NextUp.com or *TextAloud*, or for other case studies involving users ranging from firefighters, doctors and lawyers, to truck drivers, musicians, and more, please contact publicist Angela Mitchell at **(904) 982-8043** or via *Admitchell@Nextup.com*.

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