

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – DECEMBER 5, 2007

Contact: Angela Mitchell
admitchell@nextup.com or (904) 982-8043



2668 Lewisville-Clemmons Road
Clemmons, NC 27012

TextAloud Helps Engineer Judge Risk and Prevent Disaster ***Blind Engineer Finds Text to Speech Software Helps with Work and Leisure***

CLEMMONS, NC and ARLINGTON, VA -- Civil Engineer **Russ Rangos** works with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a variety of roles relating to water resources, risk communication and flood risk management. With dual BS and BA degrees, as well as an MS in Engineering and Project Planning, Rangos is highly skilled at analyzing scenarios and projecting their potential outcomes, and his work in water resource-related activities has never been more crucial in today's Post-Katrina world. His total physical blindness doesn't stop him from expertly envisioning a wide range of potential scenarios and technologies in his work, and to help get the job done, Rangos turns to leading Text to Speech program **TextAloud** from NextUp Technologies (<http://www.Nextup.com>).

Thanks to *TextAloud*, Rangos can hear reports, stay up to date on the latest research, and even enjoy his extensive book and music libraries during his leisure time. Priced starting at just \$29.95, *TextAloud* installs in seconds, and converts text into spoken audio files for listening on a PC, Laptop, or other portable device.

"Being blind, it's important to have a sound source with clear voices, as they're far easier to listen to over long periods of time," says Rangos. "It's highly valuable for lengthier studies or reports for work, and equally valuable when I'm reading for pure entertainment purposes. I am an avid reader, and sometimes the books I want to 'read' are not available in audio. Like many blind users, I do have a screen reading program as well, but *TextAloud*'s true, natural-sounding voices are more fun, especially for long listening sessions."

Rangos first began using *TextAloud* on an occasional, casual basis – primarily as a fun secondary resource and backup for his screen reader, "But after a while, I realized the wider potential of its use, and began saving large files in MP3 and WAV, discovering that it was a great way to archive e-text reports and books," he adds. This way he could also listen to research or reports in comfort while traveling, and could listen to his favorite works of fiction read in a dynamic and realistic way during his leisure time, too.

Along with being an avid reader, Rangos is also a music buff, and enjoys a wide mix of genres and styles, constantly ripping and burning new mixes for his own enjoyment. Even here, he has found uses for *TextAloud*. "I've been having a ball using the different voices to 'introduce' music and to create talking titles for my extensive collection," he comments. "It's really cool to combine a French accent with an English text to introduce, say, a Chopin piece. Or as another instance, I'll use an Italian voice to introduce a movement of one of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. The accents are pretty authentic, and depending on the musical style, I can add echo effects or voice pitch changes for listening diversity!"

Rangos uses *TextAloud* on his Bookport, but his primary use is burning music and speech to CD for use at home or during travel. "In both work and play, *TextAloud* has really enriched my life."

About *TextAloud*

Highly useful for students, scientists, writers, business people, students and people from all walks of life -- *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.

All companies and products referenced in this press release are the trademarks of their respective owners.

###

Media Contacts:

Angela Mitchell
Paranoid PR (for NextUp.com)
(904) 982-8043
Admitchell@Nextup.com