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Australian Entrepreneur Ends Headaches with *TextAloud* *With Text to Speech, Businessman Gains Retention, Productivity and Profits*

CLEMMONS, NC and NEWCASTLE, AUSTRALIA -- As a successful 42-year-old Australian builder, pilot, and entrepreneur, **Alistair Mills** has accomplished remarkable things – in spite of the visual impairment that led to lifelong difficulties in reading. However, with a successful (and correctable) diagnosis of Dual Astigmatism at age 21, and Text to Speech tools like the *TextAloud* software program from **NextUp Technologies** (<http://www.Nextup.com>), Mills quickly found an enjoyable and alternative way to listen to his reading material, and to do so without the eyestrain, eye fatigue and headaches he experienced by reading visually.

“I was dismissed as a poor reader and student until the age of 21,” comments Mills, “when a doctor discovered that I suffered from Dual Astigmatism and Dual Misalignment. I was physically unable to read, because my eyes were not able to track words sequentially.” Instead, his eyes ‘machine-gunned’ parts of words, guessing at most of them yet only getting about three letters of any one word at a time. “My condition also meant that, if I tried to read for any length of time, I would suffer excruciating headaches and extreme eye fatigue,” he adds. Luckily, *TextAloud* provided Mills with the perfect solution: Mills could now read for study, entertainment, and more, by listening to text converted into spoken audio (for use on a PC, laptop or other mobile device) and by an easy PC program that installed in minutes.

Mills immediately began using *TextAloud* for his business studies and courses. “When taking a course, I would take my laptop computer with me, and whenever possible, would get the course syllabus on disk. Using *TextAloud*, my grades went from barely passing to average 95%!” Soon, Mills was using the program for all his reading. “Professionally, I need to read

copious amounts of highly technical text, so for the last five years now, I'll buy two copies of the book I want to read, cut the spine off one, and scan it into my computer. I process it with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software, save it as a PDF, import it into Microsoft *Word*, then drop it into *TextAloud*. Working this way allows me to read whole books in just a couple of sessions." On one recent evening, using *TextAloud*, Mills was able to listen to over sixty (60) pages of highly complex information in a single session, and he has had many sessions where he was routinely able to listen to as many as 240 pages, as well. "My favorite aspects of *TextAloud* include the user friendliness of its software interface, the program's flexibility, as well as its easy compatibility with other software outputs," he comments. Mills uses the program with Acapela® Premium Voices, and especially enjoys any of the voices in 22 kHz.

Since he began using *TextAloud*, Mills has found "a significant increase not only in comprehension and productivity, but also in the quality of my concentration." He adds, "It's easy to enter what I call 'The Zone' where you are powering easily through work for significant periods of time. I love getting that feeling of higher concentration with no noticeable increase in effort when I'm using *TextAloud*, and you're in that zone before you even realize it." Mills also likes the fact that, in order to utilize the software efficiently, "you have to address and file your documents accurately, which promotes good 'housekeeping' on your PC." As the head of his own Investment Business, on any given day there are always an unlimited number of reports Mills may need to read, as well as newspaper financial sections, industry articles, and more.

"I never get tired of using *TextAloud*," says Mills, "and it gives me a blast when I see how much work I've been able to achieve. My reading study is now headache-free. I enjoy reading by listening now. My productivity is high. And my business and my profitability are all increasing, and that's partly due to the increased capacity I've uncovered via *TextAloud*."

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 from \$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.

NextUp.com also offers *TextAloud* with optional premium voices from **Acapela**®, for the most natural-sounding computer speech anywhere. Available languages include U.S. English, U.K. English, Arabic, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Spanish and Swedish. For more information on Acapela Group, visit <http://www.acapela-group.com>.

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 students, to entrepreneurs, firefighters, doctors, lawyers, truck drivers, musicians, and more, please contact publicist Angela Mitchell at **(904) 982-8043** or via Admitchell@Nextup.com.

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