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Text to Speech Software Wins the Race for Motorsports Editor

*TextAloud Turns Visual Disability into Easy Listening for
Toronto Journalist*

TORONTO, ONTARIO – As the editor of a popular Canadian motorsports website, **Kate Shaw**'s job often requires meticulous attention to visual detail, as well as long hours reviewing industry racing articles, news, and more. With impaired vision and an inability to focus in her left eye (the result of sudden dry macular degeneration), reading or long hours of staring at a computer screen are no longer possible for her. “It really puts a strain on my right eye, and after two hours of computer work that eye too can become woozy and does not focus properly,” she comments. To assist her in meeting deadlines and handling heavy reading loads, her tech-savvy sister recommended that Kate begin to utilize Text to Speech (TTS) software **TextAloud** instead.

A leader in Text to Speech PC software from **NextUp Technologies** (<http://www.NextUp.com>), *TextAloud* is priced starting at just \$29.95 and allows users to simply and easily export their text from books, websites, or e-mail, and to then listen to their reading aloud via computer, iPod, or other portable audio device.

“We’re always privileged to hear from users like Kate, as they highlight the versatility and popularity of *TextAloud* with the visually impaired,” comments **Rick Ellis**, President of NextUp Technologies. “There are a variety of listening technologies available, but so many of them are prohibitively expensive, and worse, offer poor voice quality and selection,” he adds. “*TextAloud* provides many users with visual disabilities an affordable, alternative PC software solution.”

The software's effect on Kate's work and routine was immediate, allowing her to comfortably listen to reading material aloud, without the fatigue, headaches and eyestrain she otherwise endured through visual reading. "I had tried other Text to Speech software titles and found them overly complicated, with dozens of features I would never use," she comments. "But *TextAloud* was easy, straightforward, and simple to install and set up."

The program quickly became a mainstay, providing daily and ongoing support that Kate found especially helpful in her review of massive amounts of information as a popular news source. "During a racing weekend, I receive between 50 to 100 team releases and stories from reporters who work for me, that have to be reviewed both for stuff used in my own writing, as well as for editing and corrections," she says. "In addition, some writers may rely a little too heavily on spell-check so *TextAloud* is also valuable at finding incorrect words as well." By using *TextAloud*, even with a daunting number of high-octane stories and releases to review, Kate is able to do so in a way that saves her from her previous and all too constant eyestrain.

For a premium voice, Kate chose the AT&T Natural Voices™ 'Mike,' and the voice continues to be her choice on an ongoing basis. "It's so nice that he doesn't sound like a robot," she comments. She had also thoroughly enjoyed using one of the British-accented Premium Voices for awhile, referring to it humorously as 'the butler voice.' She adds, "It made me feel like Bertie Wooster!"

For Kate, *TextAloud* is not just a regular source of assistance in writing, editing, or news evaluation, but also on such common aspects of daily computer life as e-mail and web surfing. "I have my computer set up so that when I open an e-mail, it copies to the *TextAloud* reader and 'Mike' reads it to me," she comments. She subscribes to a Daily Gospel mailing, which *TextAloud* reads to her in the morning while she's making her coffee. "I also rely on it to read long, chatty e-mails from my family and friends, who have just about given up writing letters," she adds.

Kate runs *TextAloud* easily on a Dell laptop, and has also made extensive use of the NextUp team's support staff as she became familiar with the software. "They are easy to reach and have always solved my problem promptly -- without the seemingly obligatory 'GeekSpeak,'" she comments. "In today's world, this is very rare, and when one depends on a product like this, its value is far above rubies."

TextAloud has become an integral part of Kate's work and routine. "It's made it possible for me to do my work the day it comes in, and to keep working much longer than I would be able to work if I had to read all the material visually," she adds. "It's saved my eyesight and my time."

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>.

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, Arabic, Cantonese Chinese, Mandarin Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Belgian Dutch, Faroese, Finnish, French, Canadian French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese, Russian, Castilian (European) Spanish, Latin American Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Swedish, and Turkish.

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. 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.

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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