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Visually Disabled Chicago Student Chooses Text to Speech over Pricy Screen Readers

TextAloud Text to Speech Provides an Affordable Alternative to Costly and Cumbersome Screen Readers

CLEMMONS, NC – As a flourishing media and theatre student at a local Chicago university, Robert Hansen’s visual disability doesn’t keep him from maintaining a full and demanding academic schedule. Robert’s most valuable assistive tool isn’t a specialized or expensive gadget, however, but an affordable Text to Speech (TTS) program: ***TextAloud***, from **NextUp Technologies** (<http://www.NextUp.com>).

TextAloud has proven popular with a growing audience of users like Robert -- people overcoming a visual impairment who found the program after seeking less expensive alternatives to screen readers and other high-end assistive technology programs. *TextAloud*, on the other hand, is easy to use PC software that accomplishes many of the same tasks, converting visual text into natural-sounding spoken audio at a price starting at just \$29.95. “*TextAloud* gave me an inexpensive alternative to the costly assistive products already on the market,” comments Robert. “One minor charge of my credit card, and boom, it was mine, bought and paid for.”

Using *TextAloud*, Robert, a returning student going for his undergraduate degree, was quickly able to listen to his studies, and with almost no learning curve to the experience. “*TextAloud* was simple to learn,” he comments. “It launched in a timely manner, the buttons were easy to use, and everything about the software was self-explanatory.”

Robert was soon using *TextAloud* to read an ever-expanding assortment of diverse reading material including eBooks, scanned textbooks and study materials, online newspapers and websites, e-mails, and a variety of documents and formats -- even those formatted for Adobe Acrobat Reader. With *TextAloud*, Robert could listen to a variety of material for his studies, and take that information anywhere he went, as needed, on any popular remote portable audio device or MP3 player. "I've been exclusively using *TextAloud* on a daily basis for all my reading, as well as to keep on top of current events online," he adds.

TextAloud offers a number of features, which prove especially useful to visually disabled users. Its handy Clipboard reader function quickly became a favorite of Robert's. "I like being able to simply copy and paste text into *TextAloud*, and the program automatically starts reading it aloud to me," he says. "I also enjoy the 'read from cursor' option, which allows me to pick up from where I left off. It's also great that all I have to do is open a file, and *TextAloud* will start reading it to me automatically."

"With *TextAloud*, I've gained a lot of confidence in Text to Speech products," states Robert. "They are honestly more stable than the costlier alternative products for the visually disabled, which are often not current or up to date on new web scripting. So for those visually impaired users with enough sight to be able to see what to highlight or click, *TextAloud* is an excellent alternative to other, more costly screen readers. It offers most of the same features, and allows me to accomplish many of the same tasks, but more efficiently and far more affordably."

"Ultimately, *TextAloud* means I can use a computer confidently, and accomplish tasks in a timely manner," says Robert. "And it means I can do so independently, without having to have people to read to me."

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. *TextAloud* also works seamlessly with iTunes, for easy synching with iPod®, iPhone™, or other iTunes-compatible portable audio players. 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™**, **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 writers, editors, and teachers, to students, 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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