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Battalion Chief, Teacher, and Student Turns to *TextAloud* to Reclaim Lost Hours

*Jacksonville Teacher and Student Makes Use of
Daily Commute Hours and More*

CLEMMONS, NC – To say that Jacksonville's Tom Brown is a wearer of many hats would be an understatement. His job as a Battalion Chief for a local Fire/Rescue Department is stressful and often time-consuming. Now add in a second job as a Lead Instructor for a local Community College teaching Paramedic primary education, as well as a full-time schedule as a Public Administration student at a local St. Augustine college, and it's no wonder that Tom has little time to study, much less to read for pleasure. Then he found ***TextAloud***, the leading Text to Speech software from NextUp.com, and the ease and affordability of the program quickly enabled him to find that missing time to study -- by listening to the material, anywhere he went.

"One of my coworkers suggested *TextAloud* when I was studying for my Chief's promotional exam," comments Tom. "The software enabled me to export my reading to audio files on CD, which allowed me to study almost anywhere -- even while riding the lawn mower!" Text to Speech technology via *TextAloud* made all of Tom's studies productive, giving him back missing minutes by allowing him to study aurally (and to retain the information better and longer than rushing his studies in visual reading). In addition, when he was able to study visually, "the added advantage of reading along gave me the ability to use more than one of my senses and, I believe, reinforced the study material," he adds.

The affordable PC program from the Text to Speech leaders at NextUp, *TextAloud* downloads and installs in minutes, and enables computer users everywhere to easily listen to their favorite reading as natural and enjoyable human-sounding speech. The program offers users more choices than ever for listening to anything from e-mails, to eBooks, on the computer or on the go via an iPod or even audio CD.

TextAloud enabled Tom to export his studies to audio files, which he was then able to put on a CD for listening during his commutes between school and work. He soon became such a fan of the software that he began recommending it to friends at work and in class. "I've introduced the software to several people who now download their text onto their iPods, as well," he adds.

Tom also makes full use of the software's Premium Voices. "The best tip I ever got was to purchase and download the AT&T Natural voices," he comments. "They have the best sound of the add-on voices, and that variety is really important." Tom also uses several of the AT&T Natural voices for emphasis on key points in his lecture notes. "It's sort of like highlighting text," he comments. "When the key points come up, I like to change from a male to female voice -- or vice versa -- to get my attention and note the change in importance of the slide or phrase." He often chooses British voices for such emphasis, as the voices are so different from the American choices that they really serve to get his attention and emphasize points where necessary.

Tom used the software successfully for his promotional exam, and also routinely suggests its use for students who have access to scanners, who can then scan in their textbooks and export that text to speech, to enhance their study time. His chosen methods for listening to *TextAloud* include both his Sony and Toshiba laptops for creation, and on his desktop, Walkman and car CD player for his studies and reading.

The software ultimately benefited him enormously as a student, with over two hours per day of commute time transformed by the software to intensive study time thanks to Text to Speech. "*TextAloud* was a major part of my being tied for the top slot on my promotional list," Tom comments. "Not losing study time while I did necessary chores or drove from place to place gave me a distinct edge over those who did not have Text to Speech capabilities," he adds. He not only went on to introduce the software to friends, coworkers, and students, but even to their parents and other acquaintances. "One of my coworkers has a mother who has bad vision, and I

introduced the software to him when he was studying for a promotional exam," he adds. "He loved the software and downloaded it onto his mother's computer so that she could have the electronic Bible read to her. She was thrilled."

Ultimately, *TextAloud* proved transformative to Tom in both his studies, work and life in general. "This software is very easy to use and become proficient with," he summarizes. "It will make a difference in your ability to use study time wisely and efficiently. Anyone with access to electronic versions of the text they are reading can use this as an addition to their reading almost instantly, getting double the input through both sight and sound. It actually makes daily travel productive."

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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