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## **NextUp.com Text to Speech Software an Attractive Alternative to High-Priced Custom Devices for Voice Communications**

*TextAloud and NextUp Talker are modestly priced software titles offering real voice-communication alternatives to high-priced gadgets and devices costing thousands of dollars (and more)*

CLEMMONS, NC – With health care coverage a hot-button issue in recent weeks, one topic that continues to make headlines is the fact that health insurers are repeatedly willing to cover devices and options that cost patients thousands of dollars, yet those same insurers will not cover the modestly priced, everyday alternative gadgets that are proving far more useful to those battling illnesses or other afflictions day to day. The issue is a familiar one for the software creators at **NextUp Technologies** (<http://www.Nextup.com>), which specializes in Text to Speech software for PC users everywhere. The company's top two software titles *NextUp Talker* and *TextAloud* are bestsellers in part because they have been adopted and championed by those with illnesses or disabilities, and because they are not only affordable solutions (both titles are priced at under \$100), they simply work better than machines or devices that often cost hundreds or thousands of dollars.

"Recent media attention has helped to clearly illustrate what we've been working constantly to promote," comments NextUp President **Rick Ellis**. "The simple truth is that inexpensive software combined with an inexpensive notebook PC can provide a much better solution than dedicated, proprietary devices that cost thousands of dollars yet which can actually do far less. Software solutions like ours are also far more flexible, offer access to dozens of excellent and highly realistic voices, and are inexpensive enough to be a viable option for many people, with or without insurance."

Both *NextUp Talker* and *TextAloud* have become welcome solutions for many with disabilities, as user-friendly PC programs that work easily on Windows computers, and which are able to be used in combination with smaller portable devices like iPods, iPhones, and PDAs. Both are budget-friendly, as well, with *TextAloud* priced from \$29.95, and *NextUp Talker* priced at \$99.95. Most importantly, as with the technologies discussed in the media over the past week, both programs have proven to offer useful solutions for everyday people seeking to overcome their disabilities.

### ***NextUp Talker*** (<http://www.Talkforme.com>)

*NextUp Talker* software has become a popular resource for those suffering voice loss, whether from ALS, cancer, stroke, injury, aphasia, or other conditions. With *NextUp Talker*, users are able to communicate in a clear and human-sounding spoken voice once again, simply by using an ordinary Windows computer, laptop, or Tablet PC. The program installs in minutes, and even offers convenient shortcuts for quickly entering commonly-used sentences and phrases, making quick conversation easy and accessible for anyone.

As discussed in the media over the past week, while there are other custom machines and devices that are 'approved' for this kind of vocal support for patients, they are often prohibitively expensive (with many costing as much as \$8,000), restrictive, clunky, and not nearly as mobile or easy for patients to take anywhere. *NextUp Talker* is meanwhile priced at just \$99.95, and includes two Premium AT&T Natural Voices with purchase -- and it works with almost any laptop or PC.

Vocally impaired users of *NextUp Talker* include:

- **William F.**, an accident survivor who turned to *Talker* to be able to communicate more clearly and easily. (*August, 2009*)
- Cancer survivor **May Rone**, who turned to *NextUp Talker* after researching her best

voice communication options along with her husband Chuck, and who used *NextUp Talker* to maintain a busy and productive life in spite of her voice loss. Chuck and May were even able to record her voice in favorite words and phrases, for use via *NextUp Talker* even after her surgery. (January, 2008)

- ALS sufferer and College Professor **Stephen Smith**, who along with several other ALS sufferers discussed the advantages of *NextUp Talker* as a resource for those suffering the slurring and voice loss caused by the degenerative process of ALS. (October, 2006)

### **TextAloud (<http://www.TextAloud.com>)**

*TextAloud* has similarly become very popular -- in this case, with the visually disabled as a support or even an alternative in some cases (as with *NextUp Talker* versus comparable yet highly expensive vocal devices) to the traditional 'screen readers' available for the blind. Once again, *TextAloud* is a budget-friendly alternative because the voices are more naturalistic, and the software is simply more limber and easy to use -- users can listen to e-mails, PDFs, documents, websites, etc., anywhere they go and in more pleasant and realistic voices. The program has also proven to be highly popular with users suffering from dyslexia, ADD/ADHD, or other learning or reading disabilities. *TextAloud* works with any PC and is priced from just \$29.95.

Visually impaired users of NextUp *TextAloud* include:

- Welsh Educator **Tony Rucinski**, a director for learning and information services at a major Welsh University, and who overcomes his legal blindness with *TextAloud*. (June, 2009)
- Busy media and theatre student **Robert Hansen**, who attends a Chicago university, and who turns to *TextAloud* to help him to maintain a full and demanding academic schedule. (September, 2008)

- Active retiree **Stephen Sprenger**, who turned to *TextAloud* to support his tired eyes and blurred vision. (September, 2008)

### **About TextAloud**

A highly useful PC program 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* can even be listened to on TV, using Tivo's® Home Media Option, and 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>.

In addition to **Nuance**®, NextUp.com also offers *TextAloud* with optional Premium Voices from **AT&T Natural Voices**™, **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, Basque, Catalan, Cantonese Chinese, Mandarin Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Belgian Dutch, Faroese, Finnish, French, Canadian French, German, Greek, Hindi, Icelandic, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese, Russian, Castilian (European) Spanish, Latin American Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Swedish, Taiwanese, and Turkish.

### **About NextUp Talker**

*NextUp Talker* is priced at just \$99.95, and is compatible with Windows® Vista, XP, 98, NT, 2000, or Tablet PCs. The program is instantly accessible for download, evaluation and purchase via <http://www.talkforme.com/>, and includes a free 30-day trial so that users can truly get familiar with using the software as a new part of everyday life. *NextUp Talker* comes with “Mike” and “Crystal,” an excellent pair of male and female Premium Voices from **AT&T**

**Natural Voices™**, or additional Premium Voices are also optionally available from NextUp.com including **Nuance RealSpeak®** and **Acapela®**.

### **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 several other innovative Windows software designed to save time and deliver vital information.

Evaluation copies of *TextAloud* or *NextUp Talker* are available upon request. For more information on NextUp.com, *NextUp Talker* or *TextAloud*, or for a rich assortment of case studies involving users ranging from firefighters and lawyers, to writers, editors, teachers, actors, students, entrepreneurs, doctors, truck drivers, musicians, and more, please contact publicist Angela Mitchell at **(904) 982-8043** or via [Admitchell@Nextup.com](mailto:Admitchell@Nextup.com).

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