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Teacher and Fire Chief Blazes Through Educational Goals with *TextAloud*

*Battalion Chief, instructor and student continues to excel and inspire others, with
the help of TextAloud Text to Speech*

CLEMMONS, NC – Three years ago, Battalion Chief **Tom Brown** turned to **TextAloud** Text to Speech to assist him in his work for the Jacksonville Fire/Rescue Department. The software from **NextUp.com** proved especially invaluable to Tom in his continuing studies, which were challenging to maintain on top of a demanding job as a Battalion Chief and teacher himself. Years later, Tom is still using *TextAloud*, and in more ways than ever.

The popular Text to Speech software program that enables PC users to experience their reading by listening, *TextAloud* provides a useful and ingenious alternative. Priced from just \$29.95, *TextAloud* is state of the art TTS that's easy to use, turning almost any text file format into spoken audio—from websites, articles and e-mails, to eBooks, word processing documents, PDFs, or even (as Tom does) from *PowerPoint* presentations. In just a few mouse clicks, *TextAloud* then seamlessly exports that text into popular audio file formats which can be played via MP3 player, iPhone[®], car stereo, or computer.

Tom originally turned to *TextAloud* while studying for a vital promotional exam in the fire department. *TextAloud* proved invaluable in his studies, allowing him to listen to his materials and absorb them anywhere, even while mowing the lawn! The software ultimately enabled him to not just pass his promotional exam, but to tie for the top spot, and it proved so useful that Tom has continued to work with the software in the years to follow.

Tom recently achieved a major milestone, completing his Bachelor's degree in Public Administration, and *TextAloud*, as with his promotional exam studies, was a key component in his study success. "While pursuing my Bachelor's degree, I would use *TextAloud* to convert notes and *PowerPoint* slides into audio files," Tom explains, and it's a routine he plans to continue in the Fall as he continues his studies in pursuit of a Master's in Public Administration. The software's ability to convert written text into audio files for school and promotional exams helped Tom, as well as many of his classmates and coworkers achieve higher marks and greater success in their studies.

As he has continued to use *TextAloud*, Tom explored new ways to make the software even more productive. He has created a routine in which he chooses the text to export, then previews all of the prospective audio versions before saving the file, in order to catch abbreviations or acronyms. He also continues to enjoy the ability to change voices within projects with ease. "The ability to change voices to emphasize a particular topic remains a very valuable feature," he comments. "This voice change functions as a highlight in the information, causing the listener to perk up and pay particular attention, bringing the proper emphasis to the selected text."

Once he saves the file to audio format, Tom either burns it to CD, or copies for listening on his Phillips portable MP3 player. While he finds the program highly useful for listening on the go, in the gym, and in the car, it has also taught him to value the ability to reinforce study input by listening at the same time as reading visually. "Anyone with access to electronic versions of the text they are reading can use the program in support of their reading," he adds, "getting double the input through both sight and sound."

TextAloud has become an important asset to Tom's friends, coworkers and family as well. One friend who was studying for a Lieutenant's exam began to use *TextAloud* in his studies, and "I know of several others I've introduced to the software who download the text onto iPods, and who have done well on their promotional exams, too," adds Tom. "My wife likes being able to use the optional Spanish voices, meanwhile, to assist her in Spanish class."

TextAloud continues to play a key part in the success of Tom's many roles as a student, Lead Instructor, Battalion Chief, Paramedic Primary Education instructor, and more. "The program has allowed me to use study time which would just not have been available without *TextAloud*."

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 works seamlessly with iTunes®, for easy synchronizing with iPod®, iPhone®, or other iTunes® compatible portable audio players. Best of all, unlike prohibitively priced gadgets or eReaders, *TextAloud* doesn't require special hardware of any kind. The program is available for fast, safe and secure preview and purchase via <http://www.NextUp.com>.

NextUp.com also offers *TextAloud* with optional Premium Voices from **Nuance RealSpeak™**, **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.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 enables people who have lost their voices to use the latest in high-quality computer voices to communicate aloud with others.

Evaluation copies of *TextAloud* are available for the media upon request. For more information on NextUp.com 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.

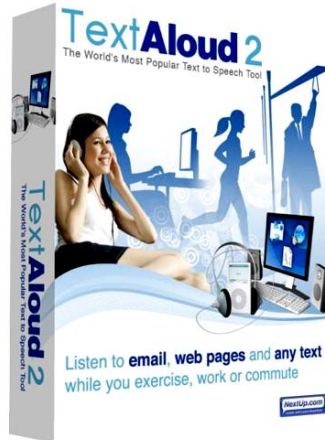
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Photos and Captions, *TextAloud*



Fire Chief Tom Brown continues to use TextAloud to meet his educational goals, and to listen to his reading and studies anywhere he goes.