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***TextAloud* Helps Blind Calgary PC User Enjoy His Newspapers**

Text to Speech software provides access to news and entertainment, with natural-sounding voices

CLEMMONS, NC – Some screen readers for the visually disabled can be limited in their voice qualities and features. Text to Speech programs like *TextAloud* from **NextUp.com**, however, can offer excellent assistive support to the visually disabled, as well as more flexibility on voice quality and choices. That is why 44 year-old Calgary resident **Lee Veitch** sought out *TextAloud* to help him to listen to his documents, as well as to supplement his screen readers. For Lee, who battles a visual disability as well as severe arthritis, the program has now become a mainstay.

"At first, I tried it as a novelty," Lee comments. "Then I used it to provide myself with more realistic speech than can be obtained with a plain screen reader." Lee's experience with the Premium Voices was so positive that he soon purchased more voices. "*TextAloud* allows me to copy the text from multiple sources," comments Lee, "which I then convert to MP3 format. I can then burn the MP3s to CD to listen to 'on the go' with my portable CD player. The clarity and pronunciation make for a pleasant listening and learning experience."

TextAloud is the easy and affordable PC software that helps users export almost any text into speech files for listening via CD, computer, iPod®, iPhone®, and more. *TextAloud* has proven especially helpful as an assistive technology for Lee against his blindness. "As a blind/visually impaired user, I am very happy with *TextAloud*, as its speech engines are far superior to my screen reader's voices," Lee comments. "I appreciate the natural-sounding voices, complete with proper inflections -- and (yes, I'll say it) even 'feeling.'"

Lee's system for utilizing *TextAloud* is simple and effective. He saves the texts from his e-mails, PDFs, and favorite websites, as well as his favorite articles from local newspapers, in a week's worth of content at a time. He then uses *TextAloud* to output that content to MP3 files for

later listening, using separate and specific Premium Voices for each type of content. This way, he can instantly distinguish between e-mails, newspapers, and other website content as he listens to the files via CD as well as computer. "The ability to choose multiple voice engines can also break up the monotony of long articles," he adds, "and different voices for different articles can help to distinguish between work-related and personal documents. I'm able to convert directly to audio file without having to use expensive or multiple programs to get the same result."

Lee utilizes several of *TextAloud's* useful features to streamline his work, like the shortcut keys that enable users to play, pause or export an article with the single press of a button. "The voices are exceptional," he adds, "and each voice can be personalized or tweaked enough to give the impression of a real person reading aloud."

For more effective use of *TextAloud* in conjunction with his screen reader, Lee personalizes his programs, turning off text highlighting in *TextAloud* , while turning off status updates in his screen reader. This ensures that the screen reader won't read the text at the same time that *TextAloud* is reading its text, or speaking aloud information on such aspects as 'percentage completed' or 'current progress.'

"Ultimately, *TextAloud* has provided me with the freedom from having to sit in front of my PC for countless hours listening to my stuff," says Lee. "It's great to have the freedom to listen on the go!"

About *TextAloud*

With a completely new interface including more personalization options than ever before, ***TextAloud*** is the highly useful PC program for students, scientists, writers, business people, students and people from all walks of life. *TextAloud* enables anyone to experience their reading by listening, and 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. System requirements include almost any version of Windows® (from 98 to Me, NT, 2000, XP or Vista), as well as a minimum of 64 MB of RAM, 10 MB of disk space, and a sound card. *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. Become a fan at <http://www.Facebook.com/TextAloud>, or try the program today, via a fast, safe and secure preview and purchase at <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*



Lee Veitch sought out TextAloud to help him listen to his newspapers by ear. TextAloud is the easy and effective PC program that turns text into speech files you can listen to anywhere you go.