

Assistive Technology Speaks for Those Who Cannot See

TextAloud brings books, web pages and articles, to those with visual impairments.

Clemmons, NC ([PRWEB](#)) February 16, 2006 -- Most of us take such actions as computing, word processing, reading e-mail or surfing the web for granted. But for those without sight, or who are battling any kind of visual disability, these tasks can present huge challenges (and expenses) -- even with all of the sophisticated technology available today. Luckily, Text to Speech software programs like NextUp.com's TextAloud help to provide an alternative, turning visual text into natural and enjoyable speech. With TextAloud, a hard-to-read e-mail or website becomes an enjoyable listening experience.

This is why Text to Speech programs like TextAloud are becoming more and more essential to the visually disabled and the way they read for work, learning, or simple enjoyment. TextAloud is an award-winning program that converts text into spoken audio for listening on a PC, and that can also save text to audio files for playback on the go. The easy to use program is a snap to set up, and works along with a wide array of surprisingly natural premium voices to bring words to life for those who have trouble reading visually. For visually-impaired users, TextAloud truly presents an easy and very affordable alternative to high-end machines and software programs, which are too often prohibitively expensive.

"TextAloud was specifically created to bring words on screen to the ear in an enjoyable and affordable way," noted Ken White, CEO of NextUp.com. "Visually impaired users were some of the first to discover TextAloud, and we are excited to see our program continuing to be such a benefit to those who cannot see."

Praise from Visually-Disabled Users of TextAloud:

Edward M.: "My wife is permanently blind, and TextAloud has enabled her to participate again in the various groups in which she is interested. We collect e-mail files and any research material into optical recognition documents that can be read by TextAloud using the "speech to file" feature. We then burn a CD from the information in *.WAV format, and this becomes her library (she is able to mark the Jewel cases in Braille for location purposes). It has made a great deal of difference in her feeling of self-worth."

Carolyn T.: "I'm a 40-year-old blind woman and scholar. Before getting TextAloud, I had to pay people to read texts I needed, either aloud to me or onto tape. The tapes were bulky and easily damaged, and the process was time-consuming and extremely expensive. The sheer number of cassettes (as well as bulky recorder) I would have to carry meant that I could not read on campus or when I traveled. While proud of being accepted into a graduate program, these kinds of hurdles made me begin to dread what it would take for me to attain my Ph.D.

"However, not long after starting graduate work, a friend recommended NextUp.com's TextAloud, and it was an effective and inexpensive solution to what is normally a costly endeavor for blind people. Now I'm finally able to read when I'm on campus as well as when I travel (with several books' worth of text easily fitting on my MP3 player at one time). In addition, unlike taped texts, TextAloud can change the speed at which the text is read without distorting the voice or words. And unlike many adaptive software packages that blind people are told they should buy, TextAloud doesn't cost thousands of dollars -- something any college student can appreciate!

"Although I originally purchased TextAloud to read books for school, I also use it to read over my own work, grade my students' papers, and access articles and email on-line. TextAloud has become invaluable to me, and it's

one of the few tools that I've consistently recommended to my students, faculty, and associates when asked about alternatives to ink-based texts."

About TextAloud

TextAloud is a full-featured Text to Speech tool offering direct support for Word, PDF and HTML formats, as well as advanced pronunciation tools, an Internet Explorer Plug-In for easy listening of favorite web pages -- and more. TextAloud is priced at just \$29.95, and is compatible with systems using Windows® 98, NT, 2000 and XP.

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® RealSpeak®, NeoSpeech® and Cepstral® for the most natural-sounding computer speech anywhere. Available languages include English with U.S., U.K., and Indian and Scottish accents, as well as French, Canadian French, Latin American Spanish, European Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese Chinese, Korean, Japanese, German, Italian, Dutch, Belgian Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish, and Arabic.

About NextUp.com

NextUp.com, a division of NextUp Technologies, LLC, provides award-winning Text to Speech software for consumers, business customers, educators, and those with visual impairment or learning disabilities. In addition to TextAloud, NextUp.com markets other innovative Windows software including talking personal "news agent" NewsAloud™, WeatherAloud™ (a weather application that lets users select and listen to personalized weather forecasts), and stock updates and related news headlines read aloud thanks to StocksAloud™. Most recently, NextUp released NextUp Talker 1.0, 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 currently available upon request by members of the press. To receive a review copy, or for more information on NextUp.com or TextAloud, please contact Rick Ellis. Meanwhile, for images, logos, box shots, or other information or artwork on TextAloud, please contact publicist Angela Mitchell at (904) 982-8043.

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