

TechnoTalk

The TASC Newsletter

Volume 14

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February 2005

building futures



Editorial

by Jo Ford

Well the TASC team are certainly in full swing for the new year. Catherine has just returned from the 21st International Seating Symposium held in Florida. She is currently putting fingers to keyboard and has many stories to tell and exciting ideas that she will be sharing with you in upcoming editions.

On the home front, Katherine and Paula attended a full day training workshop on WYNN Software held at Quantum Technology. Katherine has tried to summarise some of the key features of this program for you. They found this intensive training opportunity provided them a comprehensive insight into the functions and applications of this program.

This month we also have some important amendments to be made to the Comparison to Note Takers Table provided in January. As you can imagine it is an onerous task to keep these tables up to date and we thank our readers for providing us with any additional information that we have not included. The TASC team always welcome your feedback and comments.

Please don't miss the website of interest featured by Rachelle. The CALL website provides great links to interesting and useful resources.

Finally be sure to check the update on where you can see a Dragon Naturally Speaking Demonstrations and Upcoming Conferences for 2005.

Happy Reading,
Jo



WYNN Software To Enhance Reading, Writing and Comprehension

by Katherine Young

Last December, Paula Robinson and myself attended a one-day training course on WYNN Software at Quantum Technology.

WYNN is PC Software that enables scanned text, electronic files and text on the Internet to be highlighted and read aloud. It is available in two versions, WYNN Wizard and WYNN Reader. Both versions use color-coded tool bars to provide reading, writing, studying and Internet features.

WYNN Wizard includes optical character recognition (OCR), the ability to scan printed pages and convert them into electronic text. WYNN Reader is identical to WYNN Wizard but without the scanning feature.

The four color-coded tool bars are customisable for individual needs and preferences. Tools can be added or removed as the individual's skills change or a choice can be made from the pre-made custom tool bars available. All have large buttons that are labeled with both pictures and words.

Blue tool bar: File Management Tool bar for email and Web.



There are three ways text can be read from the Web: a replica of the original text, using the WebMask™ feature to reduce visual clutter while reading from the original view and text view to read original text with customised visual settings.

Green tool bar: Reading Options tool bar.



The presentation of the document can be controlled, including the size and font of the text, spacing and margins. The 'Mask' button allows unwanted text to be "masked out".

Pink tool bar: Study Tools tool bar.



This tool bar enables a teacher to insert text reminders or recorded voice notes in a body of text. Main themes and ideas can be highlighted

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From previous page.

and study guides can be created. Access to talking dictionaries helps to build comprehension.

Yellow tool bar: Writing tool bar.



Written material can be read back with customised visual settings. The word prediction bank learns vocabulary and syntax from typing and can learn new text from any scanned document or the Internet. An outlining feature provides scaffolding for written work.

WYNN has two voice synthesizers to choose from:

1. RealSpeak™ provides human sounding voices in US English and British English. It has 11 optional languages.

2. ViaVoice® is IBM's speech synthesizer, which provides spoken text in US English, Spanish and six other languages.

The 'Exact view' in WYNN provides an exact replica of text and graphics for many file types, including Word, PDF and HTML. The 'text view' enables text to be modified so it can be read in preferred size, spacing and color to address visual processing difficulties.

Also demonstrated at the course was TestTalker, software that is designed to help individuals be more successful with taking tests, completing worksheets and studying. The software enables tests and worksheets to be converted to a computerised form that can talk. The same bimodal approach that is used in WYNN is also used in TestTalker, i.e. words are highlighted as they are spoken. TestTalker provides an exact replica of the test.

The software has two models, a test-creating and a test-taking model. Teachers can use the test-creating model to scan in tests and configure them if desired. The test-taking model allows the text to be highlighted and read aloud and enables students to answer questions by entering text into blank sections or colored boxes on the form.

A 30 day / 30 hour WYNN demo CD is available. More information can be found at:

www.FreedomScientific.com/WYNN
and
www.quantech.com.au

HANDY HINT

Do you have a client who only needs to use the left click on the mouse and they accidentally hit or are distracted by the right click?



Hint:

Try and use a USB Mac mouse, which has one button. It can be plugged into the USB port of your PC and works like a gem!

Corrections for the Note Takers Comparisons!

Amendment to TechnoTalk Volume 14 Issue 1 January 2005 Article: Note Takers Comparison by Paula-Jane Robinson. The following corrections/addition can be made to our article last month. We apologise for any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused.

· AlphaSmart 3000 · AlphaSmart Dana · AlphaSmart Neo

The above products are also sold by:

Technability
www.technability.com.au
189 Allambie Road
Allambie Heights NSW 2100
Ph: (02) 9975 8218

Spectronics
www.spectronicsinoz.com
PO Box 88
Rochedale QLD 4123
Ph: (07) 3808 6833

Ability Technology
www.abilitycorp.com.au
145 Sydney Road
Fairlight NSW 2094
Ph: (02) 9907 9736

Northcott Dynamic Living Design
www.northcottld.com.au
1 Fennell Street
North Parramatta NSW 2151
Ph: 1800 506 071

Novitatech
www.novitatech.org.au
171 Days Road
Regency Park SA 5010
Ph: 1300-85 55 85

AlphaSmart Dana does have speech options

Dana combined with Write:OutLoud® To Go, the talking word processor from Don Johnston Incorporated, and the new AlphaSmart VoiceCard allow users to type text which is converted to speech.
http://www1.alphasmart.com/k12/write_outloud.html

Laser PC6 does have speech options

Add the optional text to speech cartridge for speech output from the word processor, or from the text to speech window. Predicted words are not read out loud. There is one voice only - a female synthesised voice.
<http://www.novitatech.org.au/product.asp?p=247&id=1680&start=1>

Dragon Naturally Speaking Demonstrations

by Paula-Jane Robinson



www.voiceperfect.co

Dragon Naturally Speaking software allows the user to create documents with one's voice, without the need for constant keyboarding. Dragon Naturally Speaking recognises natural, continuous speech and converts it into text on the screen. Voice commands can be used to start programs, switch between programs and control program windows. There are several versions of this program, depending on the needs of the user. However if you are considering Dragon Naturally Speaking, it is well worth viewing a demonstration of the product first. Although there are many benefits of speech recognition, some of the issues that we at TASC are aware of when it comes to speech recognition include:

- There is a learning curve (and ongoing corrections) that is required when initially training the software to recognise your voice
- Any changes in your voice may result in inaccuracies
- A noisy environment may effect the accuracy of the program
- Be aware that there are many voice commands to control the software, hence a method of recalling them is advised

- You are in control of the computer, and need to tell it what to do, therefore prior computer skills and knowledge are recommended

TASC has become aware that there are free daily (Monday – Friday) demonstrations of Dragon Naturally Speaking in Sydney. The details are as follows. (Please call prior to check for times / cancellations, etc):

Company: Voice Perfect Systems (Voice Perfect Systems is an Australian owned company. There are Technology Centres centrally situated in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Auckland)

Address: Level 6, Suite 604,
301 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: (02) 8270 9888

Internet: www.voiceperfect.com.au/voiceperfect/locations.php

Email: Sydney@voiceperfect.com



Hi, my name is Liza MacLean and I am the new OT at TASC Consultants. After graduation from Cumberland College in 1996 I worked for DADHC doing early intervention and school aged therapy for a year or so. The next 6½ years were spent working in the UK and travelling abroad.

My experience includes various positions in paediatrics, adult and elderly care, including acute hospital medical/ortho/surgical, community rehabilitation, home modifications, early intervention and school therapy, neurology and managing a falls prevention service. In between jobs (or should I say my jobs were in between holidays?!), I also travelled around Europe, South East Asia, the Middle East, Canada and North America and Africa.

I moved back to Australia last year and am now looking forward to the next exciting challenge, working for TASC!

WEB REVIEW

Title of Page: Resources

Last update or

copyright date: February 2005

Title of site: Call Centre

URL:

[http://callcentre.education.ed.ac.uk/
Resources/resources.html#](http://callcentre.education.ed.ac.uk/Resources/resources.html#)

Last accessed: 21st February 2005

This is the resources page of the CALL Centre (Communication Aids for Language and Learning) website. The CALL centre is a research and service unit that provides advice regarding assistive technology for children who have speech, communication and/or writing difficulties. The resources page provides links to all of the free resources available on the website. These include:

Boardmaker Resources

Follow this link to download Boardmaker resources for well known board games, nursery rhymes, story and symbol resources for a range of children's books, lotto activities using familiar themes and topic boards for environmental studies (weather, animals, transport etc).

Books and Reports

Follow this link and you will find some excellent publications and downloadable books. Subjects include an introduction to AAC, making and using symbol resources to support interactive story reading, personal communication passports, technology to support the writing process, a comprehensive overview of special access technology options, speech recognition and

powered mobility. This section is well worth searching through.

Clicker Resources

Download Clicker 4 grids (Mac and PC) created for a range of familiar themes including animals, colours, number matching, gardens and pets. At present there are 19 different activities available for download so if you are supporting a student to use Clicker 4 it would be worth searching this link for resources and activity ideas.

Communication Resources

This link leads to an article on creating symbol resources to support interactive story reading.

Frequently Asked Questions pages

You may find a topic of interest in this section. The answers to the questions are comprehensive and informative.

Interactive Switch Tutorials

This section offers introductory tutorials on switch access issues including scanning movements and selection methods. An excellent training resource.

Passport Resources

Personal communication passports are used to introduce people who are unable to easily speak for themselves. Passports can provide a range of information that will help to facilitate more effective communication between the person and their conversational partners. Select this link if you are interested in finding out more about this very interesting topic.

Presentations

Check out this link to access presentations

that CALL staff have prepared.

Quick Guides

Follow this link to download cheat sheets for a range of commonly used software and assistive technology issues (including AAC access technology, ChooseIt! Maker, IntelliTools, Microsoft Paint, Switches and Interfaces, word prediction just to name a few).

As you can see from the range of information on offer this is an excellent website and well worth a look.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

ACPA 2005 National Conference

Pathways to Citizenship: Therapy,
Communication & Technology
14-15 March 2005
Hilton International Hotel
Adelaide, www.acpa-inc.org.au

AGOSCI 2005

"Together We Can"
31 August – 3 September 2005
Sheraton Brisbane Hotel
Brisbane, www.agosci.org.au

We welcome any feedback, good or bad, that you have on our service. Please feel free to contact us by phone on 02 9972 8183, email at tasc@tscnsw.org.au or in writing at the address below.

TechnoTalk is available free from www.thespasticcentre.com.au/technotalk or by subscription for \$27.50 (GST \$2.50 incl)



building futures...

For people with **cerebral palsy** and their families.

The Spastic Centre
189 Allambie Rd, Allambie Heights, NSW, 2100
PO Box 184, Brookvale, NSW, 2100
T 02 9451 9022
F 02 9451 4877
E scnsw@tscnsw.org.au

www.thespasticcentre.com.au