

TechnoTalk

The TASC Newsletter

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building futures



Editorial

by Jo Ford

As the Easter Bunny is merrily making his rounds the TASC Consultants have been hard at work putting together the March edition for you. This month proves to be a good read while munching on your chocolates!

Assistive Technology support for language and learning support is always a hot topic for us. Paula has been investigating software programs that may be useful. She has summarised the main features of Kurzweil 3000 providing a quick reference for you to use when identifying if this program may meet your needs.

TASC have recently purchased the PSI (Proximity Switch Interface) to add to our growing range of alternate powered mobility options. Natalie has busily worked on setting up the system and has provided an overview of this new powered mobility interface.

If you are interested in training, ABILITY TECHNOLOGY's next training seminar will be held on Friday 29 April 2005. It will focus on computer access (including speech recognition and portable note-takers, as well as keyboard and mouse alternatives and special software). If interested contact ABILITY on telephone (02) 9907-9736 or email info@ability.org.au

Happy reading

Jo



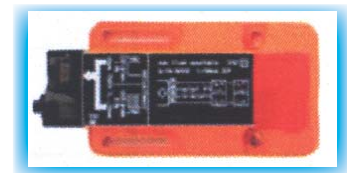
Proximity Sensor Interface (PSI) – New Developments in Powered Mobility

by Natalie Carden

TASC now has a PSI (Proximity Sensor Interface) unit, a long awaited addition to our range of powered mobility access options. The PSI is an interface designed to accept specialised sensor switches and/or momentary switches to integrate wheelchair control systems (Penny & Giles, Dynamics and WiseDX) with environmental control systems (including computer access) and communication devices.

The key development has been the ability of the system to run switches that do not require continuous pressure to achieve action, ie driving forwards. The two discussed here are the Proximity Switch and the Fibre Optic Switch.

The Proximity Switch operates by detecting an object within its sensor field. It allows the user to operate the wheelchair primarily with movement of a body part in and out of the range of the switch (which is adjustable). An additional switch, ie mode, would be set up to allow the user to turn the system on and off and to scroll between active systems, eg drive vs communication. A necessary function so that the chair won't react when the user stops for a chat.



Proximity Switch

The Fibre Optic Switch is the other new piece of technology for which the PSI has been developed. It is a switch that requires the user to "break" the beam of light to operate the wheelchair. Fibre optic switches can be set up at any reliable site, eg chin, finger. Again, a mode switch would allow the user to interface with environmental control functions or communication devices through the PSI using the same set of switches.



Fibre Optic Switch

If a single switch site is all that is available a 'scanner' for selection of functions can be connected to the PSI unit to access the user's equipment as described previously.

The PSI unit we have at TASC is a 3-Switch Head Array using Proximity Switches. We will have it available for trial on a demonstration chair at

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SOFTWARE REVIEW

by Paula-Jane Robinson

What is the Kurzweil 3000 Program?

Manufacturer: Kurzweil Educational Systems



Kurzweil 3000 is a scanning, reading and writing program for people with visual, learning or reading difficulties, that makes printed or electronic text accessible to people. Kurzweil 3000 works on a computer in conjunction with a scanner, (a modified version called Learn Station that doesn't use a scanner, is also

available) and using synthetic speech converts the printed word into speech. When a printed item is scanned, Kurweil preserves the original page layout, and highlights (eg words, sentences, etc) as it reads the document to you. Kurzweil works within its own window.

<http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/browse.asp?cat=14400#print>

Main Features

Dual Highlighting	Kurzweil can highlight a sentence and read the word being spoken at the same time.
Decoding Tools	Decoding tools such as a dictionary, synonyms, syllabification and spelling of words.
Study Skills Tools	Tools that allow the user to highlight main ideas, add annotations, extract outlines or words lists and create voice notes.
Writing Tools	Kurzweil will speak letters and words as you type them. Audible spell checker and a word predictor are also available.
Test Taking Capabilities	Enables students to directly enter their electronic answers into a test or worksheet. Questions and answers can be read back to the student.
Web Access and Online Books	Audible and visual accessibility to web pages, allowing students to search and retrieve, eg online books.
Vocabulary / Confusable list and Homophones Support	The Homophone list assists when similar words such as: " to", "two" and "too" are used. The Confusable list can assist when commonly confused words such as: "edition" and "addition" are used. Hence you can choose from the vocabulary lists already created or create your own lists.
Audible Word Prediction Tool	As the user types the first letter of the word, suggestions are made in the prediction list (audio available).
Audio File Creation	Create MP3 and WAV files of entire documents, selected pages or text.
Broad Access to Electronic Files	Kurzweil supports popular formats such as .doc, .pdf and DAISY.
Advanced Scanning Support	Advanced features for both scanning and image management eg support for double-sided pages, and time saving features such as the Automater to batch process for .tif and .pdf files, and images generated from high speed scanners. (Please visit http://www.kurzweiledu.com/scanner_search.asp?software_id=2 to review recommended scanners).
Picture Dictionary	Kurzweil supports electronic picture dictionaries, eg from Mayer-Johnson, Inc. and Crick Software.


Bilingual and Foreign Language Benefits	Audible dictionary definitions and correct pronunciation in English, French, German, Spanish or Italian.	
Network Access	Use personal settings and files from any networked computer running Kurzweil.	
Logs	Track and monitor students, ie the log reports on when files were created, opened, saved, closed, when they were read, etc. Kurzweil supports electronic picture dictionaries, eg from Mayer-Johnson, Inc. and Crick Software.	
Advanced Image Management	Produce a clear, accurate electronic image, preserving graphics and text in their original context.	
Document Security	Document Protection features include: file encryption and the ability to disable copying or printing of document content	
System Requirements	<p>Windows 300 MHz (or faster) if using RealSpeak, 400 MHz Intel® Pentium® III (or faster) 64MB (64MB for colour scanning) if using RealSpeak, 128 MB (128 MB recommended) 300MB - 400MB (depending upon the various options you select) Windows® 98, ME, 2000, XP, Windows NT® Video RAM 2MB or better Screen resolution: 800 x 600 pixels Colour Palette High Colour (16-bit) Scanner: TWAIN compliant For Audio File Creation MP3 encoder and/or media player Sound Card Creative Labs Sound Blaster® 16 or other 16-bit compatible sound card with speakers and microphone CD Drive, Keyboard, Mouse, Floppy Disk Drive</p>	<p>MAC Minimum Processor: G3 Macintosh capable of running Mac OS version 9.2.2 or Mac OS X version 10.2.4 Memory: 64MB, 128MB recommended (OS9) or 128MB (OS X) Hard Disk Space: 100MB Operating System: Mac® OS version 9.2.2 or Mac® OS X version 10.2.4 or higher Scanner: Fully TWAIN compatible scanner for Mac OS 9. Image Capture compatible for Mac OS X. CD-ROM Drive Required</p>
For further information	http://kurzweiledu.com	
Licensing	<p>Windows Kurzweil 3000 Professional Colour Version 8 or Black and White Version 8 for Windows - Single User Copy. Kurzweil 3000 Version 8 LearnStation for Windows - Single User Copy VoiceText Voices - Single User Licence.</p> <p>Mac Kurzweil 3000 Professional Black and White Version 2 for Macintosh - Single User Copy Kurzweil 3000 LearnStation for Macintosh - Single User Copy Various multiple licences are available. Please see the Spectronics site for further details.</p>	
Demonstration Version	Please call suppliers. (Please see Supplier details next page) for a demonstration CD (Windows and Mac).	

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Kurzweil 3000 Supplier Details	Technability www.technability.com.au 189 Allambie Road Allambie Heights NSW 2100 <i>Postal Address:</i> PO Box 184 Brookvale NSW 2100 Ph: 02 9975 8218 <i>Sales and Administration</i> Ph: 02 9975 8240 Spectronics www.spectronicsinoz.com PO Box 88 Rosedale Qld 4123 Ph: 07 3808 6833	Pulse Data Australia www.pulsedata.com Suite 2, 7-11 Railway Street Baulkham Hills NSW 2153 Ph: 02 9686 2600 Ability Technology www.abilitycorp.com.au 29 Frenchs Forest Road Seaforth NSW 2092 Ph: 02 9907 9736 <i>Postal Address:</i> Private Box 44 145 Sydney Road Fairlight NSW 2094
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<p>TASC Seating Service.</p>  <p>PSI 3-Switch Head Array</p> <p>Support for the integration of components will be through Specialised Wheelchair Company. Enquiries or referral regarding the</p>	 <p>PSI Touchless Chin Control</p> <p>PSI can made to the TASC Seating Consultants on 02 9972 8114. If you would like to find out more about specifications, demonstration or price call Specialised Wheelchair</p>	<p>Company on 02 9905 5333.</p> <p>References</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· PSI Owner's Manual· www.swco.com.au <div data-bbox="1061 1489 1517 1825" style="background-color: #e0f0e0; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px;"><p>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.</p><p>TechnoTalk is available free from www.thespasticcentre.com.au/technotalk or by subscription for \$27.50 (GST \$2.50 incl)</p></div>
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