

TechnoTalk

The TASC Newsletter

Volume 14

Issue 8

September 2005

building futures



Editorial

by Jo Ford

This month's TechnoTalk is overflowing with information from all areas of assistive technology that the TASC team are involved in. In fact we have added a couple of extra pages to ensure that we include everything for you.

Peter has been reviewing tilt-in-space chairs for clients and recently had a look at the new Quickie IRIS. There are a number of features of this chair that he was keen to share with our readers.

As you would be aware the TASC consultants love to create comparison tables of products to help us when we are exploring options for our clients. Katherine has recently updated a comparison of communication devices with static display and digitised speech for your easy reference.

The SeatSafe focus group will be holding their next meeting on 11th October; more details are included in this newsletter. We have also included information on the Microsoft Accessibility Update Newsletter that has free downloads and resources for educators.

We hope you are enjoying the new bi-monthly editions of TechnoTalk and look forward to sharing more information with you in November.

Happy Reading

Jo



Manual Tilt-In-Space Wheelchairs - Quickie IRIS

Peter Chapple

There are a number of tilt-in-space wheelchairs out on the market at the moment that have a variety of features making them slightly different. This article will profile the Quickie IRIS, manual tilt in space chair, which has recently been introduced to Australia and offers a number of positive features unique to this particular line of chairs.

One of the most important considerations in today's working and care environment is Occupational Health and Safety legislation, and the health and well being of carers providing support for people with disabilities. The weight of a manual wheelchair is a critical factor that impacts upon the physical stress of managing a person in a wheelchair. The Quickie IRIS has a base frame weight of 35 pounds or approximately 15 kilograms, providing a very light manoeuvrable option for families.

Other notable features of the IRIS include:

- Rotation in space – Rotational tilt-in-space around the person's centre of gravity. This minimises wheel base length, which makes the chair more compact and easier to direct (particularly through 'tight' turning circles). Tilt range of 55 degrees as far back as 60 degrees, ie – 5° to 55°, 0° to 55°, 5° to 60°.

- Frame adjustability – Full frame adjustability through the range 14" to 22" in width and 15" to 22" in depth. Allows for flexibility when scripting!

- Ultra low seat-to-floor height – Range from 14" to 20.5", with the ability to go as low as 12.5" with a drop seat pan. This caters for a very wide range of clients who perform standing transfers.

- Weight capacity – 250 pounds standard or 350 pounds with heavy-duty option, including transit ready mounting points.

- Rear wheel options – 12", 16", 20", 22" and 24".

- Castor options – 5" x 1.5", 6", 6 x 1.5", 8", 8 x 1.5", 8 x 2". Appropriate castor size will also depend on chosen seat-to-floor height.

- Reclining back – 8 adjustment settings at 5 degree increments giving 35 degrees of adjustment between 85° and 120°.

- Warranty – Lifetime warranty on the frame and 12 months on all other accessories.

- Footplates and hangers – 70°, 80° and 90° hangers available in standard or heavy duty.

- Overall width – Frame width plus 8"

- Back height – Standard stroller handle 18", 21" or 24". With angle adjustable stroller handle, available in regular or long, 16" to 20"

Reference:

- www.sunrisemedical.com (2109/2005)

- ©2005 Sunrise Medical Inc, product information flyer.

Picture sourced from:

- www.lr.com.au (21/09/2005)

Please phone TASC on 9972 8114 for further information on suppliers, who can further tailor the set up to individual client needs.



Quickie IRIS.

















Katherine Young








Communication Devices with Static Displays and Digitised Speech: A Comparison





The following table is an updated comparison of the static display devices that we are often asked about. These systems require someone to record a message onto the device. As a key is activated, the message is heard. It is by no means a comprehensive list. In general, the devices that are more costly have a wider range of

features, and are more flexible in keyboard layout, scanning and levels. When comparing devices, we would advise that you also go to the supplier's websites to find out more about the devices. A list of their websites is included at the end of the table.

Name	Keyboard Layouts Available	No. of levels	Recording Time	Access options	Approx Price and supplier
BIGmack Communicator 	N/A	1	75 seconds	Direct or single switch	\$180 Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech
BIG Step-by-step communicator 	N/A	A series of messages can be recorded then played back in sequence by consecutive presses of the switch	75 seconds	Direct or single switch	\$278 Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech
Partner Four 	4 keys	1	32 seconds (8 for each message)	Direct and jacks for external switches	\$330 Suppliers: Technability
Base Trainer 	4 keys	1	8 seconds per key	Direct and jacks for external switches	\$330 Suppliers: Technability
CheapTalk 4 (4 square or 4 in line)  30 x 20 x 6cm (pictured)	4 keys (either 2 rows or 4 in a row)	1 (with overlay options adding 1 level)	Up to 5 seconds per message	Direct, switch sockets or scanning (depending on model)	Ranges from \$273 - \$683 (depending on model) Suppliers: NovitaTech Technical Solutions
Cheap Talk 8  30 x 20 x 6cm	8 keys	1 (with overlay options adding 1 level)	Up to 5 seconds per message	Direct, switch sockets or scanning (depending on model)	Ranges from \$493 - \$863 (depending on model) Suppliers: NovitaTech Technical Solutions

Name	Keyboard Layouts Available	No. of levels	Recording Time	Access options	Approx Price and supplier
Easy Talk 	1, 2, 4, 10, 20 or 40 keys	8	8, 16, 24 or 32 minutes of standard recording time (depending on the model)	Direct, scanning (visual and auditory)	\$1610 - 8 minute \$1775 – 16 minute \$2100 – 32 minute Suppliers: Technability
AdVOCAte 	1, 2, 4, 8 or 16 keys (keyguards available)	5 (1 level allows key linking)	16 minutes	Direct, 4 switch sockets, scanning (visual and auditory)	\$2200 Suppliers: Technability Zygo Australia
Eclipse (4 models available)  (33 x 24 x 3cm)	2, 4, 16, 32, 64 or 128 keys		8 minutes or 40 minutes (depending on model)	Direct, 1 or 2 switch, joystick headpointing	\$5600 - \$7500 (depending on model) Suppliers: NovitaTech
Go Talk 9+  (21 x 31 x 2cm)	9 keys (+ 3 extra keys which retain the same core messages over each level)	5	9 minutes total	Direct	\$399 Suppliers: Technability Spectronics NovitaTech
Go Talk 4 	4 keys	4	3 minutes total – 10 seconds per message	Direct	\$359 Suppliers: Technability Spectronics NovitaTech
Pocket Go Talk  (7.5 x 14 x 2.5cm)	5 keys	5	6 minutes total – 14 seconds per message	Direct, auto scanning, single switch only	\$429 Suppliers: Technability Spectronics Novitatech
Go Talk 20+ 	20 keys (+ 5 extra keys which retain the same core message over all levels)	5	15 minutes	Direct	\$449 Suppliers: Technability Spectronics NovitaTech
Talara 	2, 4, 8, 16 or 32 keys	4	45 minutes	Direct and single switch scanning (visual only)	\$1400 Suppliers: Technability Zygo Australia

Name	Keyboard Layouts Available	No. of levels	Recording Time	Access options	Approx Price and supplier
Hip Talk 4, 10, 16 and Hip Talk Plus  (15 x 9 x 7cm)	Hip Talk 4 has 4 Hip Talk Plus – 3, 6, 12.	1	8, 16, 24 or 32 minutes of standard recording time (depending on the model)	Direct	Hip Talk 4 \$305 Hip Talk Plus \$545 Suppliers: NovitaTech
DACTyl Macaw +4 	1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 128 keys	Up to 63	78 minutes as standard (model with longer recording time available)	Direct, switch scanning (visual and auditory), morse code, joystick	\$6000 Suppliers: Technability Zygo Australia NovitaTech
Macaw 3+4  (There are many other Macaw models available – see suppliers for details)	1, 2, 4, 8, 16 or 32 keys	32	78 minutes as standard (model with longer recording time available)	Direct, switch scanning (visual and auditory), morse code, joystick	\$3800 \$7500 (for 18 hours additional recording time) Suppliers: Technability Zygo Australia NovitaTech
MessageMate 40 (multilevel) 	2, 4, 10 or 40 keys	1 level – 150 second model 4 levels – 5 and 10 minute model	150 seconds, 5 minutes or 10 minutes (depending on the model)	Direct or scanning (visual and auditory)	\$1495 – 150 sec model \$1825 – 5 min model \$2180 – 10 min model Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech
MessageMate 20 	2, 5, 10 or 20 keys	1	75 or 150 seconds total recording time – depending on the model	Direct or scanning (visual and auditory)	\$915 – 75 sec model \$1245 - 150 sec model Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech
Mini MessageMate 	8 keys	1	60 seconds total	Direct Switch – up to 8 switches (no scanning)	\$579 Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech
Talk Trac 	4 keys	1 or 2 depending on model	70 seconds	Direct only	\$172 – 1 level \$199 – 2 level Suppliers: Technability Spectronics NovitaTech

Name	Keyboard Layouts Available	No. of levels	Recording Time	Access options	Approx Price and supplier
Tech/Talk 	8 keys	6, 8, 12 depending on the model	4.5 or 9 seconds for each message (depending on model)	Direct (4 switch jack model available for additional cost)	\$645 – 6 levels \$745 – 8 levels \$1080 – 12 levels Standard model prices Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech Spectronics
Tech/Talk ECU (Environmental control capabilities) 	8 keys	5 for communication 1 for ECU	As per above	Direct or Optional – single switch access to each of the 8 cells per level	\$1365 Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech Spectronics
Tech/Speak 	32 keys	2, 4, 6 and 12 depending on the model	2.25 or 4.5 seconds for each message (depending on model)	Direct	\$745 – 2 levels \$915 – 4 levels \$1080 – 6 levels \$1580 – 12 levels Standard model prices Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech Spectronics
Tech/Scan 8, 8+, 32 and 32+ 	8 or 32 keys (depending on model)	2, 4, 6 (32 and 32+ models) 8 (8 and 8+ models)	2.25 or 4.5 seconds for each message (32 and 32+ models) 4.5 or 9 seconds for each message (8 and 8+ models)	Direct and scanning. Auditory scanning available on plus models.	\$2295 – 32 + \$2125 – 8 + Suppliers: Technability NovitaTech Spectronics

* Photos sourced from suppliers' websites and own photographs.

Suppliers Websites

NovitaTech - http://www.novitatech.org.au/at_home.asp?p=245

Spectronics - <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/>

Technability - <http://www.technability.com.au/default.asp>

Technical Solutions - <http://www.tecsol.com.au/>

Zygo Australia - <http://www.zygoaustralia.com.au/pages/aboutzygo.html>

SeatSafe Focus Group Meeting

What is SeatSafe?

SeatSafe was formed by a group of therapists and other professionals, with an interest in seating, who were developing resources related to safety issues. The group has continued and expanded over the years and now meets on a regular basis. SeatSafe is associated with Spot on DD.

What do the meetings involve?

The meetings include individual presentations, group discussions and opportunities to network with other professionals, with all different types of experience with seating and mobility. Often, a number of people within the group would like a particular seating-related topic to be explored in more detail. This is encouraged and the committee attempt to facilitate as many opportunities for relevant presentations and discussions from a variety

of people, as is possible. The meetings provide a great opportunity to share information in an informal environment.

Who can attend?

All interested parties are welcome, including Speech Pathologists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Engineers, Technicians and anyone with an involvement in seating. The meetings are free to those who are members of Spot on DD. It is requested that non-members make a payment of \$10 at the meetings (alternatively you can join Spot on DD on the night if you wish).

Contacts:

Please contact the TASC Seating Consultants (Ph: 9975 8114) if you require any further information.

Details of the next meeting are as follows:

Date: Tuesday, 11 October 2005

Time: 3:00pm - 5:30pm
(note - this is an earlier starting time which will be trialed)

Venue: The Northcott Building,
No. 1 Fennell Street, Parramatta

Topic: Mat Evaluations;
Case Studies depicting how assessment information can be used to script/provide seating recommendations; Tilt-in-space wheelchairs – justification, scripting, funding and product reviews.

Microsoft Accessibility Update Newsletter

Microsoft has an Accessibility Update Newsletter with free downloads on Accessibility Resources for Educators including:

- Using Accessible Technology: A Guide for Educators – A 47 page guide providing information on accessible technology initiatives and resources available to educators to ensure all students have equal access to electronic information. Some of this information is specific to American legislation, statistics and equipment, however there is some interesting information on different impairments and relevant accessibility options and also case studies.
- Windows XP Step-by-Step Tutorials – These include using the Accessibility Wizard and adjusting the Accessibility Options for various features (A summary Cheat Sheet of these options is also available from TASC).
- Microsoft Office Tutorials – Including Outlook and Internet Explorer.
- Resource Guide for Individuals with Learning Difficulties and Impairments.
- Also other guides for Educators on Using Digital Media, Using Microsoft Office, Using Microsoft Producer and Using Tablet PC.

Check the following links for more information:

<http://www.microsoft.com/enable/education/default.aspx>

<http://www.microsoft.com/enable/education/guide.aspx>

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/news/index.htm or by subscription for \$27.50 (GST \$2.50 incl)



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For people with cerebral palsy and their families.

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