



Modern-Eyes

Working together
WITH visually impaired people
FOR visually impaired people

THE MAGAZINE

Issue 60
July 2007

Sharing news, views, comments, information
and technology

Website: www.modern-eyes.co.uk

Contact Details:

Sue Allard

Telephone: 01453 757 047

Email: sue@modern-eyes.co.uk

Supplied by: James and Owen
2 London Road, Stroud, Glos
Telephone: 01453 764 026

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Modern-Eyes: THE MAGAZINE

is available in large print or Braille, on tape or as a DAISY CD, on a data CD, by email and on the website as a Word file, zipped Word file, webpage or pdf file.

FROM YOUR EDITOR

Hello everyone!

First of all, I must apologise for the last issue going out late. I had some technical problems with the DAISY version and the nice lady from the printers left the print copy on the doorstep as usual but when it threatened to pour with rain she came back and rescued it as I was out. So it was a day or so late arriving as she, quite rightly, with the weather as it has been, waited until I was in before delivering it again!

This is our sixtieth issue! You will find that it is a bit longer than usual!

This month there is news of some special offers from Tapesense, news about possible audio access to iPods, audio description at Lords, the long awaited version eight from Dolphin and, as usual, much more.

So get the ice cubes clinking, settle down under the parasol (or umbrella!) and read on ...

Sue

OUT AND ABOUT**HELP FROM VIRGIN****Trouble with trains?**

If you ring Virgin they will ask if you want a taxi to the train station and again for the return journey.

Virgin Care line

Telephone: 08457 44 33 66.

Thanks to Christine, one of our readers, for this information.

UNDERGROUND ACCESS!

London Underground has launched its new detailed, interactive which allows passengers to understand the access available at every station across the network, particularly the routes between street and platforms.

The service takes access information to a new level and is initially only available at

Website: www.directenquiries.com

The service will soon be fully integrated with the Transport for London journey planner.

London Underground's Accessibility and Inclusion Manager, Wayne Trevor said: "The new service will be a real benefit for all our customers showing them the best routes through stations for their individual needs, not just wheelchair users, but the elderly,

travellers with heavy luggage and parents with buggies, as well as those passengers with visual and hearing impairments.

"This groundbreaking new service allows all customers to plan in advance ensuring an easier and more relaxed journey, promoting confidence and independent travel on the Tube."

Visitors to the website:

www.directenquiries.com

will be able to search for accessible routes through each Underground station, prioritising their search according to their individual needs.

Routes available include both street-level to platform and interchanges (platform to platform).

The access details include the number of steps, lifts, escalators, walking distances, ramps and platform to train gap width.

The site also allows passengers to search for comprehensive information about each station, including car parking, toilets, services for blind and partially sighted people, induction loops and other access facilities.

Visitors to the site can also register, free of charge, which will allow them to receive updated travel and access information on stations of their choice.

This additional service will also be available by SMS before the end of the year.

The Transport for London journey planner allows passengers to conduct searches across the whole network covering 274 stations, providing accessible route information across the city. Integration of the two services is underway.

This new online interactive service complements Getting Around London:

Your Guide to Accessibility, launched in March, which gives information about accessibility on all forms of public transport across London.

The guide is available at Tube stations, bus stations and Travel Information Centres.

**Telephone: 0207 222 1234
24-hour service**

Audio, large print and Braille versions of the guide are also available.

Website: www.tfl.gov.uk

WANT A LOBSTER?

HALF PRICE PHONE

I have also heard that if you want to buy a Virgin Lobster Windows Smartphone, you can get it for £49.99 at the Virgin Megastore in Cheltenham, if you buy at the weekend. The normal weekday price is £99.99!

Please note:

This information was correct at the time of press. Please check before you buy!

Telephone: 01242 222 123

CASHPOINT BLUES ... YELLOWS, GREENS, REDS ...!**CHANGES TO CASHPOINTS**

I have had the following message from Joan in Cirencester. Have any of you had similar experiences?

"I have encountered a rather annoying problem with my bank. Up to a month ago the cashpoint keyboards at my local branch were easy to negotiate and the screens easy to follow. This gave me the independence to withdraw my own cash unaided. About a month ago all this changed. Presumably the bank wanted to update their cashpoint machines to a more modern and jazzy look but to the detriment of the visually impaired.

Gone is the black and white screen with large font letters - replaced by a very colourful blue and yellow layout in small font. The keyboard has also altered and the lighting over the cashpoint dimmed!

I wonder, did the bank's design team consult a visually impaired person prior to making these changes?

Having discovered the changes, I spoke to the assistant at Customer Services who was sympathetic, saying there had been a number of complaints about the new cashpoints. She advised me to write to the Senior Manager of the bank, so I did.

I am now on a mission to get a positive response but so far my letters have been passed round various departments - it feels very like a 'passing the buck' situation!! However, in my last letter I threatened to approach the Banking Ombudsman if some notice is not taken of my complaint.

Have other readers had any similar experiences? If so, I feel we should not just let it lie - after all, the banks are able to produce large print, audio and Braille statements and other correspondence, so why are we discriminated against when we reach the cashpoint! This bank apparently has introduced the new cashpoints in every branch throughout the country".

Thank you Joan

Let's have your comments!

Sorry we can't name the actual bank but it could get us into trouble!!!

Sue

SUPPORT GROUP

I have received this information from Anne in Fairford:

DISC

Disability information and support in the Cotswolds. There is an office in Cirencester and one in Fairford. Disability affects everyone and sometimes just a chat can help. That is what I am here for, many disabled people their families and friends comment on the lack of information that is readily available we aim to provide that information. Our service is completely confidential and free, DISC has been established and is run by disabled people for disabled people, we understand. The disability label covers everything from obvious physical to the not so obvious mental or bereavement problems.

To contact DISC

Email: Anne@sc-vs.com

Telephone: 01285 713 852

Mobile: 07889 088 167

**Or call in to the office:
3 London Street
Fairford
Glos**

SPORTS NEWS

WEMBLEY SITE HAS POOR ACCESS

The website for the new stadium falls short on accessibility for its disabled visitors.

Website: www.wembleystadium.com

The site uses the latest in interactive technology, webcams and downloads to enable site visitors to find out about the history of the facility, forthcoming events and applying for tickets, as well as allowing fans to take a virtual tour of the ground.

AbilityNet has carried out an audit of the site and found it wanting.

Wembley's Disability Liaison Coordinator, Marie Head, has welcomed this independent audit in helping to further improve and develop Wembley Stadium's website in line with the location itself - "one of the most accessible sporting and entertainment venues in the country."

Unfortunately, the physical accessibility of the stadium is not reflected in its website presence, which obtained only a two star rating - one star short of the basic three stars which denote a minimum standard of accessibility - meaning that it lacks many of the fundamental features allowing disabled people to use the site effectively.

Typical problems encountered during the testing included:**Small text and poorly contrasting colours**

Attempts to resize text do not work and text overlaps or drops to the bottom of the page

Blind users will encounter a wide variety of difficulties using this site. The virtual tour, for example, provides no spoken or text description of what is being shown and they have to struggle with inaccessible controls on the player it uses.

Many labels to images on the site, which blind users rely on as a key accessibility tool, are uninformative or unnecessary - adding a large amount of confusing "auditory clutter".

Visitors who have difficulties using a keyboard or mouse will find that the history of Wembley timeline facility moves so fast that only an expert "mouse sharpshooter" will be able to use it - let alone keyboard users, blind users and those using voice recognition.

The main menu of the site is unusable by the keyboard so visitors unable to operate a mouse are effectively barred from the site.

The site is totally reliant on JavaScript - those mini programs embedded in a web page that add extra functionality, but which are often problematic for those users of the special technologies required by many disabled people. Without JavaScript, the main menu and search facilities cease to function.

FOOTBALL FIXTURES FOR 2007/2008

Don't miss out on your favourite team's action! Thanks to RNIB, you can follow all the matches throughout the 2007/2008 season for leagues in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

The annual listings are available in Braille and email - and this year, for the first time, we're producing the English and Scottish fixtures in Daisy audio format too.

The listings are presented in date order and also contain the final league tables from last season.

England

Braille

Product code: TC20537

Email: Quote EF

Daisy audio

Product code: TC 21179

Scotland

Braille

Product code: TC 20538

Email: Quote SF

Daisy audio

Product code: TC 21180.

Wales

Braille

Product code: TC 20540

Email: Quote WF

Ireland

Braille

Product code: TC 20539

Email: Quote IF

Cost: £1.50 per set of listings

TELEPHONE: 08457 023 153

AUDIO DESCRIBED CRICKET AT MCC

Ball by Ball – Cricket Commentary at Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC)
The “Ball by Ball” project is a new service which has been installed at Lord’s and the MCC. The audio description is provided by a commentator specifically trained in describing events for those unable to see them clearly. This commentary is transmitted to a headset that can be worn by spectators in any area of the ground. It is provided by volunteer, BBC trained, commentators who have been recruited to provide this service for all games.

Blind and partially sighted spectators are provided with small hand held receivers and headsets which allow them to receive the dedicated commentary throughout the match. The project is proving a huge success and there has been a very good take up of the headsets for every fixture.

RNIB has trained the stewards and officials on how to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act, how to provide accessible information and how to guide a blind or partially sighted person.

RNIB is now looking to work with all county clubs and test match grounds to ensure that this service is available to all blind spectators across the country.

For more information about the Ball by Ball service provided by MCC

Telephone: 0207 616 8500

Website: www.mcc.org.uk

LEISURE TIME

AUDIO MENUS FOR YOUR IPOD?

Audio menus for iPods

By Kate Green

Researchers are testing ways to let people listen to gadget menu options instead of looking at them. Scrolling through an iPod menu requires a significant amount of visual attention and can be a hindrance during physical activity and even dangerous while driving.

To make iPod menu navigation easier and safer, the University of Toronto and Microsoft Research have collaborated to create software that would allow iPod users to navigate the menu using audio cues.

The researchers have developed an auditory menu system called earPod that provides audio feedback as a person moves his or her finger over the touch pad. While earPod is not ready to replace the extensive menus on real iPods, Microsoft Research scientist Patrick Baudisch says the results are encouraging.

After thirty minutes of using the technology, users can navigate two levels of earPod menus faster than traditional visual menus, and with just as much accuracy. Baudisch says that audio menus could help gadgets save battery life by not lighting up the screen, and could add functions to screen-free devices such as the iPod shuffle.

The earPod system assigns selections to different areas of the iPod's circular touch pad, allowing users to jump directly to a selection, rather than scrolling through as with the regular iPod. Eventually, the earPod could be programmed to read off a limited number of names of artists and songs.

Georgia Institute of Technology professor of psychology and computing Bruce Walker says audio interfaces are not widespread in handheld consumer devices because audio hardware and software is resource intensive, requires significant amounts of energy and computation, and is difficult to program. But computing power is becoming cheaper, and there is greater demand for new ways to interact with handheld devices.

He expects the number of researchers investigating ways to make better audio interfaces to grow over the next few years.

But computing power is becoming cheaper, and there is an increasing need to find different ways to interact with handheld devices, says Walker. Within the past 10 years, he says, the ubiquity of mobile devices with small displays "has made us all visually impaired".

Currently there are only a handful of researchers who are systematically looking at ways to make better audio interfaces for various devices, but Walker expects the ranks to grow in the coming years.

This first earPod prototype has a two-level menu hierarchy with eight items per category, for a total of 64 items. To test how well people use the system, the researchers assigned to the first menu level a random assortment of categories: "clothing", "fish", "instrument", "colour", and four others. The next level contained eight examples of these items. The iPod analogy would be found in the opening menu, which includes "music", "extras", "settings", and then lower menus that include "playlists", "artists", and "albums" for instance. The earPod approach could be extended to read off names of artists and songs as well.

EarPod was designed specifically for gadgets with circular touch pads, which are evenly divided into eight sectors: it's cut like pieces of a pie, with each menu item associated with each piece. When a person touches the dial of an earPod-equipped gadget, the audio menu responds with a pre-recorded human voice. If a person puts his or her finger at twelve o'clock on the touch pad, the voice might say, "Colour" indicating that the finger is on the colour sector. When the finger crosses one of these invisible sector lines, the user hears a clicking sound. As a finger moves, a new menu item is announced. To select an item and go to the next menu level, the user lifts his or her finger and hears a "camera-shutter" sound, which indicates that an item has been chosen.

Because the touch pad is divided into portions, people can easily learn where menu items are and quickly jump to certain items without having to scroll through a list, as with an iPod.

Another feature of earPod, he says, is that a user doesn't need to wait until a menu item is read before moving on to another. When a finger moves to a new sector, the audio is interrupted and the new item is announced.

In the earPod usability study, conducted by Shengdong Zhao, a doctoral student at the University of Toronto, and project lead, the researchers found that people who had no experience using either an iPod or an earPod-equipped device used the devices with equal accuracy. EarPod was 92.1 % accurate, while the visual system was 93.9 % accurate, but the difference was not statistically significant. It took people longer to grow accustomed to earPod, but with experience, users' performance on the audio menu became faster. After thirty minutes of training on both devices, subjects could navigate two levels of menu with earPod in 2.1 seconds as opposed to 2.5 seconds with the visual menu.

Georgia Tech's Walker is impressed with the earPod approach and results. "My overall impression is that this is great ... It was inevitable: trying to look at how to take an interface that is purely visual on the iPod and turn it into an interface that's purely auditory, because, after all, the iPod's an auditory device. Why should a

person have to pull their player out while they're jogging to look at it?"

Currently, however, earPod could not be a complete replacement for an iPod menu, Walker notes. One reason is that earPod doesn't lend itself to menu flexibility. Once a person learns the position of the menu items, he or she might become frustrated if those positions need to change due to a software update or added playlist. In particular, the approach would not work well for menus such as mobile-phone address books, Walker says.

In addition, adds Baudisch, because the circular track pad is divided into sectors, there are a limited number of menu items that a person can access. If there are eight sectors, each with 8 menu items, then there are only 64 total items accessible on the device, and this wouldn't be good enough for iPods that hold hundreds of playlists and thousands of songs. However, Baudisch suspects that future prototypes will provide ways to get around the problem. He and his team are exploring how people respond to faster audio output (speeding up the recorded voice) and how people use audio and visual cues simultaneously. Developing an all-encompassing interface for eyes-free operations on auditory devices is still a future project, he says.

(AccessIT, June 2007)

EASY LISTENING!

Tapesense are offering several DAB radios at discounted prices for the summer. These include a portable DAB radio with a long battery life.

They also have offers on various headphones, batteries, audio leads and recordable media.

Telephone:0207 357 9298

Email: info@persula.org

NOTE:

There is a £5 minimum order charge.

NEW GUIDE CATS CD

BCAB (The British Computer Association of the Blind) has announced the imminent arrival of the next C D in the Guide Cats series. Top Cat, White Tie and Tails is a single volume C D which will be ready for launch at the Sight Village exhibition in July. If you enjoyed Guide Cats for the Blind and The Missing Persians File CDs, this latest collection won't disappoint.

An all-spoken collection of poems from the endless repertoire of humorous poet Les Barker, the CD lives up to its predecessors with a glittering array of celebrities. Tim Brooke-Taylor, Andrew Sachs, Roger Lloyd Pack, Joss Ackland, Prunella Scales and Christopher Cazenove, are joined by Les Barker, Judi Spiers, Ken Bruce and many others.

NEW DAISY TITLES TO BUY

RNIB has recently added to their range of Daisy books with new titles in cookery, poetry, science fiction and fantasy, horror, crime and thriller, children's fiction and much, much more. Contact RNIB for more information.

Telephone: 08457 023 153

MEDIA NEWS

FREE ARCHIVE?

**BBC archive could come free online with your licence fee
Richard Alleyne. (The Daily Telegraph, 16/4/07)**

Up to a million hours of broadcasting history could be made available on the Internet as part of a plan to open the BBC's archive to licence fee payers.

Lost gems of radio and television, some of which have never been repeated, include an interview with Martin Luther King filmed shortly before he was assassinated, and a 1956 episode of the nature series Zoo Quest in which a young David Attenborough captures the komodo dragon on film for the first time.

The episode has only been shown once but could soon be available online as part of the ambitious project, led by the BBC's director of future media and technology, Ashley Highfield.

The BBC wants to put the material on the internet for viewers to watch, listen to and download and it has begun the long process of retrieving and transferring programmes.

A trial involving 20,000 users began in May and the service could be available nationally in a year's time. Most of the service should be free to licence fee payers but those abroad will pay and there is a possibility of advertising on the site.

Other shows the BBC hopes to make available include a 1981 performance of Othello, starring Anthony Hopkins and Bob Hoskins, and a dramatic government appeal, transmitted in May 1940, asking

for volunteers to sail to Dunkirk to help rescue the 330,000 French and British troops stranded there.

The corporation is currently trying to clear the copyright on material.

(AccessIT, May 2007)



DIGITAL TV

STILL CONFUSED? GET SOME HELP!

Do you need more information on Digital TV?

Ricability, an independent national research charity, has tested over 100 digital TV products to help consumers choose the easiest to use for the switch to digital television. The findings are published free on a fully accessible 'triple A' website

Website: www.ricability-digitaltv.org.uk

The information is also available on audio tape and CD.

Test reports are available on indoor aerials, set top boxes, PVRs and IDTVs and as well as recommending the easiest to use products, detailed useful information is given for people with sight problems on: ease of use of remote controls and on-screen guides, and audio description availability and access (within detailed test reports).

Four audio-tape/CD reports are available:

- 1) Getting started: what to do about digital TV**
- 2) Indoor TV aerials: consumer test report**
- 3) Digital TV recorders and set top boxes: consumer test reports**

4) Widescreen iDTVs: consumer test reports

To obtain copies

Ricability
30 Angel Gate
City Road
London
EC1V 2PT

Email: mail@ricability.org.uk

Telephone: 0207 427 2460

RNIB also has a fact sheet all about choosing digital TV equipment

Jill Whitehead

Telephone: 0207 391 2398

Website:

http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/publicwebsite/public_audiodescription.hcsp#P46_2253

Computing

A DIFFERENT SCREEN READER TO TRY

Stephen, one of our readers, has sent this email. It might be of interest.

Dear Sue,
I wondered if you thought of trying

Website: www.SAToGo.com

which is discussed below in the forwarded message. If it means accessibility to any visually impaired person who cannot afford a full screen reader, it has to be a good thing. Would you consider passing this information on in Modern-Eyes.

Stephen

Yes I would! So here is the information Stephen refers to:

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Janelle Schulenberg

Tacet Consulting

Email: janelle@tacetconsulting.com

Serotek Makes Web 2.0 Accessible to the Blind

Technology Company Introduces SA To Go

Minneapolis, Minnesota

13 June 2007

Serotek Corporation, the leading provider of Internet and digital information accessibility software and services, announces the public beta release of a web application called SA To Go (System Access To Go), the first product to make Web 2.0 accessible to the blind and the visually impaired.

SA To Go is a web-resident product stemming from Serotek's award-winning System Access software. More than a screen reader, System Access requires no installation and provides complete control of your e-mail, makes web surfing easy, and offers intuitive access to Microsoft Office productivity tools like Word, PowerPoint and Excel. SA To Go makes System Access available on the Web for instant operation and has no permanence on the using computer. Users can now access System Access software anytime, anywhere that Internet access is available.

“We believe SA To Go will revolutionize the way blind people use the computer,” said Mike Calvo, CEO, Serotek Corporation, “That’s why we felt it critical to leverage the power of Web 2.0 to continue to fulfill our promise of accessibility anywhere.”

SA To Go provides instant accessibility. Once online, users can visit

Website: www.SAtoGo.com

and it appears in seconds. When finished, the user simply closes the program and any personal information vanishes leaving the host computer completely unchanged.

“Microsoft applauds Serotek’s innovation with respect to access for all,” said Daniel Hubbell, Technical Evangelist, Microsoft Corporation, “SA To Go is a revolution for people who need access to computers away from home.”

Because of technologies like Fonix's text-to-speech and its small size, SA To Go loads within seconds giving the blind user the same access on the go as his sighted peers. And since SA To Go is a true web application, accessibility is no longer an expensive option; companies that want to provide public accessibility to customers can do so for a fraction of the cost.

“Serotek’s new SA To Go application gives blind and visually impaired users quick, convenient access to PC functions,” says Tim K. Hong, VP of Sales, Fonix Speech, Inc. “SA To Go incorporates Fonix text-to-speech, which is optimized to provide clear, intelligible TTS voices without using large amounts of processing power or memory. Fonix speech technology is a good fit for Serotek’s System ccess Mobile applications.”

Serotek is putting the system out for public Beta because they are encouraging user input. The company can imagine hundreds of applications but believes users will direct its true potential.

“We think we've only scratched the surface of the potential of SA To Go,” says Calvo, “That's why we're inviting users to take it for a spin and let us know how they think it might be applied.”

The company will be surveying users on a regular basis and encouraging users to e-mail their ideas and comments

Email: SAToGo@serotek.com

To participate in the public beta, users can go to

Website: <http://www.satogo.com>

Follow the instructions. Immediate accessibility will lead the user through the registration process. For more information about Serotek and its family of System Access accessibility tools, visit

Website: www.serotek.com

Serotek Corporation

Serotek Corporation is a leading technology company that develops software and manufactures accessibility solutions. Committed to the mission of providing accessibility anywhere, Serotek launched an online community specifically designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities. Since then, Serotek has introduced several powerful, affordable solutions that require minimal training, including System Access, for which it was awarded the prestigious da Vinci award for innovation in universal accessibility by the National Multiple Sclerosis Association. For more information, visit

Website: www.serotek.com

Fonix Corporation

Fonix Corporation (OTC BB: FNIX), based in Salt Lake City, Utah, is an innovative speech recognition and text-to-speech technology company that provides value-added speech solutions through its wholly owned subsidiary, Fonix Speech, Inc., currently offering voice solutions for mobile/wireless devices; interactive video games, toys and appliances; computer telephony systems; the assistive market and automotive telematics. Fonix provides

developers and manufacturers with cost-effective speech solutions to enhance devices and systems.

Website: www.fonix.com

Microsoft Corporation

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential. For more information,

Website: www.microsoft.com###

DOLPHIN VERSION EIGHT NOW AVAILABLE

If you are a Dolphin version seven user, now it the time to register for a free upgrade to version eight. You can find fell details of how to register on the Dolphin website

Website: www.yourdolphin.com

Supernova, Hal, Lunar and Lunar Plus are now all available from the website.

You can download a thirty day trial version and then request an unlock key to convert it to the permanent version.

If you are using the pen version of any of the software you will be given instructions on how to obtain the new version eight.

Version 8 of Supernova heralds the release of the World's only full screen reader with inbuilt screen magnification that supports Microsoft's newest operating system, Windows Vista.

Supernova Version 8 will empower visually impaired users worldwide running any of the 4 Vista editions to chose the speech output, screen magnification, refreshable Braille and colour changing settings that best suit their needs.

Also released are Version 8 of Dolphin's Lunar, LunarPlus and Hal that also include Vista support for the Home Basic, Home Premium, Ultimate and Business editions, alongside the same excellent functionality and product support Dolphin customers have come to expect.

Immediately Available in 16 Different Languages

Are you a speech user looking to access German Windows Vista Ultimate? Need some added magnification for French Vista Home Premium? No problem. Version 8 of Supernova, Hal, Lunar and LunarPlus are all immediately available in our 16 most popular language versions including UK English, US English, Arabic, Croatian, Czech, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Icelandic, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Swedish and not forgetting Welsh.

Free Upgrade to Version 8 – Register Soon

Over 20 years of developing market leading software has earned Dolphin a loyal group of customers ranging from aging surfers to students, from as far apart as the UK to South America. We are therefore delighted to offer any Supernova, Hal, Lunar and LunarPlus Version 7 user, a free upgrade to Version 8 with support for Vista and XP.

Users need simply register their name, email address and serial number with Dolphin or their local Dolphin Dealer by the end of August and will receive their free upgrade by download.

Unlock a Demo - Quick, Easy & Carriage Free

Version 8 also marks the arrival of the unlockable demo, simply download the trial version that suits your needs, put version 8 through it's paces and then by entering a simple unlock code, your demo is converted into a full user licence with no time restrictions and no limitations. Unlock codes also come with the added bonus of a £20 or \$34 or €28 discount off the price of your normal Dolphin software.

ACCESSING PDF USING JAWS

Here is an article from AccessIT, May 2007 which may help JAWS users with PDF files. A lot of the information is also relevant to other screen reader users.

"Across the world, millions of P D F's are generated every day. Organisations, businesses and governments, small companies and individuals use them - they are everywhere, but why?

- **Printing:** paper is still popular and P D F's print reliably
- **Protection:** the information is locked.
- **Design:** a company can implement its corporate branding guidelines and know that everyone seeing that document is getting the same experience
- **Foolproof:** it's not difficult to create a P D F, just a couple of clicks and it's done

"PDFs should really be intended for reading in their printed format and not on screen. This becomes even more relevant for screen reader users.

"As a screen reader user myself I've hit up against lots of problems trying to access and read information in PDFs.

More often than not P D F's are much harder to navigate and read than other document formats and leave me confused or doubting the accuracy of what I'm hearing.

"Help is at hand - we've produced Accessing PDF using JAWS: a user's guide.

Website:

www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public_accessingpdf.hcsp

"This guide is aimed at you the screen reader user, those people who support you and of course policy makers and IT managers. The guide is from a screen reader user's perspective and sets out tips on reading PDFs, Adobe's official guidelines, what's inside a PDF, links to conversion resources and a section that somewhat bravely comments on the legal aspects.

"Please use the guide and tell us what you think and share any tips you may have.

"Together we can make PDFs what they were designed to be: a way of sharing information irrespective of location or platform."

You can post comments, or read other blog entries at

Website: www.rnib.org.uk/wacblog/

(AccessIT, May 2007)

USEFUL WEBSITES

EBAY TUTORIAL

Interested in eBay? Then check out the online Tek Talk training archives

Website: www.accessibleworld.org

There is information on Navigating and Bidding on eBay presented by Matthew Bullis, a blind experienced computer user.

CITY BREAKS PODCASTS

Planning a city break in Bath, Oxford, Birmingham, Manchester or London?

Then download a city guide from

Website: www.enjoyengland.com/ideas/city-breaks/podcasts/audio-city-guides.aspx

and listen to it on your M P 3 player wherever you are.

You can find out how Bath's Roman history has influenced its landscape today, learn how the fascinating city of Oxford has been shaped by history, architecture and education, discover the nightlife and entertainment of Birmingham, learn more about the capital of England and discover some of Manchester's greatest cultural assets.

SKYPE AND JAWS

Get JAWS scripts for Skype

Website: www.dlee.org/skype/

MORE TUTORIALS

Pick up a tutorial for Audacity or Windows Media Player

Website: <http://vip.chowo.co.uk/>

CREEPY CASTLES!

PCS Games, who claim to "make games that tickle your ears," have released 'Sarah and the Castle of Witchcraft and Wizardry', a new accessible game inspired by the books of JK Rowling. The game transports players into a world of fantasy filled with secret

passageways and hidden chambers. You are challenged to explore the castle searching for magical items and fighting creepy creatures.

Website: <http://www.pcsgames.net>

COMPUTER CLASSES

IT WORKSHOPS

Don't forget our workshops at Coney Hill and Stonehouse.

At present the Stonehouse class is full but we have spaces at Coney Hill on Tuesdays.

If you would like to come to a class, let us know and we will do our best to find you a place.

Telephone: 01453 757 047

Email: sue@modern-eyes.co.uk

Or rob@modern-eyes.co.uk

NOTE:

The classes will finish at the end of July for the summer break. We will start again in September.

WORK BOOKS

If you are using Hal, Lunar, Lunar Plus or Supernova, you may like to know that we at Modern-Eyes have written some work books to help you get to know your software, set it up how you want it and practice a few exercises.

We have one for guiding you through the magnification and colour schemes and one for helping you to choose your voice, amount of reading and more. They are currently for Windows XP systems. Vista to follow when we have got to grips with it!

We also have books to help you get started with word processing and how to manage your files and folders on your PC. T

The books cost from £7.50 each and are available in any format.

If you would like any of these books please contact us.

Sue

Telephone: 01453 757 047

Email: sue@modern-eyes.co.uk

Rob

Email: rob@modern-eyes.co.uk

DISCLAIMER

All information in this magazine is provided in good faith and is, to the best of our knowledge, accurate at the time of printing.

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