

A.T. News

November 2007

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Editorial

Welcome to our November newsletter, which we hope you'll find packed with useful information about upcoming Assistive Technology training opportunities, product updates and innovative service developments.

Despite the monsoons of the summer, Enable Ireland's National high tech Assistive Technology Training Service has been busily progressing a number of projects, in line with our core aim to make Assistive Technology available to all who need it, in order to enhance independence.

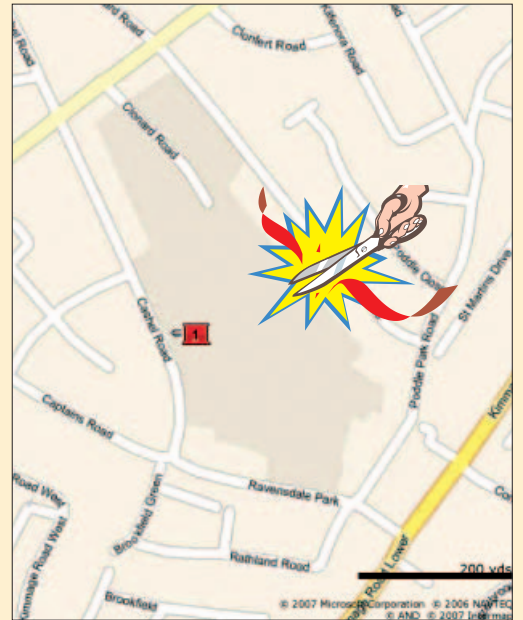
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Micheál Martin will

officially open our AT training centre on November 28th next. With generous support from Microsoft's Unlimited Potential Programme, we have established the first national centre which focuses primarily on the delivery of training in assistive technology. This new location gives us an essential base in which to develop and deliver innovative programmes in assistive technology.

Why not visit Microsoft Maps to check out our new location?

Now read on for all the latest news in Assistive Technology

Siobhán Long, *Manager*



CEO, Fionnuala O'Donovan visits Enable Ireland's new Assistive Technology training HQ in Cashel Road

Second AT Course delivered due to increasing demand

Due to a phenomenal increase in demand for our AT training course, certified by Dublin Institute of Technology, we ran a second course in 2007.

In response to feedback from previous attendees, we altered the schedule of this second course and instead of running it over two full weeks (each week separated by approximately 6 weeks to allow participants to apply their learning), our autumn course ran over a total of 9 days: 3 days per week, every fortnight for 6 weeks.

As usual, participants will also be required to complete a post-course project if they wish to apply for accreditation.

The course dates were:

- Week 1: September 3rd, 4th & 5th 2007
- Week 2: September 17th, 18th & 19th 2007
- Week 3: October 1st, 2nd and 3rd 2007.

A joint graduation ceremony, which will be officiated by Senator David Norris, will take place for both courses on December 4th 2007, in Microsoft, who have generously hosted all of our courses since 2005.

Microsoft wins CSR Award for partnership with Enable Ireland's Assistive Technology Service

For their partnership with Enable Ireland's Assistive Technology service, Microsoft were the proud winners of the Award for Best Community Partnership in the Multinational Corporation category at this year's Chambers Ireland CSR Awards ceremony. The Award ceremony took place in the Burlington Hotel, Dublin on Wednesday 26th September 2007.



Pictured at the event from left to right: Padraig McManus (ESB), Siobhan Long (Enable Ireland), Tom Murphy and Catherine Hallahan (Microsoft), Minister of State Pat Carey TD, David Pierce (Ulster Bank).

Assistive Technology on YouTube!

With broadband slowly spreading its tentacles across the country, we recognise that we have a part to play in making the information society accessible to all. Recently, we uploaded a video demonstrating an Irish-designed switch accessible mobile phone to YouTube, one of the most widely used video-sharing websites.

To view this video, go to www.youtube.com and type 'Click2Phone' in the search box



Dublin Institute of Technology launches a Masters in Assistive Technology



The DIT will commence a Masters in Computing (Assistive Technology) in January 2008.

The course will be taught in conjunction with the Central Remedial Clinic and the Central for Excellent in Universal Design, at the National Disability Authority.

This Masters is designed to provide a broad background in the area of assistive technology with special focus on the principles of Universal Design. Participants will develop professional, technical and research abilities central to computing for assistive technology.

There is a strong emphasis on practical assessment to allow students the opportunity to apply skills acquired within modules. The minimum time to complete the MSc programme is three academic semesters (1 year) fulltime and four academic semesters (two years) part-time. However the modular nature of the programme offers students

the flexibility to progress through the programme at their own pace.

This programme is being offered initially only on a part-time basis, thus the minimum duration for a student enrolled in the MSc programme, to eligible for the award of MSc in Computing (Assistive Technology) is four academic semesters assuming that all modules are taken and completed and passed on first attempt. Students can progress through the programme, at their own pace, taking as many modules as they like (to a maximum of six) each year. Classes will be held on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

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Groove Power Wheelchair



The new Groove Power Wheelchair from Sunrise Medical comes with the option of 3 interchangeable power bases, and an extensive seating range. The base consists of either a front wheel drive, mid wheel drive or rear wheel drive system with suspension features to overcome most types of terrain. An interface module between the seat and base allow for a fixed seat tilt, 30 degree of dynamic tilt and a seat lift.

The drive controls are from Delphi Electronics. As well as the standard joystick Delphi allows for various other controls like switch options, touch pad, mini joystick, Sip and Puff.

An Enhanced Display provides the options for switch scanning and environmental control. The display has a built-in infra red transmitter, and can control doors, lights, curtains, telephone and various other home appliances like TV, music centre etc. Appliances are setup by entering the product code or infrared signals, which can be learnt by the Enhanced Display. The menu is customisable and can be setup for text or symbols.

For further information see:
http://www.quickiepower.com/groove_en_gb/index.html

Seán Loughran
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Product Updates

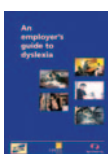
Communication

Sherston Products:



This company provides a wide range of curricular software. Nearly all of Sherston's software is accessible via touchscreen and interactive whiteboard. Much of Sherston's software is also accessible by switch.

www.sherston.com



The British Dyslexia Association has an Employer's Guide to Dyslexia.

You can visit their website at: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk for more information.



A new **CD-ROM** is available to help young people with dyslexia determine how they learn best. You can find out more about this software from Dyslexia International at www.ditt-online.org. Their website also provides a variety of resources and information for employers

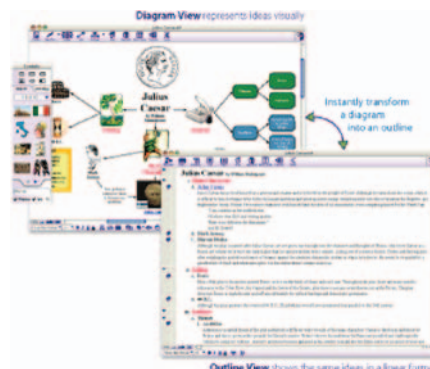
and people with dyslexia.



Number Shark Version 4 has been released.



Claro Read has a new version available that is compatible with Windows Vista. <http://www.dynavox.co.uk/>



There are two programmes that can help create mind maps on your computer. **Inspiration** is compatible with both Macintosh and PCs, it can be downloaded from their website for a free trial. www.inspiration.com **Mind Manager Pro 6** is another mind mapping program that is also Macintosh and PC compatible. It can also be downloaded for a free trial from www.mindjet.com, or a demo CD can be posted.



Kaz is a touch typing program available for home, school, or business. This touch typing program is available for Macintosh and PC. Kaz also produces an RSI computer program for PCs only. www.kaz-type.com. Please note we have not tried this computer programme yet ourselves.



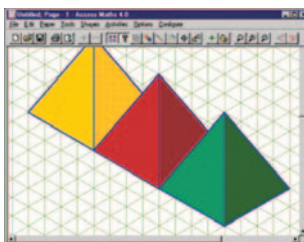
A small, left-handed keyboard is available that might work for anyone using one hand to type. This keyboard is available from **KeyTools**. www.KeyTools.

Product Updates



A portable screen magnifier called the **Stellar Pocket** is available from vendors in the UK:

www.forcetenco.co.uk and www.steller-technology.co.uk



The **ACE Centre** has a number of AT software programs available, as well as free publications, including a guide for software developers on creating accessible software.

Check out their website at www.ace-centre.org.uk

IBM HOME PAGE READER



This product provides Web access by speaking web page information. **Home Page Reader** provides an easy-to-use interface for navigating and manipulating web page elements and utilises IBM's multilanguage text-to-speech synthesiser for speaking.

Using the numeric keypad on the keyboard, a person who is blind or who has a visual impairment can hear the full range of web page content provided in a logical and understandable manner. In addition to being a Web browser, Home Page Reader includes a desktop reader with keyboard navigation and speech output for Adobe Reader, Macromedia Flash, and a number of Windows applications, including the Windows desktop and selected system applications.

Cost: €242.00 incl VAT.

DocuPen R700



The DocuPen is capable of storing up to 100 pages into memory and takes approximately 4 to 8 seconds per page. The DocuPen scans a FULL PAGE width and therefore scans the entire page including text and graphics. Included with the Pen is OCR Converter Software which on connecting the Pen to a laptop or computer will immediately convert all stored documents to text for you to read using Text to Speech Applications on your laptop or computer.

Colour Format is also available with the R800 model.

Cost: €185.00 incl. VAT

Co-Writer Solo



*For struggling writers, translating thoughts into writing can feel overwhelming. Their writing often suffers from phonetic or inventive spelling, lack of richness, limited detail, and incoherence. **Co:Writer** is a word prediction program which uses Linguistic Word Prediction™ intelligence. Users with limited Keyboard Skills or limited mobility may benefit from using this product as it allows a user to create text with very limited keyboard input.*

Newly-discovered Assistive Technology Supplier in Co. Clare

E@syPC are an Assistive Technology Solutions Provider, based in Newmarket on Fergus in Clare. Specialising in solutions which support reading and writing skills. E@syPC are distributors for ClaroRead software, Dragon Naturally Speaking Voice Recognition Software, Co-writer and other software www.easypc.ie

The year ahead-planning for your AT training needs

We're already working on our 2008 schedule of training, so if you have a particular AT training need, why not contact us to discuss? Here are just some of the training options we have available:

NATIONAL AT SEMINAR 2008:-

AT Service welcomes topic suggestions **NOW!!**

AT Training Options

<p>1. Certified AT Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Modules include: alternative computer access, augmentative communication, visual impairment, AT for leisure, AT in education, funding and legislation ➤ Course open to anyone interested in AT ➤ Certified by Dublin Institute of Technology ➤ Course dates: Spring 2008 	<p>2. General AT Workshops:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Low Cost No Cost: How do adapt your PC without spending anything ➤ AT Assessment Kits ➤ Windows Accessibility Features
<p>3. Supplier/Product-specific Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Grid ➤ Clicker ➤ Alternative power Mobility Controls ➤ Boardmaker ➤ Dynavox/other AAC device ➤ Jaws ➤ Kurzweil 	<p>4. Topic-specific Training:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Environmental Control Overview ➤ PC Access ➤ AAC ➤ Visual Impairment ➤ AT in Education (General & Teacher Focused) ➤ AT & Dyslexia ➤ Integrating AT: AAC, PC Access & ECU ➤ AAC & Literacy ➤ AT & Product Design
<p>5. Customised AT Training to meet local service needs: eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ AT in Early Services ➤ AT in employment 	<p>6. Bi-annual National AT Seminar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First held in 2006 ➤ First seminar focused on a) AT in Early Services & b) AT and Autism
<p>6. Employer Seminars</p>	<p>7. National AT Loan Bank: What it is & How to access it</p>



BREAKING NEWS

National Disability Authority launches AccessIT website

A set of new NDA web resources aimed at anyone involved in creating ICT solutions, such as websites, web-based applications, communication systems etc. The new resources can be found at <http://accessit.nda.ie> and will be of great interest to ICT staff, procurement staff and anyone who writes content for websites. While the AccessIT resources are primarily aimed at public sector staff, they will also be used by many private sector suppliers who are working for public sector clients. Please check out these resources for yourself. The AccessIT website still have accessibility guidelines on the web, Public Access Terminals, Telecommunications and Application Software but also include a number of new and updated resources including;

- Introduction to accessibility (<http://www.accessit.nda.ie/managing-accessibility/introduction-accessibility>)- What is accessibility and who benefits from it?
- Legislation and public policy (<http://www.accessit.nda.ie/managing-accessibility/legislation-and-public-policy>)-

An overview of the Irish legal and policy framework.

- Accessible IT Procurement Toolkit (<http://accessit.nda.ie/procurement>)- Guidance on ensuring accessibility when writing tenders and evaluating responses for ICT solutions
- Techniques for designers and developers and authors to ensure accessibility of websites (<http://www.accessit.nda.ie/web-resources/guidance>)- including video clips showing usage of 'screen readers' and code samples to get you started
- Web accessibility auditing- guidance for manager (<http://www.accessit.nda.ie/web-resources/auditing-web-accessibility>) - Advice on how to commission an audit of a website
- Smart card guidelines (<http://www.accessit.nda.ie/it-accessibility-guidelines/smart-cards>) - advice on ensuring systems which use 'smart cards' (e.g. the Luas smart card) are accessible for people with disabilities

AT Graduation to take place on December 4th in Microsoft

This year saw a massive increase in interest in our certified AT training course. We delivered two courses this year, so there will be over 40 graduates in 2007 joining over 100 graduates from our previous certified training courses, contributing to the growth of a significant AT community across the country. We are delighted to announce that Senator David Norris will officiate at our graduation ceremony in Microsoft, on December 4th at 11am.

Online AT Newsletter: www.atechnews.com

Award-winning journalist, John Williams edits an online newsletter, Assistive Technology news, focusing on new developments and critiques of currently available technologies.