



Users in Control:

A Fresh Perspective on Accessibility

Episode 1

Editor's Word: AT Revolution!

by Joe Barnick, Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to the first episode of “Users in Control: A Fresh Perspective on Accessibility”. This new audio and PDF podcast offers an insightful look at how people with disabilities are empowered through Mac OS X, while shattering preconceptions on disability and assistive technology. Here the users of AT are in the driver’s seat! As in the AssistiveWare Newsletter and video podcast, “Exploring the Frontiers of Assistive Technology”, these stories are written by users of Mac OS X and assistive technology. Featuring their experiences and accomplishments, the episodes seek to inform, inspire, and provide a platform for new ideas.

With this podcast, the content of the newsletter will be available sooner and in a form better for individuals with vision or reading impairments. Found at www.assistiveware.com/newsletter.php, the newsletter appears twice a year in a print ready PDF. The video podcast features some of the contributors sharing how Mac assistive technology impacts their lives. All AssistiveWare podcasts are available free at the iTunes Store and www.atpodcasts.com. As editor of the newsletter and this audio and PDF podcast, and as someone who relies on assistive technology, I hope everyone will realize its potential and the accessibility that the Mac offers.

Little did I realize when I downloaded the on-screen keyboard KeyStrokes 2 on my old

PowerMac that this flawless application had sparked the AT Revolution. From it would arise AssistiveWare, and a family of products consisting of KeyStrokes, SwitchXS, LayoutKitchen, Proloquo, and VisioVoice. Also, never could I envision Apple revolutionizing our lives with digital innovations like the iPod, iTunes Store, Mac mini, and Mac Pro.

The contributors’ successes would be impossible had Mac assistive technology not evolved beyond cumbersome and sloppy disability software. From graphic design to gaming, they share their experiences in pursuing careers and hobbies, and living life to the fullest. With AssistiveWare products, the playing field has been leveled so those with a disability can use the same software as any Mac OS X user.

In future episodes, Bill Lee shares his experience as a technology director working with a student needing a fresh approach to AT. Game guru Mike Philips proves that Rome was built in a day in his guide to Civilization 4. Graphic designer Leigh-Anne Tompkins discusses her work and extraordinary way of accessing her Mac. This is just a sampling of what’s to come.

Through their products, Apple and AssistiveWare have shown the flair to “Think Different”. With Apple’s Intel transition complete, great things are in store for Mac OS X users with disabilities, so stick around – evolution is revolution! ☐

This PDF and audio podcast is created by Mac users with physical, speech, or vision impairments. Featuring their experiences, it seeks to inform, inspire, and provide a platform for new ideas. Twice a year, some of the articles appear in a PDF of the AssistiveWare Newsletter, found at www.assistiveware.com/newsletter.php. A video podcast titled “Exploring the Frontiers of Assistive Technology” that features some of the contributors is also available.

The audio version of this podcast was created on Mac OS X with GhostReader and the Infovox iVox voices of the Acapela Group under a special license permitting professional use of the voices.

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