ViewFinder News

ViewFinder LOW VISION RESOURCE CENTER ™

Lynne Noon, OD	Kevin Huff, OD

Computer Accessibility Options For the Visually Impaired

Computer resources and tools for people with and without disabilities are constantly increasing and becoming more sophisticated. With today's technology, people who are visually impaired or totally blind can use computers to access employment, education and leisure activities. This newsletter highlights basic changes that can be made to a computer to increase visibility.

ViewFinder Low Vision Resource Center provides basic computer modification and training services. We also sell a large selection of large print keyboards, keyboard products and computer enlargement software with and without speech capabilities. Free demo discs of the most popular software are available at both stores. For more advanced technology assessment and training needs we refer our clients to local resources.

Make the keys on your current keyboard more visible with large print keycap labels

Simple Changes to Hardware

- Change to a larger, high definition monitor to increase magnification. A large monitor can also be added to a laptop computer.
- Use large print keyboards or large print keyboard stickers or keyboard overlays.

- Microsoft sells a standard keyboard with a magnification zoom feature. This product can be found at Office Max or Staples.
- Microsoft sells a computer mouse that has a screen magnifier feature. This product can be found at Office Max or Staples.

Microsoft Windows Accessibility feature

Windows operating system has an accessibility feature that will allow the user to:

- Increase font size
- Change the default font to a clearer font such as Arial or Verdana.
- Open a floating magnifier that enlarges part of the screen.

- Change the size of the scroll bars and window boarders.
- Change the size of the icons from normal to large to extra large.
- Change the display settings to 4 different high contrast settings including white letters on a black background or black letters on a white background.
- Change the size and color of the mouse cursor.
- The Windows Accessibility Feature and Accessibility Feature Wizard can be found in the list of programs that are standard on all computers with the Windows Operating System. For more information on Windows Accessibility features go to:
  http://www.microsoft.com/enable
- The appearance of your display can also be changed in the display feature in the Control Panel: Control Panel/Display/ Appearance to change the font from normal to large to extra large. To change the size of everything displayed go to: Control/Display/Settings/Advanced/DPI Settings.

Apple Accessibility Feature

- As with the Windows operating system, every Mac comes with built-in technologies designed to help people with disabilities.
- The newest Snow Leopard operating system advances accessibility even further.

Change the Size of Incoming & Outgoing Email

- Windows Outlook and Outlook Express allow changes in size, font and font color for all email. This can be found in the Tools/Options/Mail Setup section of this program.
- Always set the default font to a clear, easy to read font such as Arial or Verdana.

Enlarge the Internet

Internet Explorer has an enlargement feature that can be found on the tool bar under: View/Zoom.

Screen Magnification Software Programs

- **For Windows Products**: ZoomText (can include speech output), ZoomWare, 1 Click Zoom (free download), Lunar, SuperNova, Magnifier Plus, MAGic.
- **For Mac Products**: Apple Screen Magnification Utility, Mac-nifier, Screen Loupe, VisioVoice.

Speech Output Screen Readers

- The following programs allow non-visual computer access.
- **For Windows Products**: Jaws, WindowEyes, Outspoken, Hal Screen Reader, Supernova, Thunder, NonVisual Desktop Access Windows Narrator and WordReadPlus.
- **For Apple Products**: iSpeak, VoiceOver Utility and VisioVoice.

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Volume 17

January 2010

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