

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Assistive Technology (AT) Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2017

Members Present

Jeff Bishop, Chair*
Nathan Pullen*
Terri Hedgpeth*
Sue Lehew*
Bea Shapiro*
Ed Gervasoni*
Julie Jones*
Adam Cruz*
Jaime Trausch*

Members Absent

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin Assistant
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Jeff Bishop, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of March 15, 2017 and April 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Nathan Pullen motioned to approve the March 17, 2017 meeting minutes. Terri Hedgpeth seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Nathan Pullen motioned to approve the April 19, 2017 meeting minutes. Terri Hedgpeth seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

AT Trends

Adam Cruz stated that Window Eyes announced that the sales of Windows Eyes would be discontinued in the U.S. and Canada. Mr. Cruz stated the Windows Eyes for Office would no longer be supported, which was

unfortunate, as the product was an inexpensive option for users. Jeff Bishop stated individuals could still use Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) and Narrator. Jeff Bishop noted current Windows-Eyes customers with a Software Maintenance Agreement (SMA) would receive a free copy of JAWS 18. Terri Hedgpeth stated Microsoft would be releasing Windows 10S, which was an abbreviated version, and new laptops that would be competitive with Google Chromebooks. Jeff Bishop stated the Windows laptops would be about the same price as Google Chromebooks, and would only run applications from Windows 10. Adam Cruz inquired regarding the specifications of the laptops. Terri Hedgpeth stated the laptops would have i5 processors and 4 gigs of internal memory. Jeff Bishop stated Windows would release an i7 model as well, which would compare to the Google Pixel Chromebook, or a higher end Chromebook.

Terri Hedgpeth stated Amazon released Amazon Look, which was a camera that would take pictures of an individual's outfit. Ms. Hedgpeth stated the individual could post the picture and receive feedback from the community or receive suggested clothing items from Amazon. Terri Hedgpeth stated the product could be intrusive and serve as a method for Amazon to suggest items for the individual to buy. Jeff Bishop stated the camera automatically took the picture of the individual once the person was standing in front of the camera. Jeff Bishop stated the Echo Show was an Echo with a video screen for video calling. Bea Shapiro stated Echo products could only be used with other individuals with Echo products as well. Nathan Pullen stated an individual with Echo Show could contact an individual with any Amazon products.

Jeff Bishop stated Google would release enhanced Google home devices, which would include features such as phone calls. Jeff Bishop stated Google Assistant was a standalone app on the iPhone, which was accessible. Jeff Bishop stated there was new indoor navigation technology for blind or visually impaired individuals. He noted Microsoft released 16.0 One Note, which included an accessible user experience across Mac, Android and iOS in preparation for Global Disability Awareness Day on March 18, 2017. Adam Cruz stated the Humanware Brilliant 14 Braille Display was released. Terri Hedgpeth stated the braille display paired with multiple devices. Ms. Hedgpeth stated it had a switch on the back that clicked into two positions. She noted one position allowed access to all internal apps, and the other position returned the user back to the braille display. Terri Hedgpeth stated the braille display was able to sync to all Apple i-devices. Adam Cruz stated the Brilliant 14 Braille Display was similar to the VarioUltra Braille Display, which was solidly built and quiet, although the command structure was somewhat lacking. Terri Hedgpeth stated the VarioUltra did not always maintain a connection to an individual's Bluetooth devices.

Jeff Bishop stated new Apple products would potentially be released in June as well as an update to iOS. Adam Cruz stated the Apple Watch would be updated to 3.22. Jeff Bishop stated Apple would release a health band for individuals interested in health monitoring such as tracking glucose levels for example.

AT in Schools Discussion

Jeff Bishop stated he received a statement from Rich Sorey, Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) Program Manager regarding why subscription based products cannot be purchased by the Department of Economic Security (DES). Mr. Bishop stated he and some members of the GCBVI would meet with Rich Sorey to discuss strategies for approaching the DES Office of Procurement regarding subscription based software.

Jeff Bishop inquired regarding the committee's feedback from the previous AT Committee meeting where Microsoft representatives presented on Microsoft's increased accessibility. Adam Cruz stated he was pleased to hear about the new accessibility features, although it was unfortunate that the features were only available to users with Office 365. Jeff Bishop stated Microsoft was moving towards subscription based software as other companies such as Adobe had. Mr. Bishop stated full time university students at most schools received free copies of the software, although individuals not in school were left out. Sue Lehew inquired whether students were informed they would be required to pay for subscription updates once they graduated from school. Jeff Bishop stated students were informed that once they left the university, their Office 365 license was no longer valid. Jeff Bishop stated the software licenses were controlled by Microsoft and not the university. He noted he was unsure how Microsoft knew that a student was no longer a student although he surmised that students would have a three-six month grace period. Terri Hedgpeth stated student email accounts closed once a student left the university, which might triggered several responses. Sue Lehew stated DES did not activate and deactivate client email addresses the same way that universities and colleges did. Ms. Lehew stated the AT providers should know whether the client was receiving a software subscription and when the subscription would end. Jeff Bishop stated individuals purchasing JAWS would need upgrades as well. He noted a student might receive JAWS 18 as a freshman and be upgraded to JAWS 23 as a senior. Jeff Bishop stated that any software would not necessarily be compatible with the forced updates in Windows 10. Jeff Bishop stated the problem was bigger than just Office updates. Jaime Trausch stated at SAAVI Services for the Blind, individuals were experiencing difficulties with Zoom Text and JAWS when Windows 10 automatically updated. Sue Lehew stated

her understanding that Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) staff did inform clients that they would be responsible for their AT updates. She noted RSA did not buy many subscription based products, and many clients might not be aware that they needed upgrades for multiple products. Ms. Lehew stated RSA could procure upgraded software for clients while they received Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, although the clients needed to be prepared to pay for their own updated software once they were no longer VR clients. Jaime Trausch stated SAAVI Services for the Blind could purchase SMA for clients, although clients did not receive SMA by default. Sue Lehew stated SMA could be purchased on an individual basis. Jeff Bishop stated the students needed to have the appropriate tools available in order to be successful.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Committee was scheduled for June 21, 2017 from 3:00-4:30 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- AT Trends
- AT in Schools Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no comments forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Ed Gervasoni motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bea Shapiro seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm.