

Looking Back, Looking Forward

By **Tim Connell**

Quantum Technology marked an auspicious occasion earlier this year, when we celebrated 21 years of operation. Finally we are all grown up!

We had a small celebration with our staff but the feeling remains that we failed to adequately recognise our achievements and give thanks to all that have made this journey possible.



I was lucky to be one of the founding members of Quantum, along with Mike Ridley, Jeremy Miller and Roy Middleton. However, Mike and Jeremy had an earlier company called Quantum Engineering Design, which means Mike has been working for "Quantum" for 31 years, a truly remarkable achievement!

When I first entered the world of assistive technology, the technology options were limited but they still seemed remarkable; a talking Apple II was considered the height of sophistication. What we take for granted now was pure science fiction back then.

In this issue we recognise 2 people who were at the forefront of the development of assistive technology. Norman Wilson from Queensland, and Ron Aitchison from Sydney are not well known within the blindness community but it was their vision, energy and passion that changed the lives of many thousands of blind people around the world. The fruits of their labours were also the products upon which Quantum Technology was founded. We honour their

contributions with a small tribute in the following pages.

They say that a company is just the sum of the people that work in it. Well Quantum is that but a whole lot more besides. We have an incredible bunch of people that are committed, caring and genuinely interested in helping others. It has been my privilege all these years to be part of the Quantum team and to get so much more out of life than just an ordinary 9 to 5 job. The Quantum team is definitely greater than the sum of its individual members.

Together we have built a business that now has offices in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, and this year we opened our first international office, in the UK. We have grown from just a handful of people to now having over 30 staff and we bring a very wide variety of technology solutions to thousands of people in Australia and around the world.

As well as creating secure long term employment, we have helped Australia by exporting millions of dollars worth of high technology products around the world. For such a small company we have also been very prolific developers of new technology solutions. We now proudly have 5 of our products in the permanent collection of the Powerhouse Museum.

We are also indebted to our major shareholders, Australian Ethical Investments and Surrowee who together have funded and supported our growth over the years. Their support has gone well above and beyond what anyone would expect from a financier, and we are truly grateful.

And of course, none of this would have been possible without you, our wonderful customers. The support and feedback we receive from you is what makes all the hard work worthwhile.

As usual, we also want to look forward and bring you news of the latest in assistive technology. We are really proud to announce our new website, bring you up-dates on our scholarship program and introduce some exciting new products.

Sincere thanks to all, Tim

Norman Wilson

Norman Wilson embodies what it means to be an Australian. He is very humble and would describe himself as “just an ordinary bloke” however his life and achievements suggest otherwise.



Norman (pictured above in a recent photograph) is definitely one of the unsung heroes of the blindness community, not just in Australia but around the world. He took his love of “fiddling with technology” and his knowledge of Morse Code to develop the first automated method of electronically transcribing Braille into print.



His invention, the Braille-n-Print was conceived after he learned about a friend’s child who was blind and about to be one of the first children integrated into a regular classroom in Brisbane. In typical style, Norman reckoned it would be easy to adapt a system he had developed to translate Morse code to the Braille code, a task

that he undertook in his garage in his “spare” time. Two years later, the Braille-n-Print was ready and in 1982 it started to be sold. Norman applied for, and was granted a patent in the US, UK and Australia. The Braille-n-Print went on to serve countless thousands of students in 28 countries around the world.

Giving service to others has been at the heart of Norman’s long and productive life. As a young man in the 1930’s he put his age up to be eligible to join the Citizens Military Force (CMF), a stepping stone to eligibility for the armed services. He joined the RAAF as a corporal, served Australia in many campaigns and was promoted to sergeant in New Guinea and to Lieutenant in the Borneo arenas. Norman’s expertise in Morse code was gained in the 7th Division - Signals, on duty in Syria and Lebanon.

A very full and successful business life followed the war however a love of technology remained and Norman to this day is a devoted ham radio operator.

For recognising the parallels between Morse code and the Braille code, and the development of the Braille-n-Print, Norman was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia on the 12 June 1995.

In his later years Norman has continued to work tirelessly as a volunteer and there are many individuals and organisations (especially the Queensland Braille Writing Association) who owe him a debt of gratitude for his tireless support.

Did You Know?

Quantum has been recognised here in Australia and overseas for the products we have developed for people with vision loss. However, in our early days we also developed a range of other products and technologies for various companies, such as IBM Australia for whom we developed the security card readers for their offices in Australia and New Zealand.

One of our very first products was an intensive care monitor for babies at risk of SIDS. These were used at the Sydney Children’s Hospital for over 10 years.



Ronald Aitchison (b. 1921, d. 1996)



Ron Aitchison was born in Hurstville, NSW on 29th December, 1921. From 1942 to 1945 Ron worked as an engineer with the Amalgamated Wireless Valve Company on the design and production of klystrons and radar magnetrons, which were new devices important to the war effort. He was also involved in work on semiconductor diodes, which were the forerunners of the revolution in electronics brought about by the advent of solid-state semiconductor components. In 1945 he joined the National Acoustic Laboratory where he worked on the design and construction of hearing aids for children.

Ron was appointed as Senior Lecturer in Communications Engineering at the University of Sydney, which was the start of his 25-year teaching experience at that institution, culminating in his appointment as Associate Professor. His interest in solid-state physics took him to Bristol University, UK, for a year and he also spent a year at Stanford University, California, on a Fulbright scholarship, working at the forefront of electronics research.

In 1970, he accepted an offer from Macquarie University to become the founding Professor of Physics and took up the post in 1971. During his fifteen years at Macquarie, Ron was well known for his dedication to his students and his insistence on keeping up to date with the latest laboratory techniques, experiments and equipment for his students. This was necessary to ensure that the university was keeping in pace with the rapid changes in the electronics industry at the time.

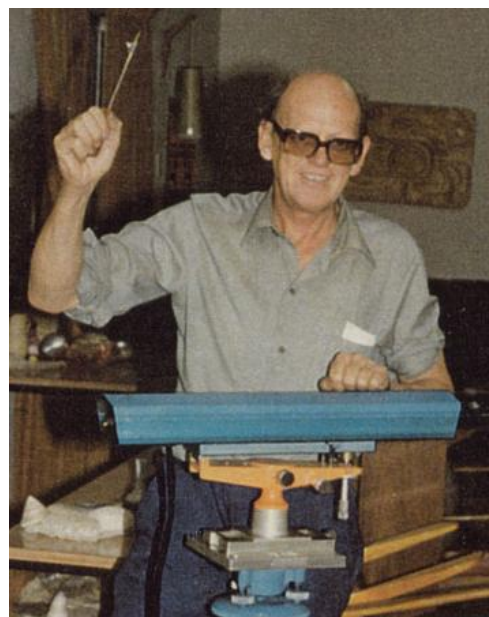
On his retirement July 4, 1986, Ron decided to carry on with some of his favourite projects which included the scientific calculator with speech output for blind students that became known as Q-Calc. Ron's passion in his later years at Macquarie University was the development of the Speakwriter, a typewriter which spoke the typewriter keys as they were pressed. An article written by Tony Healy in Computing Australia (1/9/86) quotes Tim Connell now working for Quantum Technology: "We saw Professor Aitchison on TV with his (talking) typewriter and realised we could do that." Ron developed the talk-



ing typewriter originally to help a blind student complete a standard science course. His ideas can now be seen in many of the products available today made for people with vision impairment .

During his long career spanning 25 years at University of Sydney and 15 at Macquarie University, Ron took pride not in academic papers or self-aggrandizement, but in the achievements of his students to whom he poured a never ending stream of ideas and research angles.

In the words of Professor Frederick Choong, (Foundation Professor of Mathematics, Macquarie University, 1966-1980): "No problem was too peculiar for him. We knew that he could call on the most sophisticated of electronic devices, but he might also improvise with matchsticks, chewing gum and string! I can say that Ron Aitchison was one of the most energetic, most knowledgeable, most practical, most intelligent and most interesting persons I have ever known, and even more importantly, he was a real friend with a heart of gold and a purity of spirit unswayed by self-seeking motives."



Ron building a laser by hand!



Quantum Technology Launches New Website!!!

We are really pleased to present a new face to the world, one that reflects the exciting growth and changes underway at Quantum. For most of our history, Quantum has primarily been known as a company that served the needs of people who are blind or vision impaired. Over the last decade we have realised that people with cognitive disabilities such as dyslexia, often face similar challenges accessing information, and we have introduced many leading products into Australia for learning disability. As a result we have for some time considered ourselves a company that assists all people that have difficulty accessing print, and that we are in fact a company that services the Print Disability market.

Our new web site reflects this branding and introduces new products for learning disabilities as well as alternate format production. The Web site consists of three main product areas; Low Vision, Blindness and Learning Disability.

We have also wanted to give more prominence and make it easier to find our Dealers, both domestically and internationally. Quantum is very proud of our network of Dealers and affiliates and believe they make all the difference to our goal of providing professional local support to every customer. Each Dealer has been selected for their ability to provide the full range of services, including assessment, support and repairs to users at the local level. Clicking on our dealer page will lead you to your closest dealer.

We are also very proud to introduce an exciting new feature, the Magnification Simulation Test which has been developed by Peter Cracknell, Manager of our Queensland office. This new tool will enable people with Low Vision to assess the benefits they may obtain from using an electronic magnifier without having to leave home.

Keeping in Touch

We now have a series of Newsletters that help users stay in touch with latest developments and hear first hand from other people how they are using assistive technology solutions. To sign up for one of our many Newsletters visit our Newsletter page.

We hope you enjoy our new Website and we welcome your feedback.



Some, but not all, of the Quantum team!

Alternate Format Production

Otherwise Known as “Creating Accessible Information”

People with a print disability typically need information changed from one format into another. Whether you are blind, have low vision, or are dyslexic the challenge that is shared by all is to be able to access information in a manner that suits your particular needs. This is a challenge increasingly faced by schools, universities, government agencies and employers. How to quickly and easily convert material so that you provide equal access to all.

A wonderful resource that will help you stay in touch with developments from all around the world is www.AltFormat.com. AltFormat is an independent website focusing on how developments in the production of alternative format materials are transforming the education of visually impaired and dyslexic students of all ages.

Quantum is pleased to introduce the very latest software product for creating alternate format information from Dolphin Systems in the UK, called EasyConverter. EasyConverter quickly creates Large Print, MP3, DAISY and Braille versions of learning materials that can either be scanned from paper, or input from Word, PDF, html or text files.

- **EasyConverter** is designed for use in schools, colleges, universities, small or large companies and government organisations.
- **EasyConverter** is simple to use for those with no altformat creation experience. It is equally suited to experienced professionals looking for a single flexible high quality altformat creation tool that will meet the needs of all dyslexic, visually impaired and learning disabled students.
- **EasyConverter** ensures that you remain adaptable, and able to convert from a wide range of file formats including printed handouts to downloaded PDFs, Word files, NI-MAS content and html documents.



The EasyConverter interface is a single screen from which you select the document you want to be converted, and then simply select the format you want to produce. In one step a document can be automatically converted into any one of 5 different formats. For example you may need a Digital Talking Book (Daisy format) for one student, an MP3 file that can be downloaded to an iPod for another student, or a Large Print version for a student with Low Vision.

Other Products from Dolphin include:

EasyProducer

EasyProducer converts standard Word files into DAISY digital talking books (synchronised audio and text) that can be searched and navigated. Easy to use one-click operation instantly converts text into a DAISY DTB, no training required. Convert an average textbook chapter in 90 seconds, compared to 2 hours when narrating onto audio cassette.

Dolphin Publisher

Designed for publishers of audio books, Dolphin Publisher is the premier tool for the creation of DAISY digital talking books. You can use human recorded audio, synthetic speech or record your own audio directly into Dolphin Publisher. Or import html documents, copy and paste word documents or type directly into Dolphin Publisher. Includes copyright tools for publishers to protect content from unauthorised copying.

Mountbatten Brailler to conquer the world!

I am Sarah, Mum to a little boy called Lucas who is four and a half, and completely blind. We found out about his blindness when he was around six months old, and right from the start all the tests showed that Lucas could see absolutely nothing at all. We had a pretty tough time from when Lucas (our only child) was born. He has a congenital heart defect, optic nerve hypoplasia, septo optic dysplasia, DIS, mild autism; believe me, this list can go on and on so I will stop here, as the labels can give people the wrong idea about Lucas.

I myself am a bit of an academic - and an avid reader, as is Lucas' Dad. We were finding it challenging to remain positive, so looked for ways in which we could take control of the situation and actually help our son. For us, the idea of Braille became a focus. Whilst we were grieving for all that was happening, Braille became our tool of empowerment.

We were lucky to be assigned an excellent Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired, who expressed slight amusement that we would like to begin learning Braille when our son was not yet six months, but she contacted the RNIB and managed to get us a Perkins Brailler to borrow. She handed us the terribly dry Braille Primer, and told us to shout if we needed any help... and shout we did!

Our first reaction on meeting the Perkins was that it was a joke! We looked at our sons tiny fingers, and my not-so-big ones, and couldn't believe that this was to be the tool through which our son could conquer the world.

To those of you who haven't seen a Perkins Brailler - imagine the oldest typewriter you can, with six basic keys, turn knobs to put in the paper, and heavier than a sack of potatoes. They come in a few colours - which actually do the job of making the Perkins look less, rather than more enticing. Like putting make up on a goat. We are into gadgets in our household - computers spreadeagled, PDA's, iPods, Nintendo D.S', SatNavs, cables and adapters strewn.

We couldn't believe that nobody had come up with a better, more efficient way for children to learn Braille. The fact is that there are relatively few blind people in the world, and a huge proportion of these are unemployed - not the people in power. Brailleing the Perkins way is

definitely not sexy! So, we have persevered, gained tendonitis and become frustrated along the way. Lucas, whilst being bright and able, is unable to use the Perkins for much more than making noises. He has small hands with not much strength though not abnormally so, but even when he presses on each button with his whole weight, he can barely make a mark in the paper. His Braille skills were going nowhere entirely due to the fact that the Perkins is wholly unsuitable for a small child to learn to write.

Then, about eight months ago a friend of ours read about the Mountbatten Pro Brailers. The website promised great things - an electronic Brailler which children could press easily, which then led to excellent hand positions and the correct fingers on the keys. It also has a speech programme, so that a child can hear back what they have just Brailled instantly. My friend and I fell in love, and as quickly into dejection when we noticed the price tag of £2,750. We are a family on a pretty tight income - certainly not people with that kind of cash hanging around. Then I remembered that my brilliant and awe-inspiring Dad was off to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in a couple of months or so, and pitched to him the idea of raising sponsorship to help Lucas and his friend get their hands on the Mountbatten's. He agreed, so we set to. We hassled everyone we could think of - and everyone was generous and supportive.

The time came, my Dad disappeared on a very big plane, and an even bigger journey. I received a text from him a few days later saying "We did it. Little slower than we had hoped perhaps, but in less than 12 hours! Bloody hot and knackered, but pleased". I was so in awe of him - of course I thought of the Mountbattens, but I was also just very very proud!

So, my Dad came home unscathed and itching for the next challenge. Then, a week before Christmas, we got a call saying the Mountbattens were in the country and they wanted to deliver them. I started to prepare Lucas, who often finds change a problem. The machine arrived, shiny from its box looking more like a cool toy in blue and yellow than the 50's office aura of the Perkins. Before the man had fully unpacked it Lucas was demanding that we "make it talk". We haven't looked back!

When the Mountbatten is turned on, it says in an Australian accent "G'day" - both boys now chirrup happily in antipodean accents for hours. Lu-



cas has now had his Braille for about six weeks and is already Brailleing short words! This is even more impressive as we have not taught him some of the letters that he is using; he learnt them himself whilst using the Mountbatten. He has also learned how to change programmes to change the voice from recorded to synthetic. He asks to braille for many hours a day, and as a Mum it feels very strange to be telling my son to



STOP studying, and play with some toys. Lucas has also become more interested in reading Braille - and whilst our progress there is slower, I'm sure he would be nowhere as advanced as he is now without the Mountbatten.

As I am typing this, he is sitting to my right brailleing - I will get the occasional "how do I do 'O'?" comment, but other than that he is completely absorbed. I am aware whilst reading this article back that I sound like an advertisement for Mountbatten, which is not my intention, nor is it in my nature to be so entirely enthusiastic about anything really, but I honestly believe that every child who is learning Braille (and I believe this should be every child with minimal vision) should be given a better solution to brailleing than the Perkins.

We live in a society where children are exposed to technology every day; this is as it should be, yet for kids like Lucas, they are refused the same chances to access the curriculum and work on their literacy simply because of a lack of resources and because of money.

There is no charity that fights for the rights of blind children to access all that is available to them - and there should be! If it weren't for athletic Grandfathers, and pushy parents, and generous friends, Lucas and his friend would still be failing to reach anything like their potential because children like them don't have a voice. It is time to raise that voice for them!

Quantum's Scholarship Program

For over 21 years Quantum has enjoyed the support of our customers and we recognise that without this support we would never have survived this long. We have introduced the Scholarship Program to give something back to the community that has supported us so magnificently for so long. Freedom Scientific, the developers of Jaws, Magic and WYNN (among other products) have been willing partners and support our efforts each year to assist deserving students.

We have seen the power of assistive technology and its ability to transform lives and provide opportunities for learning and living life to the fullest. Hence our Scholarship program is aimed at getting more assistive technology into the hands of students.

We receive applications from students all around Australia and it is wonderful to hear about the success, courage and struggles of these talented young people. Our full Scholarship program consists of:

The Quantum Technology/Freedom Scientific Jaws Scholarship

For vision impaired students in Australia undertaking tertiary studies in 2008

The Quantum Technology/Freedom Scientific WYNN Scholarship

For students assessed as having a learning disability and undertaking tertiary studies in 2008.

The Quantum Technology Braille Literacy Scholarship (2 Awards)

The Gillian Gale Award for Braille Literacy

Gillian is well known and admired throughout Australia and New Zealand for her untiring efforts in promoting and facilitating Braille Literacy. We are thrilled that she has agreed to lend her name and boundless energy in support of this Award.



The Norman Wilson Notetaking Award.

This award honours Norman Wilson's contribution to Braille literacy.

Full details of all Awards can be found on our website.

Jaws Scholarship Winner— Nastasia Campanella

The last 12 months have been really jam packed! If sitting the stressful HSC wasn't cause enough to be busy and filled with adrenaline then completing a TAFE course, winning a Prime Minister's award and becoming a first year journalism student definitely is. I have recently received a Jaws scholarship and thought that I'd give something back to Quantum Technology and readers of the LiveWire by sharing my story and let you know just how hard Jaws will need to be working for me.

In 2005 and 2006 I elected to take up Entertainment as part of my HSC package along with 3 unit English and other various subjects. It was a fantastic opportunity to gain an accredited certificate in an industry which I am so passionate about while also being able to include the subject Entertainment in my final HSC mark.

During the Entertainment TAFE course, I learnt about sound design, stage management and lighting concepts. Over the two year period I did work for a variety of companies including Nova, SBS, The Federal Publishing Company, Next Media and Australian Consolidated Press. I have also worked in the media, hosting my own radio show at a community radio station and writing articles for local newspapers and national magazines. Throughout this time I made significant contacts, with whom I am still friends today and who I take direction from as I slowly move into working in the media.

Subsequent to coming first in the Entertainment subject at school, I was nominated and was lucky to win several other awards. Firstly, I won the Australian Vocational Student Prize which recognises Year 12 students undertaking a school-based Vocational Education and Training (VET) program. Secondly, I received the Vocational and Technical Student of the Year Regional Award for the highest achievements in Vocational education and training in my area. Thirdly, I was awarded the Prime Minister's Award for Skills Excellence, being recognised as one of the highest achievers in Australia.

The Prime Minister's award was presented to me in Canberra at a ceremony in early December at Parliament House. The event was hosted by Steve Liebman and was attended by Julie Bishop, Minister for Education. The ceremony was so overwhelming, I still get a rush now when

I think back to how great it felt being there. Meeting Steve and talking to him about the media and his success in radio was amazing. I definitely learnt a lot just listening to what he had to say.

On top of receiving the award at the ceremony I was asked to give the acceptance speech on behalf of the 20 recipients. I only had 2 hours to memorise the speech and felt completely nervous. Yet when the time came I was assisted to the lectern and all the butterflies flew away. A feeling of professionalism replaced the nerves.

I feel that going to Canberra and receiving such a prestigious award has really opened doors for me in terms of my career. I spoke with a few journalists and my story featured in 3 newspapers. I received a few business cards from media advisers in Parliament which, for me was quite emotional as it felt as though I had actually impressed someone.

I returned from Canberra to discover that I had gained a UAI mark of 95.75 and successful entry into a Bachelor of Arts Communications (journalism) degree at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). I think I cried for about 3 hours non stop. I just couldn't believe it. You work so hard for something for so long and then to see all your hard work paying off is just incomprehensible .



The long and the short of it all. Nastasia receives her award from Tim Connell

To have received a Jaws scholarship is also an amazing opportunity. Jaws is so important in order for me to be successful in my course. It means I can do internet research independently and write articles and ultimately will mean I become a better journalist.

I'd like to thank the team at Quantum Technology for their support, advice and opportunity to share my achievements with other Jaws users. Thanks most of all for allowing me to have the latest copy of Jaws, it will play a vital part in my road to success.

FAR SIGHTED

. . . a magnifier was a good investment for Stella Hele.

STELLA Hele is a sprightly 86-year-old, who is living independently on the Gold Coast. She bought a ClearView electronic magnification unit that she uses every day.



Before retiring, Stella was an active and successful business woman. She ran her own millinery service with 12 employees in the Block Arcade, central Surfers Paradise, for more than 38 years.

When she retired in her late 60s, she found her vision was starting to deteriorate. She was unable to read standard print, even with her strongest glasses. Correspondence began to accumulate and had to wait until a friend or family member was able to read it to her. By 2006, her vision loss was significant and, while she still had peripheral vision, she could no longer read her mail, magazines and books or look at family photographs.

This all changed last year when she bought a ClearView electronic magnifier.

Stella said she used the new vision machine every day for all manner of things, such as reading the television guide and writing down the programs she was interested in that day as well as checking instructions on medication and other products, such as hand creams. But most importantly for Stella, she is now able to check the use-by dates on food. "I am amazed how much I now depend on the ClearView," she said. "I really don't know how I could cope without it."

Article reprinted from the Gold Coast Sun

Living Successfully with Low Vision

Unfortunately, there is a direct relationship between living longer and sensory loss, particularly hearing and vision. It has been estimated that there are around 800,000 people in Australia with either early on-set or acute Macular Degeneration (MD), an eye disease that involves a steady loss of central vision.

A person with Macular Degeneration loses the ability to read, distinguish faces or perform a wide range of daily living activities. What is particularly frightening about this disease is that it is increasing in prevalence at quite a rapid rate, as our general population ages.

The use of appropriate assistive technology can make a world of difference to people with Macular Degeneration and other low vision conditions. Most importantly, devices like electronic magnifiers can enable people with Low Vision to undertake a range of daily living tasks that they otherwise would be unable to.

However, it can sometimes be difficult for a person with Low Vision to get to one of our showrooms or vision agency where they can evaluate Low Vision aids.

For this reason Quantum has developed a Magnification Simulator that they can use at their local optometrists to see exactly how a Low Vision aid may assist them.

The Magnification Simulation Test

The Magnification Simulator has been designed by Peter Cracknell who is the Manager of our Brisbane office. It can be run on a regular PC or is also available on our website. The Magnification Simulator takes only a few minutes to run through the test and at the end a general assessment of how a Low Vision aid may help is produced. The person undertaking the test may experience just how an electronic magnifier may be able to help them.

The Magnification Simulator is available to Optometrists for no charge, so if you know of an Optometrist in your area that may be interested in obtaining a copy please let us know. We can also send a copy to family and friends who may want to assist you find the solution you need.

Maintaining your independence is a vital ingredient to living successfully with Low Vision!

A New Standard for Portable Magnification

Quantum is proud to present the new Compact+ portable video magnifier. With its one-button simplicity controlling both magnification and contrast, the Compact+ takes portable magnification to a whole new level.

The new Compact+ has a very impressive range of features. Unlike other portable units, the camera is located at the centre of the unit. Now you can hold the magnifier directly above the image and this avoids the need to search for it. The camera also slides into a second position making writing underneath easy.

The new collapsible handle gives extra support and control to the user for optimal reading comfort. Simply pull the handle out from the top of the Compact+ and it will snap into place.

Brighter and sharper than its competitors. The Compact+ gives maximum contrast creating clean, crisp images enabling you to read the contents on a prescription bottle, sign credit card receipts and cheques, all with the truly portable Compact+.



Designed for the active lifestyle, the Compact+ measures only 5 inches wide by 3 inches high, with magnification capabilities up to 10 times. With a 4.3" widescreen, the Compact+ allows the user to read and write in colour, black on white, white on black, and other colour select contrasts. Unequaled among its competition, the Compact+ has a built in snapshot feature that freezes the frame with the simple push of a button.

Easy to use and easy to carry around, the Compact+ fits in a purse, schoolbag, or briefcase, has a 2.5 hour rechargeable battery (or optionally use regular AA batteries), and comes with a convenient carrying case. Don't leave home without it!



Zoom-Ex: A New Tool for High Volume Reading

Zoom-Ex is the world's first instant book-to-speech tool. Using Zoom-Ex and a standard PC you can scan up to 20 pages per minute (and the book stays bound). Zoom-Ex then allows you to read the information at a magnification level that suits your needs, or if you get tired of reading, Zoom-Ex will convert the information to speech and speak it out for you. Converting text to speech is almost instantaneous!



Zoom-Ex will also enable a person to read text from the screen and listen to the speech at the same time. As Zoom-ex says a word it will also highlight the word on the screen as an aid to reading and comprehension.

When you are reading from the screen, Zoom-Ex will automatically wrap the lines, so all you have to do is scroll down the page for uninterrupted reading. This eliminates the need for a reading table as found on traditional electronic magnifiers. It also enables the creation of large print books, where Zoom-Ex will automatically do the formatting for you.

Zoom-Ex is a standard peripheral for a PC that connects via a USB port and requires no additional power source.

Remarkably, Zoom-Ex weighs around 400g and folds down into a small package that can easily fit into the average laptop bag.

For anyone who needs to read large volumes of text, or is involved in the production of alternative format materials, Zoom-Ex is something you need to inspect.

Demonstration units are now available.