5th

Anniversary

Celebrating 5 years of connecting people ,
thanks to all of you - the wonderful subscribers!!

Editor 's Desk

Dear friends,

Many thanks to all of you to have given me the opportunity to be connected!!!

It's been a wonderful five years of a pursuit of disseminating information to change perspectives by creating awareness about inclusive technology and designs that promote equal and independent participation by persons with disabilities.

"Sometimes it's the journey that teaches you a lot about your destination".-Drake

Hoping to continue the mission with all your support.

Regards

Bhavna Botta

http://www.connectspecial.in/

Innovative Ideas

Smart crutches(www.mytorchit.com)is a design improvement of the traditional crutch crafted to improve the mobility of a person using crutches. It is the world's first self-standing crutch. By using a specially crafted metal flexures based tip design, the Smart Crutch substantially improves the stability and mobility of a patient while keeping the cost low. It also incorporates smart techniques to keep energy usage low. The ultimate result for a user is that the energy used is minimal and there are no impact forces carried to the body thus mitigating side effects. The design additionally increases grip on rough terrains such as sand, pebbles and wet surfaces.

In a nutshell, the product improves the quality of life of the people by enhancing stability, providing feature by slip resistance, all-terrain, self-standing and shock absorption (10-15%), less effort for walking (reduction by 20%). The product will improve the productivity of the person using it. He /She will be able to commute anywhere without any fear of falling, which unleash his /her skills to perform new tasks.

Picture shows four male persons using smart crutches-one crossing the road,the second person walking ,third person -a leg amputee using it and the fourth person with the crutch jumping over a hurdle

McDonald's India unveils EATQUAL

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities, saw a first of its kind launch of **EatQual** – a special pack for customers with limited hand mobility by McDonald's India West and South. With this, the brand has become the first food player in India to have undertaken such an initiative.

This thoughtful initiative looks into the challenges of the standard packaging which requires customers to use both their hands to truly enjoy the delicious McDonald's burgers. EatQual addresses this challenge and ensures that people with limited upper-limb movement can now enjoy their favourite McDonald's burger just like everyone.

McDonald's India launched the packaging by hosting individuals with limited upper hand mobility in their restaurants across Mumbai, Pune and Chennai who enjoyed their favourite burgers in the new EatQual packaging.

The event in Chennai was supported by The Good Quest Foundation, a Non-Profit Organisation founded with an objective to work for a tangible impact in the lives of the less privileged, down trodden and marginalized in the Community.

Picture shows a person with upeer arm restrictions having a burger in Eatqual pack -insert shows a close up of EatQual pack designed to hold a burger in a verticle position .

Inclusive policies

Look out for these inclusive facilities at the Polling centers during the upcoming elections -
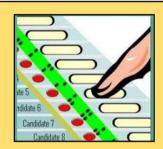
Accessible polling booths

wheel chair facility

Trained volunteers

Priority queue

Braille EVM & candidate sheet

Help Desk

Rest rooms and water facility

Sign Language

Companion can vote soon after person with disability

If companion help is sought in voting ,companion to sign form 14A

Postal Ballot

Inclusive Tech

Live Transcribe has a new name — Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications.

It's an app that makes everyday conversations and surrounding sounds more accessible among people who are deaf and hard of hearing, using just your Android phone. Using Google's state-of-the-art automatic speech recognition and sound detection technology, Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications provides you with free, real-time transcriptions of your conversations and sends notifications based on your surrounding sounds at home. The notifications make you aware of important situations at home, such as a fire alarm or doorbell ringing, so that you can respond quickly.

On most phones, you can directly access Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications with these steps:

1. Open your device's settings app.
2. Tap 'Accessibility', then tap 'Live Transcribe' or 'Sound Notifications', depending on which app you'd like to start.
3. Tap 'Use service', then accept the permissions.
4. Use the Accessibility button or gesture to start Live Transcribe or Sound Notifications.

[New] Sound Notifications:
• Get notified of potential risky situations and personal situations based on sounds happening at home (for example, smoke alarm, siren or baby sounds).
• Get notifications with a flashing light or vibration to your mobile device or wearable.
• Timeline view lets you go back in history (currently limited to 12 hours) to see what was happening around you.

Envision AI

Envision AI is one of the newer accessibility apps for Android. It uses your camera to narrate what is happening around you. For instance, you can point your phone at your companion across the table and it'll tell you that someone is sitting there and whatever other objects they may have with them. The app can also read documents and handwriting, scan barcodes, and it has support for 60 languages. You can also teach Envision who trusted members of your family are and it'll remember. The app is a bit expensive, but it may help some people.

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.letsenvision.envisionai

https://youtu.be/tbrigsu2OiA

Spoken AAC

Spoken uses predictive technology to simplify communication for people with aphasia and other speech and language disorders. Instead of limiting users to simple phrases and icons, the app predicts the next words you're likely to use so you can quickly build complete sentences.

https://youtu.be/3GWmZtUj3ok

My Wheelchair Guide - guides users through self assessment and wheelchair selection, taking into account factors such as health considerations and wheelchair features, including backrests, footrests, wheels, handrims, cushions and accessories. In addition, the app offers:

- Wheelchair maintenance checklists
- Wheelchair skills videos
- Illustrated wheelchair parts guide
- Note-taking capabilities

The free wheelchair app is available on both Android and iOS platforms and offers advice for both beginner and advanced wheelchair users.

https://apps.apple.com/us/app/mwg-manual/id1413608780

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=edu.pitt.shrs.mywcguide

Technology for overcoming barriers of remote working

Originally published at http://www.accessandinclusion.news

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/02/tech-innovations-people-with-disabilities-covid/

From Zoom transcripts to smartphones that can audio-describe the world to a visually impaired person, these technological advancements can help close the disability inclusion gap. For the 1.3 billion people across the world who live with some form of disability, remote working can be particularly tough. But technology is helping to overcome the barriers that risk excluding some people from the pandemic-era world of work.

Valuable 500 is encouraging the development of digital technologies to support people with disabilities working from home during the pandemic. Here are five innovations that are tackling the barriers they face.

1. Seeing AI

This Microsoft artificial intelligence app for visually impaired people uses your smartphone's camera to audio-describe the world around you. It is capable of recognizing people you know and can even describe their appearance, including how they are feeling.

It can read images on screen, hard-copy documents and it can scan barcodes in shops to provide a description of products.

2. Google Action Blocks

For people with a cognitive disability, Google has come up with the idea of making it easier to carry out common actions such as calling a colleague or a loved one. An Action Block – literally an image or button on the home screen – can be set up on any Android phone.

Using Google Assistant technology, simply touching the Action Block triggers the action, which can include making the phone speak words for those with communication difficulties. The app is available in English, French, Italian, German, Spanish and Japanese.

3. Zoom transcripts

Zoom, one of the fastest growing virtual meeting apps last year, has followed in the footsteps of Google Hangout and Microsoft Teams by introducing live captioning to help hearing impaired users take part in online meetings. The app also allows users to obtain a transcript of a recorded meeting after it has finished.

4. Android Voice Access

Google involved people with motor disabilities in the design of its voice-activated Android smartphone app. The ability to use the phone's functions without touching the screen was an essential first step.