

talking newspapers

TNAUK: Registered Charity No. 293656

and magazines

“bringing print to life”

download revolution

subscribers can now access and download all National Talking Newspapers & Magazines audio recordings online

Our audio download service, launched last summer, now provides our subscribers with web-based access to all the publications that we record.

All our recordings are made digitally. Once added to our system, recordings are automatically uploaded overnight to the web and processed so that each title is presented as two 45 minute ‘sides’, and article-by-article.

Subscribers can choose to listen online or download the audio for later listening on their PC or on a portable MP3 player.

The main advantages of this service for subscribers are the speed of delivery – no more waiting for the post, and the range of material available for a single fee – all publications can be accessed for just £59pa.

“I just wanted to take the time to write and thank you for this innovative service as this means I can get the publication as soon as it is available and immediately take it away with me on a portable media device. I no longer have to wait for the Post Office to deliver it and I can dip in and out of for as long as I like!” - AR, Gloucestershire



The download service was developed for National Talking Newspapers & Magazines by Time Index Technologies. Their system facilitates automated uploading and presentation of the files online, and the

company’s specialist time indexing technology enables any part of an audio track to be played without first downloading the whole track.

The main advantage of this feature is that the charity can provide each publication part both as a whole file and on a track-by-track basis without having to upload each track separately.

Article continues on following page...

Summary: Download Service

Publications available: 200+

Annual Subscription: £59

Format: MP3 Download

Requirements: PC with internet

connection – broadband recommended

Developed by Time Index Technologies:

<http://www.timeindexing.com>

ceo's welcome



"Oh, I've never heard of them. What a good idea." I have lost count of the number of times I have heard this reaction when I tell people about National Talking Newspapers and Magazines.

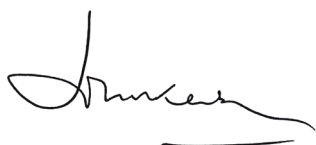
Everyone who hears about us realises what a difference it makes to the

lives of visually impaired people if they have access in alternative formats to publications which keep them in touch with their interests – music, current affairs, women's issues and sport to name just a few. But we are still unfamiliar to too many people who are visually impaired themselves or who know or work with people who are.

We are redoubling our efforts to get our message across to everyone who should hear it. But I hope that everyone who reads this newsletter will pause and think what they could do to help.

Do you have friends or relatives who are visually impaired? Does your work bring you into contact with visually impaired people, for instance in Social Services? Do you work in the media or advertising, or have contacts who do?

In whatever way you can, please spread the word.



John Kerby CEO

This newsletter is also available in large print or audio format. For more information call:
01435 866102

download revolution

continued from front page:

The download service also provides a platform for providing content for devices such as the Orion Web Box*, currently being trialed by Soundtalking, the commercial arm of the charity, which will facilitate the delivery of audio material over the internet without the need for a computer.



Timeindexing is a software company run by Lizzie and Stuart Clayman which specialises in structured data and time-ordered data systems. They donated their time and expertise to help build our audio download service.

"On a personal level, having a child who has some disabilities, including visual problems, made us aware that there were many limitations for people with disabilities in accessing all the new technology that is now widely available," says Stuart. "We have been very happy to help National Talking Newspapers facilitate their online service and to become the leading provider of high quality newspaper and magazine audio material for the visually impaired community."

www.timeindexing.com

For anyone wanting to sample the service, a sample copy of the Guardian can be accessed at:

www.tnauk.org.uk/examples/guardian.html

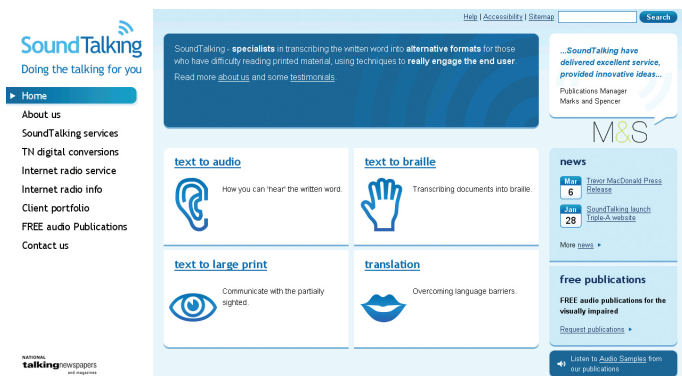
*for further information on the Orion Web Box please visit www.soundtalking.co.uk/internet-radio-service.html

purchase of the national recording centre

National Talking Newspapers & Magazines has been based at Browning Road, Heathfield since it was founded in 1984. Last year, thanks to support from Unity Trust Bank, a generous donation from the estate of Dr Hans Hirsch and support from several charitable trusts, the charity was able to purchase the main National Recording Centre building, which it previously rented from the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

John Kerby, CEO, commented: "Purchase of the office building gives the charity security of tenure, and makes a valuable contribution to our financial stability".

soundtalking launch new website



visit www.soundtalking.co.uk

Soundtalking, the commercial arm of the charity, has recently launched a new website. Developed in partnership with digital agency Nomensa, the site adheres to the highest accessibility standards and provides the facility for users to sign up to a range of free audio publications from M&S, Argos, Waitrose and Sainsbury's. Irwin Bray, chief executive of SoundTalking comments: "We are very proud of this development in our quest to make what we do for the visually impaired more accessible and, with the implementation of this new website, that journey is well underway".

parkside primary donation

Local Heathfield school, Parkside Primary, donated the proceeds of their Christmas Card stamp sales to the charity.

Two of the charity's volunteer readers, Wendy and Brian Hall, collected the £109.21 raised on behalf of the charity. The money will go towards buying more than 100 postal wallets used to despatch newspaper and magazine tapes to the charity's blind and partially sighted subscribers.



Pupils of Parkside Primary presenting the proceeds of their Christmas Stamp sales to National Talking Newspapers & Magazines volunteers Wendy & Brian Hall

spread the word

National Talking Newspapers and Magazines has a variety of promotional materials available. If you would like any catalogues (print or audio), leaflets or posters for distribution via a resource centre or direct to your clients please don't hesitate to call Customer Services on 01435 866102. All materials are distributed free of charge.



for the record

National Talking Newspapers & Magazines records about 30 hours of material each day in the National Recording Centre studios at Heathfield, East Sussex. We take a look behind the scenes...

The recording studios are very much the heart of the National Talking Newspapers and Magazines operation. A small number of the recordings the charity distributes are recorded off site, but the vast majority are recorded at Heathfield. Each of the seven studios hosts three recording sessions per day, each session involving a recording engineer and usually two readers.

Weekly publications tend to be recorded earlier in the week, ensuring that publications such as the TV listings, for example, are delivered as quickly as possible, leaving the end of each week for monthlies.

The charity relies on a small army of volunteers to give voice to the recordings. Without their

editing



The first stage in the process of producing an audio version of a publication is the editing process. This involves selecting a range of articles to fit within a 90 or 180 minute running time. For some titles, such as the Sunday papers, this

means selecting only a small sample of the articles within the paper; for other titles such as magazines that feature a great deal of pictorial content, most of the text can be included.

volunteer profile



Name: Mrs Sally C Martin

Roles: A regular reader, sometimes twice a week, specialising in Country Life, Heritage and others as required.

Experience: 12 years as a reader for the Charity.

Most enjoyable aspects of volunteering for National Talking Newspapers: Using a talent I think I have to bring magazine articles and information to people who can no longer read for themselves. The social exchange with other readers & recordists.

What do you feel are the main benefits of these recordings to listeners? Extending and continuing their interests following reduction of sight. Introducing new information to those unable to do it for themselves.

contribution the service would not be sustainable. Some volunteers have been reading particular publications for many years and have become familiar voices to listeners.

It is important that appropriate voices are chosen for each publication. Certain publications can

demand a male or female, younger or older voice. This can sometimes make scheduling difficult as an appropriate volunteer is not always available.

The job of scheduling the recording of more than 200 different titles every month and marshalling the hundreds of volunteer readers required for the task is the responsibility of Senior Studio Manager Pete Moffat. And it's not always easy as he explains: "We can be faced with the problem of finding readers at the 11th hour. Thankfully, if one reader can't make it we have a great pool of local volunteers who will rally round in an emergency. We rarely have to cancel a scheduled recording."



Malcolm Kipling recording Heritage Magazine

All volunteer readers must first pass an audition before they read and quality is constantly monitored.

During the recording, the recordist adds tone indexes between articles which allows tape players, when forward or rewinding, to detect an article and stop in the right place. Similarly, track markers are also added around articles so that the audio can be presented in a track by track format for CDs and for the audio download service.

Recording sessions last about two hours and all recordings are made digitally. As ninety minutes of audio is required from each session, every effort is made to produce a quality recording at the first take as there is relatively little time for post production.

Once recorded, the audio is transferred via memory stick to our audio server where it is automatically processed for distribution on tape, CD, DAISY CD and via audio download.

studio manager profile



Name: Pete Moffat

Role: Manager,
Recording Studios

Experience: Pete has been with the charity for two years, he joined us from American Express and the

high octane world of international finance.

About: Pete has overall responsibility for the studio operation. This means that, in addition to running recording sessions himself, he spends his time marshalling volunteers and recordists to ensure production of the 200+ titles that we offer.

When he's not tearing his hair out at the charity, Pete's getting similarly worked up over the fortunes of Watford FC. He also enjoys skiing and spending a great deal of time in the pub... participating in pub quizzes.

Contact

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TNAUK: Registered Charity No. 293656

reading material from RNIB

At RNIB we have a wealth of reading material available in braille, email, large print and Daisy audio CD.

Daisy books for sale

Since the launch of daisy books for sale we have extended the selection of titles available from 40 to over 300 with prices starting from £3.99. Popular titles include; The Boer war, The Sound of Laughter by Peter Kay and even The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda's Road to 9/11. For children, and even adults alike, the Complete Harry Potter Box set is available and for cookery lovers Jamie's Italy by popular TV chef Jamie Oliver. To obtain a copy of the latest Daisy book catalogue, available in braille, CD and large print contact RNIB Customer Services.

Magazines

Shaping Up - this is a monthly magazine available in braille and by email, priced £0.42 per issue. It is a very popular health and fitness magazine packed full of health news, fitness product reviews, alternative therapies and tips on keeping in shape. Discover how parts of the body work, and the value they have on our health, or find out more from "Doctor, Doctor" with readers sending in their health questions.

If word puzzles are for you then why not exercise your mind regularly and subscribe to **Conundrum**. This monthly braille, magazine is great if you enjoy crosswords, anagrams, general knowledge quizzes, and logic puzzles. Priced £0.57 per issue.

If you are into **Sudoku** then this new book is for you! Whether you're a beginner or an expert, or some where in between, The Little Book of Sudoku will keep you occupied for hours. With over 200 puzzles, you can have fun whilst testing and developing your skills. Available in braille and priced £3.99.

New products

The Optelec Compact+ (product code HC25) is a slim, light and easily portable PDA style video magnifier. It is easy to use and has three different magnification levels, six colour modes and an image capture feature. It has a wide 11.1cm (4.3 inch) TFT-LCD screen and an adjustable camera position which, can be adjusted to the middle when reading and to the side when writing. Priced from £495.00.

The latest information available

To find out more about the full range of RNIB products and publications available you can either visit our Online Shop at rnib.org.uk/shop or you can contact RNIB Customer Services on 0845 702 3153 and order one of our product catalogues.



have fun fundraising

Individual donors are very important to us, and holding events and raising funds for the charity can be rewarding and satisfying. Organise your own event and we will provide you with all the support materials you need.

Christmas is a good time to raise funds through holding Christmas fairs, fetes, bazaars, quiz nights, cheese and wine tasting etc.

On the other hand – during the year you could have fun raising money from various events. The ‘**unusual**’ are often the best, attracting more sponsors.

Remember that people have different abilities and skills.

In the winter ‘indoor is best’: jumble sales, sponsored darts, a world food night – prepare food from around the world and charge a fee for the evening, or what about a sponsored Head Shave!

Spring is a good time for the garden, so on a nice sunny day hold an open garden day or organise a fashion show.

Then comes summer time, garden parties - enjoy sandwiches, tea and cake, hold an art and craft fair in your house/garden or local hall, sell the goods and donate the profit or have a car boot sale.

Autumn – preparing for Christmas is teeming with opportunities – unwanted gift sale, ebay – sell all those unused items and donate the profit.

But for those of you who need a **challenge**, you can take part and raise funds for us in yearly organised events. Or you could consider: a parachute jump, white water rafting, abseiling, cycling and there are many more...



Just walk entrants 2007: Damian Daunt, Simon Courcha, Darren Pettit, Thelma Hamilton, Michael Virtue and Alan Pickering CBE

Funding is vital to keep our unique service going and your **support** will enable us to give a ‘lifeline’ to blind and partially sighted people. The Gift Aid scheme also means that if you are a UK taxpayer every donation you give can be worth an extra 28p - at no additional cost to yourself.

If you would like to discuss holding an event to raise money for the charity, please contact me on 01435 869305.

Thelma Hamilton - Fundraising Officer

yearly events

Just Walk

www.just-walk.co.uk

Flora London Marathon

www.london-marathon.co.uk

Eastbourne Half Marathon

www.eastbournehalf.co.uk

London 10k Run

www.thebritish10klondon.co.uk

alan pickering



Alan Pickering CBE

NTN&M: You have been a National Talking Newspapers & Magazines subscriber for 24 years now, since the beginning!?

ALAN: Yes and a very satisfied subscriber too.

NTN&M: Can you give us a little bit of an idea about your background and about your sight?

ALAN: I grew up in York. I was born with an inherited sight condition called retinitis pigmentosa. My parents decided not to tell me that my condition was a progressive one. I think that they were right with hindsight. I've taken full advantage of whatever sight I've had. I could ride a bike until I was about 18, the roads were safer then – probably safer now without me on them.

I could read newspapers until about the age of 30 but my sight was then starting to deteriorate until in my mid forties, early fifties it went completely. As I lost the ability to read myself, that shortfall was made good by the people around me who helped me read but Talking Newspapers gave me the independence to read what I wanted when I wanted.

I've been very lucky in a way in that because I've been quite successful in my job, efficiency has been more important to me than independence. So I've never been frightened to ask for help when that makes me more efficient, but it really is nice to have the independence that comes from the Talking Newspapers so that I can read wherever I am and whatever I'm doing.

Listening to my newspapers makes washing up and gardening chores more tolerable. I travel around a lot and I listen to my newspapers whether I'm on the train, the bus or the plane.

NTN&M: So it's not only in your work that the titles that you take are helping you?

ALAN: Because my job involves personal finance I take the Economist, the Investors Chronicle and the Financial Times, so not only are those tapes enjoyable I like to think they make me employable as well, but I then take some titles that are purely for pleasure.

I like the outdoor life so I read Farmers Weekly. I like Horse Racing so I take Racing Post Weekender and indeed it was through taking Racing Post Weekender that I fulfilled a dream in actually owning a race horse because in one of the editions, they highlighted somebody who was setting up a syndicate, so you could own a bit of a horse for not too much money. Having had my appetite whetted by being part of a syndicate I then progressed to owning my own horse, and that really has given me a wonderful added dimension to my life; an added dimension that I probably wouldn't have had, had it not been for Talking Newspapers.

a day at the races

Last year, Alan kindly sponsored a race at Lingfield Park on behalf of the charity. Despite a rather damp evening, racegoers donated more than £500.



Alan Pickering with Racing Post readers Pat Maghilles and Caroline Norman