ILC Tech

Our Service

The ILC Technology service provides information, advice and training on specialised computer access, technologies to support education and augmentative and alternative communication equipment for people of all ages.

Information regarding assistive and educational technologies is available to students, teachers, parents and tutors by appointment.

There is a wide range of adaptive technology, software, hardware, communication devices and environmental control systems on display. Sally & Evana (Occupational Therapists), Kelly (Speech Pathologist) and Alana (Education Technology Specialist) can assist you to choose the most suitable option.

The ILC Hire Service specialises in the short term hire of equipment to provide you with an opportunity to trial before purchase.

Our Team

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The Kindle Reader

A new addition to the display stock at the ILC is the Kindle reader distributed by online marketing company Amazon. The Kindle is one of a number of devices that enable the reader to download and manage text in a portable device. Certainly there is a significant opportunity to support some students and others who have difficulty managing text in traditional formats for either physical access reasons or due to literacy issues. The Kindle comes in two sizes and the ILC has the larger DX version on display. Despite this, it is more portable and lighter than any other on the market. It has wireless internet capability and books can be downloaded anywhere anytime in less than a minute. It is said to be able to hold about 15000 books (but we recommend you back them up to your computer also!)

The Kindle was instantly a hit with one person who said that because of problems with strength and hand function, she could not hold or transport heavier books and would have loved to had one in school where she had two copies of texts (one set at home and one at school). The display uses a unique electronic ink system rather than the LCD display (note an iPad in the sun is almost like looking into a mirror). The display is very easy to read and has multiple font size settings. Additionally the device can be held in either portrait or landscape.

Besides downloadable books it is possible to upload other text formats. Simple file conversion software can be used to convert text files to suitable formats to transfer to the Kindle via a USB cable. Although the Kindle can read only certain file formats. It is also possible to store audio books and MP3 files. This is particularly useful to the student who has access to text conversion software like textHELP or Wordtalk. The Kindle is able to read aloud most text provided the publisher of the book has allowed this feature.

Summary of files able to be used with the Kindle:
· Kindle format (.azw, .azw1)
· PDF (.pdf)
· Text files (.txt)
· Mobipocket format (.mobi, . prc) (only mobi books without any security protection in place)
· Audible book format (.aa, .aax)
· MP3 sound files (.mp3)

REMINDER: Applications for Motor Mouth Camp close on Friday 19th November. Motor Mouth camp is for children who use communication devices or multi level communication books and their families. Contact Kelly for information on 9381 0600.

Everyone has a mobile phone…
what about me?

Often families are reluctant to consider a mobile phone for their child or elderly parent as the features and options are so complicated. This article is a simple guide to help you narrow down your needs.

Some people have difficulty accessing a mobile phone, people with low vision might like a clam shape, flip or slide phone that automatically answers the phone when they open it. A touch screen or smart phone can help people with hearing impairments that use the larger screen for text messaging or video messaging.

Mobile phones have increasingly more complex functions that are often extras that can hinder the user's ability to get through all the menus. A particularly useful feature is the ability to associate photos with telephone numbers in the phones memory.

Most phones allow users to select between audio, visual or vibrating alerts to let users know when they're receiving a call. There are often keypad shortcuts to make every step quick and efficient, storing regular numbers automatically on the keypad.

It's equally important to consider the display set up of the mobile phone, the larger screens can allow for increased font size less cluttered screens. A backlit display can help with locating the buttons when making a call or text messaging. Some people will consider placing tactile markers to help orient your fingers on the keypad.

People with vision or hearing problems can set the keys to provide audio, visual and tactile feedback when pressed. Check if the phone has the ability to connect an alternative headset and the type of connector required. It is also useful to consider whether the keys on the keypad are easily discernible from one another that can aid those with visual or dexterity difficulties. Adjustable contrast and brightness controls to aid reading the screen.

A handset that has non-slip grips to prevent the phone from slipping out of the hand, you can also fit many models of phones with silicon sleeve to replicate this feature.

Some smart phones have voice recognition for dialing or accessing features within the phone to reduce the required handling. A mobile phone can also be switch adapted to assist with answering a call. Using predictive text input that predicts your word and minimizes the number of key presses.

Some phones have a GPS option or emergency call button built into their systems to help locate and track missing family members. Just remember to have a play before you buy a phone, go to the store and actually test them out.

Links
http://www.amta.org.au/pages/A.Guide.to.choosing.a.mobile.phone
http://www.mobileaccessibility.info/

New items in ILC Hire

We have recently made some additions to our ILC Hire library. Including….

- iPad with Proloquo2Go and Speak It Apps. This can be hired for communication trial purposes only.

- Springboard Lite

- Megabee, eye gaze alphabet communication system

- Tobii S32, new static display communication device with 2-32 messages (arriving any day now)

For information about hiring communication devices and other assistive technology please contact ILC Hire on 9381 0606.

Amazon does provide a facility to have text in other formats converted so they can be accessed or viewed on the Kindle. This is an advantage when teachers have information in other formats that they wish to be available on the Kindle. Currently the file formats that can be converted by the conversion service are:

· MS Word documents (.doc, .docx)
· Rich Text files (.rtf)
· Web pages (.html, .htm)
· Image files (.jpg, .gif, .png, .bmp)

The conversion process is available either as a free service through email or they can be sent directly to the Kindle for a fee. It takes only a couple of minutes before the link to the file is returned to either your email or to the Kindle if you pay the fee.
There are many other features of this device. We recommend you view Jeff Souters article in Online magazine for more detail

http://www.learningplace.com.au/uploads/documents/store/doc_402_2700_OnLine_Vol8_Issue_4_2009.pdf

If you wish to view the Kindle and discuss how it can interface with other literacy support tools contact ILC Tech on 08 9381 0600 .

New Products at ILC Tech

Slideshow Maker

A new product from Inclusive Technologies– the makers of Choose It Maker and Switch It Maker. This simple program allows you to easily create slideshows with your own images and sound. The user can choose which slideshow they want to watch from a simplified choice board. Access options include touch screen or mouse, or through switches and scanning. Students can even make their own slide-shows as the program is very easy to use. You can export the slideshows you have made and share them with other computers.

For more information

http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/product/slideshow-maker

K-NFB Text to Speech Phones

 Text to speech software is available on a range of Nokia mobile phones. The K-NFB reading technology provides this option in print accessibility. A photo is taken of the text which is converted by the software and can be read aloud. The text can also be displayed on the phone screen with each word highlighted as it is spoken. The reading speed is adjustable. With the use of flash memory a large amount of pages can be stored and you can transfer text files to and from computers or Braille note takers.

For more information

http://www.knfbreader.com/products-mobile.php

Coming soon to ILC Tech

iPod Switcher

An iPod docking unit specially adapted to give switch control for those with limited motor control and is ideal for desktop, tabletop or wheelchair use. Operate the basic iPod functions – **stop/start**, **next track** and **previous track** – using the three big button switches on the supplied **wire-less** remote control. You can also use your own switches plugged into its 3.5mm jack sockets.

The iPod Switcher works with all iPods, apart from the iPod Shuffle.

For more information

http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/product/ipod-switcher

Q & A- What is a Daisy Reader?

Daisy stands for Digital Accessible Information System.

It was a system developed in 1995 for people with vision impairment or those that cannot read print due to a print disability. It is a system used worldwide with approximately 125,000 Daisy books already produced. The talking books using the Daisy format provides the user with a navigation system that is sequential and hierarchical. This means you can search when reading a Daisy Book going to the previous or next page, chapter or sentence. The books can be distributed on CD's, DVD, memory cards or downloaded from the internet. The DAISY books can be played on a Daisy player, computers if they have the Daisy software installed, mobile phones and MP3 players.

Contact the Independent Living Centre and the Association for the Blind for more information.

Boardmaker Workshops

There are no more Boardmaker workshops planned for 2010.

Be sure to keep your eye out in future newsletters for upcoming Boardmaker and Boardmaker Plus/SD Pro workshops.

Did you know we can also run a Boardmaker workshop for your school?

Contact Kelly for a quote.

Professional Development

Every year the ILC Tech team provides professional development for schools and organisations across the state. We are able to present on a range of current assistive technology products and best practice. Examples of popular workshops include;

- Aided Language Stimulation - a strategy for students with complex communication needs to learn to use symbols to communicate
- Knowing Me– using personal communication passport and other tools to help students interact, participate and develop social networks.
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication—overview of current tools, technology and strategies
- Boardmaker (standard, Plus, SD Pro, Studio)
- Clicker 5
- Range of other literacy and early learning software (please contact us for a list or with your request)
- Tar Heel Reader– a freely accessible resource for talking books
- Training for programming & supporting specific communication devices

In addition, we can provide customised training or support for your organisation or school. Please contact us to discuss your specific training requirements. Remember, school PD days book out early!

Have you heard about the new Boardmaker software BOARDMAKER STUDIO
Check out this link for more information or to download a free trial
http://www.mayer-johnson.com/products/boardmaker-studio/

Calendar of Events—START PLANNING FOR 2011 CONFERENCES

Event Title	Date	Place
AGOSCI 2011 National Conference	11-14 May 2011	Adelaide Convention Centre http://www.alloccasionsgroup.com/AGOSCI2011
More than Gadgets Conference	29-30 August 2011	Esplanade Hotel Fremantle http://morethangadgets.com/

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