



**D**'**s**<sup>u</sup>**r****p****t****i****v****e**, technology is knocking at the door of the commercial assistive technology (AT) software marketplace.

What is **d**'**s**<sup>u</sup>**r****p****t****i****v****e** technology?

In the case of this presentation it is:

**high-quality, full-portable, open source, assistive technology (AT) software...**



## Definition of **d**'**s**<sup>u</sup>**r****p****t****i****v****e** Technology

Also referred to as a **d**'**s**<sup>u</sup>**r****p****t****i****v****e** innovation...  
**d**'**s**<sup>u</sup>**r****p****t****i****v****e** Technology is a technological innovation that holds the potential of overturning existing dominant technologies in the market... including forced price reductions, enhanced support and greater flexibility.



## Access Tomorrow: Project Goals\*

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- Improve academic achievement, career development, and transition outcomes of high school students with disabilities;
- Encourage and support the development of self-advocacy skills; and,
- Improve postsecondary and employment outcomes through a transition curriculum and electronic mentoring program.

\* OSEP Steppingstones Phase I Project Funded to The Ohio State University Nisonger Center and IDEAL Group, Inc.

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## Access Tomorrow: Project Overview

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- *Employs an innovative model in which open source AT software is being modified and re-packaged to execute and run off of a standard, portable, flash drive equipped with a fully-accessible talking menu.*
- Utilizes a fully-accessible online learning environment
- Provides students access to a self-directed on-line transition preparation course.
- Uses personally relevant contexts of transitioning from high school to college/employment.
- Teaches students basic information technology skills

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## Our Pilot Sites:

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- Ohio State School for the Blind
- Columbus (Ohio) Public Schools
- Worthington Public School System
- A.G. Bell Columbus Hearing Impaired Program
- Ohio High School High Tech Program
- Lead-the-Way (Workforce Investment Act)
- J. Ashburn Center (Workforce Investment Act)
- Pickaway-Ross Career Tech Center

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high-quality, fully-portable, open source,  
assistive technology (AT) software can  
help to resolve the following, common,  
commercial AT software use issues...

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## Issues with Commercial AT Software (1 of 3)

- Pressure to “assess and select it right the first time” when purchasing AT software for an individual. Unfortunately, it sometimes takes several months to determine whether or not the purchased AT software actually delivers the benefits pre-assumed before purchase. Most often no additional money is available to purchase a different AT application if the first AT application proves ineffective.
- Lack of access to AT software on public-facing PCs such as those in public libraries, community centers, mainstream college computer labs, Cyber Cafes, etc.;

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## Issues with Commercial AT Software (2 of 3)

- High cost. The cost of popular commercial AT software has not decreased over the past 10 years. ALL other types of software has.
- Issues of incompatibility and/or interoperability with other applications installed on the same PC
- Installation problems such as CD drives routinely being rendered unusable on public library and other public-facing PCs
- Lack of funding;

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## Issues with Commercial AT Software (3 of 3)

- Licensing limitations that preclude using AT software on every PC the user may wish/need to use.
- Imposed time limitations when using PCs in college (and other) AT computer labs
- Ownership issues which preclude school-owned AT software from being taken to, installed, and used on PCs in locations such as in a students home to do their homework.
- Time to find funding, solicit approval and process the paperwork to acquire AT software.

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## Mainstream, Portable, Open Source, Software

Hundreds-of-millions of consumers currently use high quality, portable, open source software. *Portable, high-quality, open source AT software can be next .*

- [7-Zip](#): file compression ([Portable](#)) [32M](#)
- [Abiword](#): create word documents ([Portable](#)) [75M](#)
- [Audacity](#): sound editing and effects ([Portable](#)) [31M](#)
- [FileZilla](#): ftp client ([Portable](#)) [28M](#)
- [Firefox](#): browser ([Portable](#)) [400M](#)
- [OpenOffice.org](#): office suite ([Portable](#)) [100M](#)
- [Thunderbird](#): e-mail client ([Portable](#)) [50M](#)
- [eMule](#): file-sharing client ([Portable](#)) [367M](#)

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## Low Visibility of Open Source AT Software

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- [No Google hits on the phrase "open source assistive technology" on any of the top 82 AT informational websites;](#)
- Why is this so?

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## Commercial AT Software

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- [Prices have either remained flat, or increased, over the past 10 years;](#) Many reasons are given for this. Believe what you want to believe... However,
- Most other types software have *declined* in price substantially over the past 10 years.
- Could the reason for price declines be the competitive pressures of a free market economy?
- Is commercial AT software susceptible to the pressures of a free market economy? You decide for yourself.
- Given bullet #1 above... we do not believe this to be the case.

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"Disruption is a life-force. It's an opportunity. Let's *love* disruption... and use it for change."

If anyone viewing this presentation has an interest in reaching their hand out to meet ours... or simply discuss the possibilities... we'd love to hear from you.

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