Tech It Easy (Text only version. All pictures and special formatting has been removed)

Access Technologies, Inc.

March 2018 Edition

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**The Best Kept Secret in Oregon**

Our staff travel over 24,000 miles each year, providing direct service to approximately 6,000 Oregonians, while also presenting and exhibiting at more than 40 conferences and special events - and we still hear “You do what?!” Wow, you are the best kept secret in Oregon!” Could it be, that we simply get so busy doing, that we forget to pause and let you know about the wonderful low, and or no cost services available to you?

This edition of Tech It Easy is our pause, starting with who we are.

Access Technologies, Inc., ATI, is a non-profit organization who provides SOLUTIONS that ENABLE independence. Our mission is simple “to assure that persons with disabilities in Oregon will be able to secure and effectively use assistive technologies” and we are proud to serve as the implementing entity for Oregon’s Statewide Assistive Technology Program; fulfilling all 7 of the Act’s federally mandated activities which include:

**Assistive Technology Finance Activities:**

It’s no secret assistive technology is expensive, so the Oregon AT Program manages a number of activities designed to save consumers money. As a reader of Tech It Easy, you are probably familiar with our **Assistive Technology MarketPlace**, the removable ATM is inside each edition. Products from the ATM are what individuals see when entering our storefront in Salem. Our administrative staff work diligently with various durable medical equipment (DME) and assistive technology (AT) distributors, leveraging buying powering, by purchasing in bulk and passing the savings on to consumers. The MarketPlace contains a select inventory of specifically requested devices by our seniors, consumers, therapists, and discharge nurses. If our MarketPlace doesn’t contain the unique device you are looking for, ask the ATI staff. Not only will we provide pricing for you, but your request may become our next “most popular” item in the MarketPlace.

For more expensive purchases including hearing aids, adapted vehicles and accessible home modifications, you may wish to consider a **low interest AT loan**. For this service contact our partners, Northwest Access Fund at 877.428.5116.

Additionally, when it’s a right fit, our Program even offers **short term layaway** options. Last year the Oregon AT Program Finance activities saved 549 consumers over $127,718!

NOTE: For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.

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**Reuse: Good for the Environment - Great for Consumers**

Oregonians are big recyclers, but did you know the Oregon AT Program supports the reuse of DME and AT devices that are no longer needed or used by their original owners? Being a non-profit, individuals are able to donate their clean, slightly used DME and AT products to ATI. Following a thorough inspection, cleaning and sanitization process, these items are made available to you simply for a service fee; allowing recipients to obtain equipment at significantly lower costs. Reuse equipment is identified in our storefront by their yellow tags and are listed in the Bargain Basement section of the ATM. Last year Oregonians saved over $124,000 utilizing the Oregon **AT Program Reuse** activity.

When perusing the ATM, you will notice that some items are being listed by individuals. These devices are being made available to you through our **Device Exchange** activity, a FREE “want ads” outlet where individuals advertise their clean, slightly used AT and DME devices for sale, trade, or donation.

**See - Touch – Learn**

Our staff believes that whether you are purchasing a bath bench to use after surgery, or your loved one is ready for a communication device, exploring the various features and functions of similar products will help to ensure that you are selecting the AT device that best meets your needs.

Last year, Pam and her son scheduled a guided demonstration with one of our AT Specialists to learn more about assistive technologies that could help her son overcome literacy barriers. During the hands-on demonstration, Pam and her son explored a variety of AT devices, apps and software designed to accommodate individuals with different learning styles.

The demonstration allowed Pam and her son to gain a greater understanding of AT that that could help him to be more successful in school, and Pam felt empowered to discuss her son’s AT needs during his upcoming IEP meeting.

Pam and her son, joined 4,240 other Oregonians who received personalized demonstrations in our Salem lab or in the convenience of their community during the last year.

FREE **Device Demonstrations**, are available through the Oregon AT Program.

NOTE: Shop the MarketPlace on TWO DOLLAR OFF Tuesdays, and save two dollars off your purchase.

Pages 3 – 7 of this edition of Tech It Easy contain listings of new durable medical and/or assistive technology devices that are available for sale through our Assistive Technology MarketPlace.

Page 8 - 9 of this edition of Tech It Easy contain our Bargain Basement. The Bargain Basement section is a listing of slightly used items which are also available for sale online in our Assistive Technology MarketPlace.

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Ask REMI!

Dear Remi,

I’ve heard it mentioned that the AT Specialists provide ICT training, what is that? ~ OM

Hi OM!

Thank you for your question. Information Communication Technology (ICT), is about ensuring everyone can access electronic data. As society continually becomes more and more dependent on web-based applications and software for access to information, it’s critical for public and private agencies to understand the necessities of developing applications that integrate accessibility in all the primary documents.

Below are some examples of what to consider when creating a Microsoft Word document.

**Use Document Styles**

Use headings and paragraph styles to structure the document.

**Add Alt-Text to Images and Objects**

This includes pictures, clip art, charts, and shapes. Use clear, concise terms. For example, “Person in a wheelchair on ramp” may suffice rather than “Smiling woman in wheelchair posing on ramp.”

**Use Short Titles in Headings**

Keep headings short (fewer than 20 words or one line long). This makes it easy for readers to quickly navigate your document.

**Name Hyperlinks Appropriately**

Links should contain meaningful text that reflects the link destination or subject, rather than simply saying “click here”.

Oregon’s AT Program provides ICT training; allowing public and private agencies to gain a deeper understanding on how to integrate accessibility into the initial document. Call 503.361.1201 to talk with an AT Specialist about your ICT needs.

NOTE: Email your AT related questions and newsletter article suggestions to: info@accesstechnologiesinc.org

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**Before You Buy**

Do you know our **AT Lending Library** has over 2,000 devices? AT device loans save time, money and frustration for many during the decision making process. Last year one of the many stories we heard from the **344** Oregonians who accessed the Loan Library was from the parents of a young boy who is non-verbal. The family contacted the Oregon AT Program to borrow an iPad and a specific communication application (app) they had recently seen at an exhibit table, which they believed would be ideal for their son. But before their insurance company would agree to purchase the accommodation, it was necessary to provide documentation showing that their child could successfully use the technology to communicate.

At the end of the loan period the parents were excited to share that their son *talked up a storm* and now has his own iPad and communication app; courtesy of their insurance company.

Using the Lending Library is easy and practically free for 30-days; as many of the devices only have a small, $9 maintenance and refurbishment fee. Then if you would like to extend the loan past the initial 30-days, there’s a monthly $20 charge, although a few items are slightly more expensive.

NOTE: The Lending Library is Open for You. Check it out online at [www.accesstechnologiesinc.org](http://www.accesstechnologiesinc.org)

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Learn about a FREE Equipment Program

iCanConnect—Oregon

Combined hearing and vision loss?

Learn about a FREE equipment program.

iCanConnect provides equipment and training to people with significant combined hearing and vision loss so they can stay connected to friends and family.

Sending email or chatting on the phone can be difficult without access to the right equipment. iCanConnect puts that technology into the hands of these individuals to enhance their independence.

Contact us to learn more about the program’s income and disability guidelines, refer someone you know, or to apply for the program.

Phone: (503) 361-1201

Toll Free: (800) 677-7512

Email: info@accesstehnologiesinc.org

Web: [www.accesstechnologiesinc.org](http://www.accesstechnologiesinc.org)