

EMBARGOED MEDIA RELEASE

Ai-Media Announces "Ai-Live™" – A World-First Education Breakthrough for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Students

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Leading deafness services innovator Ai-Media today unveiled "Ai-Live™", a world-first service that transforms education for deaf and hearing impaired students by enabling their full participation in mainstream classrooms.

Ai-Live™ was launched at the National Deafness Sector Summit in Sydney, where the Hon Bill Shorten MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, delivered the keynote address on the social inclusion of people with disability.

Ai-Live™ uses broadband technology and a unique Australian-designed system that delivers live captioning into classrooms via a laptop so that students with hearing impairments can easily follow any teacher's lesson.

The service also aims to deliver new employment and training opportunities that would be provided by Ai-Live™ at a local community level for people who would be recruited to provide the service.

Ai-Media CEO Tony Abrahams said: "Ai-Live™ has been created to connect deaf and hearing impaired students fully into the mainstream school system."

"With a better education, these students can secure better jobs and benefit themselves, the community and wider economy," Mr Abrahams said.

The successful preliminary-pilot of Ai-Live™ was unveiled today following 3 years of research and development in NSW high schools with the support of the NSW Department of Education and Training; deaf students, their families and teachers; and other organisations*.

Ai-Live™ works by having teachers in mainstream classrooms wear a lapel microphone. A teacher's live speech is then relayed via broadband technology to a skilled, hearing-able person – who could be working from anywhere - who "re-speaks" the lesson into software that instantaneously translates it into text on a screen. The text is then transmitted via the internet to a deaf student's laptop in the originating classroom with only a few seconds delay. During development, it has been proven that deaf students can follow ordinary lessons with ease, significantly improving their literacy, learning and performance without interruption to regular classroom activity.

Ai-Media also announced:

- Ai-Live™ is seeking expressions of interest from schools and students nationally – in regional and city areas – to participate in a national pilot program to prove the scalability of Ai-Live™.
- Ai-Live™ is seeking expressions of interest from hearing-able people to train and work as "re-speakers" to support the Ai-Live™ captioning service.

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Experienced disability educator, Leonie Jackson, has joined Ai-Media to lead a new Education Division that includes Ai-Live™. Ms Jackson previously spent 18 years at the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children where she taught in the preschool, primary and high school programs.

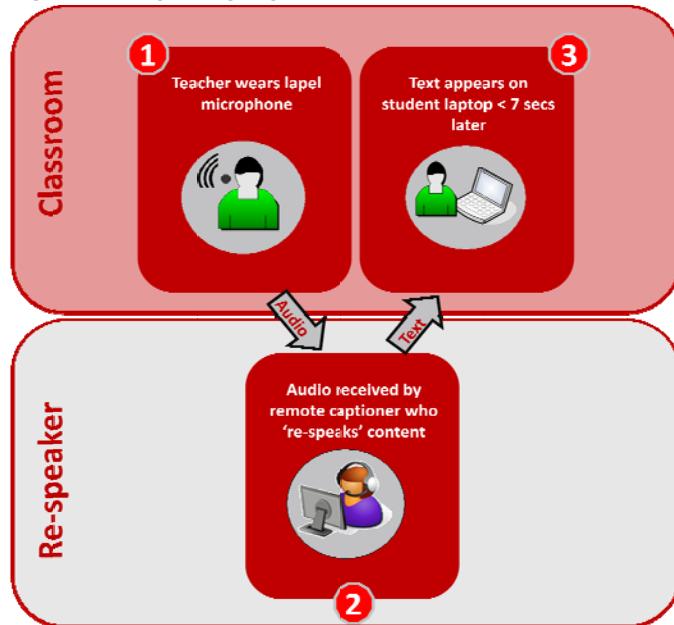
There are 10,000 deaf children in Australia and 160,000 Australians are out of work because they cannot hear. Deaf children are 2.4 times less likely to complete high school than their hearing counterparts. Ai-Live™ has been created to change that.

According to Access Economics, the cost to the Australian economy of excluding people from education and employment opportunities because of deafness exceeds \$12 billion a year.

"Ai-Live's preliminary pilot with deaf students in Years 9, 10 and 11 transformed their educational outcomes," Ms Jackson said, "One 14 year-old girl who is deaf went from bottom of the class to topping the yearly exam in one school term."

Ai-Media's education initiative coincides with renewed government focus on disability, including a Productivity Commission inquiry that has commenced into disability issues and the Henry Tax Review that has examined disability costs and future funding models.

How Ai-Live™ works



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About Ai-Media:

Access Innovation Media (Ai-Media) is a social enterprise that develops and delivers access services for media, education, business and government clients to ensure their content is available to people with hearing and vision impairments.

The company provides the following services:

- Pre-recorded captioning and subtitling for television, DVD, online and corporate presentations
- Live captioning using re-speaking and stenographic methodologies for broadcast, conference, meetings, online and mobile
- Transcripts
- Audio description

Ai-Media introduced large-scale cost-effective captioning to subscription television in 2004 – a service that has now grown to deliver over 120,000 hours across 45 channels annually.

Ai-Media clients have won an unprecedented 21 Captioning Awards over the last 5 years.

Ai-Media is the platinum sponsor of the National Deafness Sector Summit from 23-24 April.

About Ai-Live™:

*Ai-Live has been developed over the last 3 years by Ai-Media with support from the NSW Department of Education and Training, Media Access Australia, Telstra, the Australian Social Innovation Exchange (ASIX), the Centre for Social Impact, and community groups including Aussie Deaf Kids, the Deafness Forum of Australia and many interested parents and teachers.

A world-first, Ai-Live™ provides real-time text of classroom discussion delivered to a student's laptop in under 7 seconds. The service is supported by Ai-Skills™ which provides training, accreditation and quality assurance supporting the re-speaking and subject matter skills central to the delivery of effective education access.

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