

IVIE Motivator Newsletter

Summer 2023

**Welcome to the quarterly IVIE Motivator  
Newsletter!**

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## **MESSAGE FROM IVIE President**

Hi members,

It's been another busy quarter for IVIE and me as well. We've completed another successful annual convention and I hope you all enjoyed both the IVIE activities as well as the ACB events. Welcome new members! Check our member directory if you haven't done so lately. Please submit a member profile and send it in to include in our next IVIE newsletter. We'd like to get to know all of you better whether you have a business or not. Read more about submitting articles later in this newsletter.

This newsletter has a description of all the opportunities IVIE has to offer members. If any of you have suggestions for IVIE, particularly for reaching new people, please let us know. If you have suggestions for the IVIE website: [ivie-acb.org](http://ivie-acb.org), please send them to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org). You can reach me at 818-238-9321.

Happy reading,

Ardis Bazyn

## **MEMBER OPPORTUNITIES**

IVIE will continue to provide opportunities for members to network and share ideas. If you have not already taken advantage of the following options available for members, please consider participating in one or all of them.

- On the second Sunday each month, IVIE sponsors an ACB community call called the IVIE Entrepreneur Exchange. Each month, a topic is suggested. Each attendee gets the opportunity to introduce themselves and their business. Then tips on the topic are expressed and questions are asked and answered. For our next three upcoming calls, the topics are: August 13 "LinkedIn Creator", September 10 "website tips", and October 8 "Resources for blind and visually impaired entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs in the making". If you'd like a specific topic addressed, do let us know. We'll be happy to add it to our list of upcoming topics.
- The IVIE email discussion list is available for members and others interested in creating or developing a business to share announcements, resources, opportunities, and other information of interest for business owners and others. If you are not on the general IVIE email discussion list, please subscribe by sending an email to [ivie+subscribe@acblists.org](mailto:ivie+subscribe@acblists.org)

- All members should be on the IVIE-members email list for members only. If you are not currently subscribed, please send an email to [ivie-members+subscribe@acblists.org](mailto:ivie-members+subscribe@acblists.org). Members can share entrepreneur related information, IVIE business related information such as potential Constitution and Bylaw amendments, resolutions, and positive strategies to improve IVIE in the future. The quarterly Motivator newsletter is sent to the IVIE-members email list. All upcoming calls and events are also publicized on this list as well as anything members wish to share with other members.
- The IVIE business directory gives members a free way to advertise their business and publicize contact information for networking or business purposes. If you'd like changes to your listing on the business directory, please send an email to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org) or call 818-238-9321. We want to share specific details in your member directory listing. Those without businesses have their personal information on the list. If you'd like to add why you joined, you can do so. You can say retired business owner, your current job- title and company, someone with resources to share, etc.
- Our quarterly newsletter is sent to members via the IVIE-members email list. Members can submit articles about their business or give helpful tips to readers. See suggested topics under the article at the end of the newsletter called SUBMITTING ARTICLES.
- IVIE is endeavoring to have a quarterly presentation beneficial to all. If you know a great speaker on a particular topic or would like a book discussion on a helpful business related book, please let us know. On the fifth Sunday each quarter, if we do not have a book to discuss or a special presenter, we'll have an open discussion call.

## **2023 ACB CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS!**

This year, the Independent Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs (IVIE) had an exciting convention program. Whether you came to Schaumburg or participated virtually, we hope you found something in our program of interest to you. Members at our virtual business meeting on June 23 passed two Constitution and Bylaw changes. One was changing our year to a January to December year instead of July 1 to June 30. This will make it less confusing for paying dues since most organizations have dues payable by the 1st of the year. The second change

was adding a board member to the board of directors so we have five officers and one board member now. Our elected officers are Ardis Bazyn (CA), President; Teresa Christian (OR), Vice President; Jeannette Gerrard (DC), Membership Secretary; Carla Hayes (PA), Recording Secretary; Marie Brinas (VA), Treasurer; and Ron Brooks (AZ), board member. We voted to have our next online expo on November 4, 2023 from 11:30 AM to 7 PM Eastern. See separate announcement later in this newsletter.

On June 30th, RSVA invited us to their mixer again this year and I'm glad a couple IVIE members were able to attend. Several of you were able to celebrate Independence Day, Tuesday, July 4th, with us. It was nice to meet a few members at our annual luncheon. I know we had quite a few join us virtually for the program. Our first program segment was "Learning About IRS Accessibility Services." We were informed about all of the ways that the Internal Revenue Service is improving access to information for people with print disabilities and how you can request access to notices in your preferred alternate format as well as how to get accessible tax forms and publications. For those who attended in person, we were able to get all the forms on a thumb drive which I really

appreciated. Our presenter was Kim Carmichael, Senior Distribution Analyst from IRS.

Our second program topic was: "Link Up With The All New APH CareerConnect: Inform, Empower, Impact." Richard Rueda, Digital Content Manager and Lori Scharff, CareerConnect Lead Content Contractor spoke about all the new tools and resources that are available for job seekers and entrepreneurs. Our program was streamed, recorded and will be made available as a podcast.

Three members participated with a booth at the IVIE Business Expo which was held in person only. Many ACB members did take advantage of our expo and purchased our products and learned more about our services. I wish more IVIE members would have taken advantage of this offering.

**Independent Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs**

**ONLINE Business Expo**

**November 4, 2023**

IVIE is offering the following opportunity to blind or visually impaired business owners/entrepreneurs. When you join in our Online Business Expo, you can describe your products and services, pass on contact information, and allow participants to ask questions. For IVIE members, the fee for a half hour is \$10 or \$20 for an hour. Not an IVIE member? Then, the fee is \$25 for a half hour session or \$35 for an hour. Nonmembers have the option of having \$15 of the payment used to pay IVIE dues for 2024.

All those participating in the call will use the same Zoom information to connect. The date and time line would be November 4, 2023, from 11:30 am to 7 pm Eastern. At 11:45 am, an introduction of all the vendors participating with their specific time slots would be given along with instructions for those attending. A wrap-up at the end of the presentations would be available for anyone to ask any final questions of those exhibiting online.

The deadline for purchasing a time slot is October 21, 2023. To purchase a time slot or ask questions, send an email to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org) with your request to present/exhibit. Please send your business name, product line, your telephone number, and your email address. You will be sent a link for payment and additional information. If

you wish to attend the IVIE Online Business Expo and listen to this unique shopping experience, there is no cost. However, please send an email to register so we can send you the Zoom call details. Send the email request to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org) or contact Ardis Bazyn, phone 818-238-9321.

## **CREATING INVOICES**

**By Ardis Bazyn, Bazyn Communications**

Recently, there was a discussion on how different entrepreneurs create invoices. I'm sharing some of the responses I saw on the email discussion list and a few notes about my own experiences in creating invoices. One member said she uses Excel, another a word document, and another has used Paypal invoicing.

I like to have a numbering system for invoices. I use the year plus the order of invoices so 202301, 202302, etc. Having an invoice number and date help me sort invoices more easily. For those who typically pay using cash or check, I use a Word document. I have created a templet and just add the various info necessary for each invoice. For example, I have a heading saying INVOICE at the top,



my business name, address, phone number, and email address - all centered and bolded. Under the heading, I list the date, then invoice number and then the heading: **PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**. Then I have a space for listing each product or service for the particular client. At the bottom, I have my signature, tagline, and contact info and a space for any comments necessary such as upcoming appointment, payment link if needed, etc. It is easy to create templets in Word and Excel documents. Word documents can also be saved in PDF format as well.

Another option is Paypal invoicing. In an earlier newsletter, I had explained how to sign up for Paypal. It is free. Once you log into your account, you can go to the link for invoicing. You can choose one of the templets they provide or create your own invoice. I choose one they provide and fill in the appropriate info. It automatically places your company name. You add the company and payment email address for the customer. Then you can list the products or services. The templet I use gives you the option to add the hourly rate for each service if you wish and will automatically compute the total for each line or you can just place the total amount in the appropriate column. Paypal calculates the total at the bottom of the column in this section. You can attach a PDF file to the invoice if you choose to add additional info. They do not

allow word documents as attachments but do allow some other formats. The invoices are sent to the company or client email listed in the invoice once you click on submit. You will also receive a copy.

If you have questions or would like a copy of my templet either in Word or Paypal invoice, let me know at [abazyn@bazyncommunications.com](mailto:abazyn@bazyncommunications.com).

## **Entrepreneurship: Is It for You?**

**By: Ardis Bazyn**

**The first step in choosing entrepreneurship is deciding whether entrepreneurship is really right for you. Do you have the motivation to focus on setting up a business, marketing a business, and making priorities as necessary to keep it moving forward? As a business owner, you will not have a supervisor watching over you to make sure tasks are accomplished in a timely manner or give you jobs to do. You also will not have a steady income immediately. If you have lots of energy, like meeting new people all the time, and feel your personal life can be flexible, entrepreneurship may be a good choice.**

**The second step is to choose the right type of business to start. Do you have skills that could be marketed as a business? For example, if you have the skills to fix or program computers, you might be able to sell these services to others. Do you currently work for another company doing a particular service such as styling hair, giving massages, giving nail or facial treatments, taking photos, making videos, or selling products and services? If so, you might feel like starting your own business offering these same services to your own customers.**

**Another viable option is to sell products and services for a large networking products company. There are numerous options: Avon, Mary Kay, Arbonne, Party Lite, health and vitamin products, and many others. Each one has its own levels of earnings, most based on the amount of sales you make. Some require you to have inventory on hand and others do not. Check out several before deciding on the best one for you. Each charges you some upfront fees but the amount varies widely. Most do have training sessions to help you start. They also may want you to sign up other sales representatives under you.**

**Another type of business is selling products or services for disability and accessibility related companies. Most of these use contractors -you get paid for the amount of work you do but you primarily set your own schedule. You likely will have training and possibly some leads for getting sales.**

**The next step is to consider family support and your education. Having your own business takes more than just having a skill. You might be great at that skill, but can you network with a variety of people, manage accounts, keep a schedule, and have a plan for how bookkeeping and financial records will be handled? Do you have the education necessary to accomplish these tasks yourself? Do you have a family member (spouse) who can assist you in the business? Classes for those with vision loss are available online and a good business coach can assist you in finding out what is necessary.**

**Some accessible online classes are available at the Carroll Center in MA and some correspondence courses are given by the Hadley school for the Blind. SBA.gov also has many resources available. Both the Independent Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs ([www.ivie-acb.org](http://www.ivie-acb.org)) and Randolph-Sheppard Vendors**

**of America ([www.randolph-sheppard.org](http://www.randolph-sheppard.org)) have websites with lots of information.**

**The next step is to consider your financial resources and calculate the upfront cost of starting a business. All businesses take time to develop and become large enough to support you and your family. You will need some funding to assist you with living costs until you earn enough to pay your ongoing expenses. You may need to rent an office unless you are planning to have a home based business. Even then, you will need enough room for inventory, computers, marketing materials, and other equipment. You may need to purchase some equipment such as a new computer. Some funding is available through the Small Business Administration and local small business community development centers with low or no cost training from retired business counselors/representatives (SCORE). Some statewide organizations may have funding for people with disabilities and may have employment related grants and loans.**

**You will need to research valuable online resources. You can do a search for other types of businesses, possible loans or grants, and other information relating to the industry you want to pursue. You may**

**want to consult with someone else currently in that particular business -you can find others by searching for them on the Internet. The [www.ivie-acb.org](http://www.ivie-acb.org) website has business related links and a list of members who own their own business. The Career-Connect site under APH also offers mentors.**

**You can explore grants and/or low interest loans online as well. Some funding is available for starting a new business, particularly if you are a veteran. Funds for minority based businesses are also available. You can contact veteran organizations and minority organizations for assistance in this area.**

**As a person with a disability, you can get facts from vocational rehabilitation services in your state about assistance in starting a business. The Randolph-Sheppard Program gives training in food service management to visually impaired persons and assists them in applying for open positions for entrepreneurs. They also can assist you with some technology needs, particularly during your education. The Social Security Administration can give you information on incentives available for disabled business owners and assistance for living costs and health care until you earn enough to support yourself.**

**Another step in the process is checking state and local laws for starting a business. Depending on the type of business, there are licenses required. All states require you to have a sales tax license unless you sell products of a already established businesses. Other licenses may be required in the city and county in which you live. Local laws are different from city to city. Food services need health licenses to operate. Other retail establishments may need other licenses to sell liquor, over the counter drugs, and other items. Some counties require you to get a DBA- Doing Business As license and you will have to make sure another business isn't already using the business name you've chosen. It is important to know all requirements before you begin a business in your state.**

**The most important step in starting a business is writing a business plan. It forces you to think about the elements of a business such as your mission or vision, your products and services, and how you are unique from others. You will have to define how you will market your business and set goals to build your business. Finally, you will need to write a budget and plan how you will get the sales you need to pay the**

**expenses. Consulting with people familiar with marketing will be beneficial in this process.**

**-- Ardis has written the book: "BUILDING BLOCKS TO SUCCESS: Does the Image of Your Business Attract Customers or Motivate Employees?".**

## **What's New?**

(Items in this column are not endorsed by the IVIE board. If you wish to contribute an item for this column, please send it to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org))

### **FDA Issues Warning that Abbott's FreeStyle Libre Readers May Overheat**

*Full article:* <https://diatribe.org/abbott-recalls-freestyle-libre-readers-due-risk-extreme-heat-and-fire?omhide=true>

*A number of Libre users reported that their reader's lithium-ion battery swelled, overheated, sparked, and in rare cases, caught fire. In response, Abbott has issued a warning. If you use FreeStyle Libre, here are steps you can take to stay safe. Abbott has issued a [Class I recall](#), used when there is a risk of serious injury or death, for its FreeStyle Libre, Libre 14-day, and Libre 2 Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems. The recall affects all reader serial numbers distributed in the U.S. from November 2017 to February 2023, totaling 4,210,785 devices. The recall is*



due to the potential overheating, sparking, or fire that may occur when the readers are charged with non-Abbott adapters or USB cables, or when they are damaged or exposed to liquids. Abbott-provided USB cables and power adapters limit the current to safely charge the battery, whereas third-party cables and adapters may allow much higher power, increasing the risk of fire. Abbott emphasized that no readers should be returned to them. Readers can continue to be used as long as an Abbott-provided USB cable and power adapter are used and the reader is not damaged or cracked, not showing any visible swelling, is not too hot to hold, and is able to hold a charge. Abbott has reported 206 incidents related to this issue, including at least seven fires and one injury, but no deaths. The FDA is advising people to stop using the FreeStyle Glucose Monitoring Systems and switch to a backup method if they do not have the Abbott-provided USB cable and power adapter, or if the reader appears damaged, cracked, or swollen. Additionally, if there is visible swelling of the reader, if the reader gets too hot to hold, or if the reader is no longer able to hold a charge, it is essential to switch to a backup. If the Reader is damaged or an Abbott-provided USB cable or power adapter is needed, call Abbott's Customer Service at [1-855-632-8658](tel:1-855-632-8658) to request a replacement. The steps outlined at [www.FreeStyleBattery.com](http://www.FreeStyleBattery.com) provide guidance on how to properly store, charge and use a Reader and its accompanying USB cable and power adapter. This recall only applies to those using the external reader device, not those using their smartphone.

### How to safely charge and use the reader

The FreeStyle Libre reader uses lithium-ion batteries, which are also used in mobile phones and many other handheld electronic devices. These batteries have the potential for swelling, leakage, or extreme overheating and may pose a fire hazard if not properly stored and charged. To avoid the potential for extreme overheating and/or fire, Abbott recommends the following:

Charge the reader battery by only using the Abbott supplied USB cable and adapter (charger). Charging the reader with non-Abbott adapters or non-Abbott USB cables may cause the problems noted above.

1. Do not expose the reader, power adapter or yellow USB cable to water or other liquids.
2. Store the reader between -4 °F and 140 °F.
3. Do not place the reader in water or other liquids.
4. Avoid getting dust, dirt, blood, control solution, water, bleach, or any other substance in the test strip or USB port.
5. Review the revised user guide and labeling at [www.freestyle.abbott/us-en/support](http://www.freestyle.abbott/us-en/support) to ensure safe use of the device.
6. Visit [www.FreeStyleBattery.com](http://www.FreeStyleBattery.com) to follow steps to perform a Reader Test to determine if your current reader needs to be replaced.

By following these tips, people with diabetes who use the FreeStyle Libre systems can minimize the risk of fire or extreme heat and continue to monitor their glucose levels safely and effectively. Remember, it's important to take action if you notice any signs of damage or if you don't

have the Abbott-provided USB cable and power adapter. Contact Abbott Customer Service at [1-855-632-8658](tel:1-855-632-8658) if you have any questions or concerns about the recall.

## **3 of the best Mastodon apps to use on iPhone to help move on from Twitter**

Sending a toot in the best way on iOS.

Since a slate of controversial changes were implemented, rival social media platform Mastodon has seen explosive growth. You might be thinking about how you're going to use the app on [iOS](#). You'll want to kit yourself out with one of the best Mastodon apps you can find. But with such a surge in users, the number of Mastodon clients has absolutely proliferated. Working out which is the best one for your needs is not always easy.

We've sifted through the apps to find three of the best Mastodon clients on iOS right now. Use one of these apps and you'll get a superb experience from your [iPhone](#).

**[Ivory for Mastodon by Tapbots](#)**

[Ivory](#) (opens in new tab) is made by Tapbots, the same people who made Tweetbot. That app was one of Twitter's best (and first) third-party clients, but shut down after Twitter stopped allowing clients apps access to Twitter.

Ivory feels like an app made with love and care. It looks beautiful, with tasteful accents and gorgeous fonts, all of which can be tweaked to your liking. In fact, Ivory is highly customizable, and you can change the media playback rules, date format, color scheme, and even the app icon. Everything is easy to find, from your own profile to mentions and posts by people you follow. That means it's ideal for newbies and experts alike, and you'll never feel lost swiping around its interface. It's clear that Tapbots' developers have used all their past experience to make Ivory an enjoyable app. Ivory is free to download, with a few advanced features locked behind a paywall. You get plenty of functionality for free, so you don't need to pay if you don't want to (although doing so will of course support the developers).

#### **Ice Cubes for Mastodon**

If you've used Twitter and are accustomed to its layout, [Ice Cubes](#) (opens in new tab) will feel very familiar. From user profiles to media embedded into posts, each item is well-designed to help you feel right at home if you're migrating to Mastodon. But Ice Cubes isn't simply a Twitter clone – it's a superb app in its own right. Finding new content is easy, and the Explore tab will automatically highlight trending tags and posts that you might be interested in. Long-tapping a post brings up options to quote it, bookmark it, reply to it, and much more. Writing a new post, meanwhile, is pleasingly straightforward, and adding attachments and changing the audience is a cinch. Like Ivory, Ice Cubes is chock-full of customization options, and the settings menu lets you change everything from the app's look and feel to the way swipe actions

work. There are a few really clever ideas, like tweaking which actions prompt haptic feedback on your device, too. That means there's no need to stick with what you're given – if you want more choice, the app lets you set things up the way you want them.

Every feature in Ice Cubes is available for free, and you can voluntarily donate to the developer if you like their work. With so much on offer above board, there's no reason not to give it a try.

#### **Mona for Mastodon**

[Mona](#) (opens in new tab) is a brand-new app, but already it's drawing attention for the way it carves out its own niche in the world of third-party Mastodon clients. That's because it's perfect for power users who want the ability to set up Mastodon in their own way. If that sounds like you, Mona could be well worth a try.

For example, you can create a Divide View that basically works like Apple's Split View, letting you have your timeline at the top of the app and your notifications at the bottom, say. Dive into its settings and you'll see you can reorder each button under a post (from reply to translate), change what is backed up to iCloud, determine how you enter and exit full-screen mode, and so much more.

Besides a huge array of tweaks, Mona is packed with downright nifty features. That includes the ability to reply to posts right from your iPhone's lock screen, compose autosaving so you never lose your text, and full accessibility integration with Apple's VoiceOver tool.

The result is a Mastodon experience that is almost infinitely customizable, so much so that no two Mona users' apps may look the same. If you love Mastodon but

feel a bit hemmed in by other third-party clients, Mona has absolutely tons to offer. Most settings are unlocked for free, but you get even more with a sensibly priced one-off payment – no recurring subscriptions here.

<https://www.imore.com/apps/iphone-apps/3-of-the-best-mastodon-apps-to-use-on-iphone>

## Introducing the MATT Connect V2.1

Since 2017 the MATT Connect has been a classroom staple for students who benefit from accessing both a magnifier and a smart tablet. Recently, the MATT Connect got a big hardware upgrade- a new tablet! The [MATT Connect V2.1](#) upgrade has all of the original version's best features and many enhancements including and Android 12 Tablet. If you already have a MATT Connect, you can purchase a [tablet replacement](#). The MATT Connect V2.1 is capable of running the latest Android apps. The following pre-installed APH apps are also included in the APH toolbox:

- [Flip-Over Faces](#)
- [Braille Buzz](#)
- [Code Jumper](#)
- [Math Flash](#)
- [Practice2Master Abacus](#)
- [SALS](#)

Google Suite apps and eBook reader apps are also available. Additionally, all your favorite educational apps

can be downloaded to the toolbox, so you can easily access all your apps in one place.

[Why Upgrade to the Android 12 tablet?](#)

What are the advantages of purchasing an upgraded tablet? Here are some of the improvements you can expect to see:

- Faster boot-up time
- USB-C Charging
- Increased battery life
- Enhanced Accessibility
- Improved WIFI and Bluetooth connections

To learn more about the improvements and additional features added to the MATT Connect tablet, visit [What's in Android 12 at aph.org](#).

Interested in protecting your new upgraded Android 12 tablet? The MATT Connect V2.1 Upgrade has a Care Plan available for purchase. Care Plans may be purchased for any new MATT Connect V2.1 or MATT Connect tablet upgrade from V2.0 to V2.1. The care plan includes:

- 12-month extension of HumanWare's 1-year warranty (Limit one repair per entire length of warranty and Care Plan)
- One covered repair for user damage
- Membership in HumanWare's Connect Loaner Library
- Loan replacement device for repairs greater than five business days
- 2nd-day air shipping for loan units and repairs
- Includes coverage of accessories at the time of MATT Connect purchase

- Extends battery warranty to 1-year (Standard battery warranty is 90-days) Care Plan coverage is available at the time of product purchase.

### Getting Started

Ready to set up your tablet? Use a Google account and install Prodigy software V4.7. Watch the [MATT Connect Tablet Activation Tutorial Video](#) to get all the details you need to get started.

There is an online User Manual, Skills Checklist, and Hot Keys for HumanWare Bluetooth Keyboard available in the Manuals and Downloads section on the [MATT Connect V2.1](#) product page.

<https://www.aph.org/its-time-for-an-upgrade-introducing-the-matt-connect-v2-1/>

### *Artificial intelligence has proven beneficial in some U.S. hospitals, including in detecting cancer*

Doctors believe artificial intelligence is now saving lives, after a major advancement in breast cancer screenings. AI is detecting early signs of the disease, in some cases years before doctors would find the cancer on a traditional scan. [Artificial intelligence technologies](#) have the potential to significantly alter the lives of human beings, especially those with disabilities. There are numerous ways that AI can and has already positively impacted the lives of the disabled, but concerns over whether companies and websites using AI remain compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) do exist.



## What does it mean to be ADA compliant?

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal civil rights law that aims to help protect the disabled by giving them fair opportunities. Many elements of life are ADA regulated, such as buildings and certain websites. In order to be ADA compliant, technology must be accessible to those with disabilities based on the guidelines in the act. Certain businesses' web content must be accessible to those who utilize a screen reader or other assistive technology. **Is artificial intelligence compliant with ADA guidelines?** [Artificial intelligence](#) is not intrinsically ADA compliant or not, but how it is used can either help or hinder the disabled, including those with vision and hearing impairments. When used within the hiring process, apprehension over whether AI allows for equal opportunities for candidates with disabilities, based on Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, has been scrutinized. On the other hand, AI has proven instrumental in improving the lives and independence of those with disabilities.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT AI**

How can artificial intelligence be a barrier to ADA compliance? Artificial intelligence is made capable of its many applications through machine learning. This process is dependent on the [training data the algorithm receives](#). Typically, the data is based on the average individual, in which case those with disabilities are not taken into consideration. Since [AI developments](#) are often designed with the average user in mind, visually and hearing-impaired individuals may be at a disadvantage with some of these technologies. For example, automatic speech recognition systems are usually designed with common speech patterns in mind and are not compatible with speech impediment patterns. AI can help or hinder a disabled person's ability to access the web. Some advancements can help users with impairments better obtain the information they need. (Cyberguy.com)

The main concern of AI in terms of compliance with ADA guidelines is with companies' hiring processes. The Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC) expressed concern in its technical assistance document regarding AI tools that can screen out job applicants with disabilities. When using these AI screening tools, employers are expected to ensure compliance with the ADA.

How can artificial intelligence assist those with disabilities?

More often than not, AI seems to be [advantageous to the disabled](#) rather than a hindrance. AI technology helps disabled individuals engage with their world and surroundings with greater accessibility. The use of virtual assistants helps disabled individuals live with a greater amount of independence, such as by using a smart home device to easily adjust their environment, such as turning on lights and playing music.

## **HERE'S WHAT FIRST WAVE OF AI RULES FROM CONGRESS COULD LOOK LIKE**

Many inventions that we use in the world today were created to help the disabled live with fewer restrictions. One of the original typewriter designs was invented to give the inventor's blind friend the ability to write and the original audiobooks, called "talking books," were created

so that the visually impaired could experience literature. The creation of new AI tools for those with disabilities may result in inventions beneficial for all.

A blind voter uses headphones and audio along with an electronic controller outfitted with Braille to vote in an election. Artificial intelligence technologies continue to develop to assist the blind and deaf with their lives. Many companies are entering the AI space to develop technology for disabled communities. [Microsoft's AI for Accessibility](#) is designed to innovate with AI and offer grants to companies to build tools with the goal of independence for the disabled. Voiceitt is a machine learning app designed to help those with speech disorders communicate with their home devices and with other individuals. Many AI technologies have even been created to ensure that a website or company remains ADA compliant. These apps and widgets claim to help web content be more accessible to all visitors, even those with disabilities. Some of the guidelines that these programs help a website achieve include:

- Easy navigation, including when using keyboard shortcuts.
- Adjustable web content based on the needs of the users.
- Information that is presented in a simple and digestible format.
- Information that can be comprehended.

**FLASHBACK: STEPHEN HAWKING WARNED AI COULD MEAN THE 'END OF THE HUMAN RACE' IN**

**YEARS LEADING UP TO HIS DEATH.** Additionally, this AI technology aims to keep websites up-to-date with the latest guidelines that customarily change, helping to avoid unnecessary lawsuits and providing visitors with a positive user experience.

Blind man at his computer workstation using braille keyboard. AI technology is bringing advancements to help the visually, verbally and hearing impaired to use computers in greater capacities.

AI has made a positive impact on providing accessibility for the [visually impaired](#) by helping them interact with and easily navigate a web page or document. AI apps and tools have been designed to help blind visitors read a document by reformatting the text into an audio format and describing images on the page. AI technology can also help the visually impaired by making adjustments to elements of a page such as font, colors, and spacing. Similarly, AI helps individuals with speech impairments communicate with others by converting their regular speech into an output of either text or audio. The advantage is that they can utilize this technology to access services and complete searches on the internet. AI can also help with communication, such as through screen readers on electronic devices and voice control assistants such as Siri.

Advances in AI have allowed the internet to be more accessible to all demographics, even those with disabilities. AI technology is continually being explored to create accessibility in various realms, such as [in the classroom](#) and at work.

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<http://www.bing.com/news/apiclick.aspx?ref=FexRss&aid=&tid=645d38a1eb49457682ea2be344ceefb7&url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.foxnews.com%2ftech%2fis-ai-ada-compliant&c=6939516819747264186&mkt=en-us>

## **The BrailleDoodle Kickstarter Project**

The BrailleDoodle has been described as etch-a-sketch technology for the blind. The laptop sized device contains small holes with metal balls which are raised with the touch of the built-in stylus. These balls can be “erased” by pushing them firmly back down. Students can generate and erase letters, words, numbers, drawings, and graphics repeatedly in real-time.

On one side of the device, students can learn and practice the braille alphabet, simple punctuation, and a few sight-words. There is a section for tracing-like practice which contains a sample of the braille character(s) and a “no-fail” tracing area. At the bottom are several blank braille cells where students can write words and simple sentences. The opposite side of the device lies a canvas of holes where students can freely draw using the stylus. The BrailleDoodle comes with stencils for students who want a template. Teachers have the option of using this device to produce tactile graphics of diagrams, charts, and graphs. With the refreshable nature of the BrailleDoodle, these

graphics can easily be changed and manipulated as needed.

The TouchPad Pro Foundation is excited to launch this new device and strives to make it available to any child who is blind or visually impaired, including those who may not be able to afford it. TPPF believes that the BrailleDoodle is the world's most effective, enjoyable, and affordable device for teaching Braille, STEM, and experiencing Art! TPPF proudly maintains that while "blindness is a spectrum, literacy is a right!"

**[Click To Learn More](#)**

<https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/the-brailledoodle-kickstarter-project/>

## **Ulysses: The Ultimate Writing App for Mac, iPad and iPhone**

[Ulysses](#) is an exceptional text editor for the Mac, iPad, and iPhone with an unrivaled set of advanced features and a beautiful design that is always being refined and improved. The winner of an Apple Design Award, Ulysses features a distinctive balance of power-user features that writers appreciate in a simple, elegant, distraction-free UI that makes the app a pleasure to use. A terrific example of the

power available in Ulysses is its publishing tools. Users can publish to the most popular blogging platforms from right inside Ulysses. The app includes deep integration with WordPress, Ghost, Medium, and Micro.blog, allowing you to publish directly to them, complete with images, tags, and excerpts. Most recently, Ulysses added the ability to copy and paste tables from Excel and Numbers with row sorting and sketching on the iPhone and iPad versions of the app. The Mac gained PDF and image annotation too. Ulysses has built-in grammar and style checking for over 20 languages and a special dashboard in the sidebar that includes statistics, keywords, and footnotes. An outline of the headings in your writing provides a handy bird's-eye view of your work and a way to navigate your document. The app's Library sidebar helps order your writing into groups that can be nested. Along with features like sync, powerful search and filtering options, keyword support, in-line images that can be stored locally or remotely on a server, and new customization options, Ulysses is as flexible as it is powerful. Ulysses includes support for Projects now too, allowing you to show only what's most relevant to your current task and hiding everything else. You can also set character, word, and other types of writing goals that can be attached to a single document or entire group, which, combined with deadlines, is a fantastic way to form good writing habits. Then, when you're finished writing, Ulysses has abundant export options, including plain text, Markdown, TextBundle, rich text, DOCX, ePub, HTML, and PDF. To learn more about Ulysses, visit [ulysses.app](http://ulysses.app).

Ulysses is free to try before deciding whether to subscribe for \$5.99/month or \$39.99/year.

## **braille glove reads out loud**

It can be difficult for some blind people to learn to read braille. That's where the BrailleWear glove comes in, as it verbally tells them. The glove is being developed by assistive tech startup ORama AI. What was the inspiration for BrailleWear? Co-founder Kushagra Jain was inspired to invent the device while volunteering. [This braille glove reads out loud for you](#) appeared first on [COOL BLIND TECH](#).

<https://coolblindtech.com/this-braille-glove-reads-out-loud-for-you/>

## **Calendars from NLS**

NLS will be providing print/braille calendars starting this summer. The first calendars will cover a half year plus the first month of 2024. Near the end of this year, subscribers will receive 2024 calendars. Calendars are available in two sizes. The larger wall-type calendar will be print/braille. The smaller pocket-sized calendar will probably be in braille. To receive a calendar, contact your network library and subscribe. You can request one or both calendars.



## **British Vogue in Braille**

A recent Yahoo! lifestyle article includes details of the braille edition of British Vogue's latest issue, which is focused on disability, highlighting notable advocates in the space. The piece includes quotes from Kim Charlson, noting that the issue is a "game changer," as fashion and design publications lack accessibility. It's fantastic to see Kim mentioned in this piece alongside other leading advocates for individuals who are blind or have visual impairments.

## **SUBMITTING NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

I hope you've enjoyed reading this issue of the IVIE Motivator. Articles are due for the next issue on or before September 15, 2023. Please forward information you think other business owners might find useful. Our newsletters are more valuable when many members share resources. We welcome articles on technology particularly useful for business owners, starting a business, and growing your business. Please share your business experiences in a "member profile" article on you and your business. Include: your name, business name or reason you joined IVIE, how you started your business, the way you advertise or market your business, the technology you

use, and other items which might interest other members. Please include any specials, new products, or new features of your business as well. If you don't feel comfortable writing an article yourself, contact me and we'll give you a call.

We also welcome book reviews, technology reviews, online resources, or organizations or agencies you've found beneficial. Send any items for the newsletter to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org) or [abazyn@bazyncommunications.com](mailto:abazyn@bazyncommunications.com).

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