ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FACTS

MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES & INTERNET ACCESS DEVICES

WHAT IS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY?

Assistive technology, or AT, is any tool that allows individuals with disabilities to use their unique abilities to reach their goals. AT can range from low-cost tools such as a jar opener to more complex devices such as a power wheelchair or communication aid. Infants, children, adults and older persons with any type of disability can benefit from the use of AT.

What are Mobile Technologies and Internet Access Devices?

They go where the user goes. They include cellular telephones, tablets, laptop computers and watches.

Who can benefit from mobile technologies?

Because they support social interaction, safety, games and health monitoring, mobile technologies can help people stay connected when they're away from home or if they need smaller, more portable solutions within their home.

Most of these devices use a touch screen, which can aid individuals with mobility challenges. They also offer built-in accessibility options for hearing, vision and dexterity. Apps can be added, often at no cost, that permit direct and secure access to activities such as online banking, transportation schedules, shopping and games. Many of these devices also offer cellular phone calls and GPS tracking.

What is the difference between cellular and Wi-Fi service?

Both are radio frequencies that support mobile devices. With cellular service, the device connects directly to a "network" of outdoor towers to allow for telephone and internet connections. Wi-Fi is projected into an area through a router. The Wi-Fi signal is sent to a singular location (like within your house or a public library) and when you are outside of that signal, you are not able to connect. Many public places allow you to connect your device (via Wi-Fi) for free while visiting their location; cellular service is a paid connection.

What kinds of needs can be accommodated with mobile technology?

Just about everyone can use mobile technology. New advances in technology that allow for a user to speak into the device to both control it and compose messages makes these devices useful for people with low vision/blindness, mobility difficulties and writing challenges. Similar settings allow for captioning and volume control for hard of hearing users while text-to-speech settings allow content to be read aloud. People who lip-read or use sign language can benefit from built-in video conferencing and calling options.

Add-on apps can support people with disabilities. Some apps offer cognitive support, such as reminders, while others provide access to games and music. Apps differ in quality and cost. They can be obtained through the

device's app store (Google Play, Apple App Store) and are almost always rated by other users, which can help you determine if the app works as advertised. Many of them, but not all of them, offer users technical support.

Where can I purchase mobile technologies?

They can be purchased through electronics and computer stores as well as through cellular telephone providers. Many offer a phone, tablet or hardware as part of a monthly payment plan. You can expect to pay for cellular service, but if you already have Wi-Fi in your home, and don't expect to use the device elsewhere, additional payment is not required.

What are some things I should consider before making an equipment purchase?

✦ What are my strengths, limitations and preferences?

✦ For what tasks might I use a mobile device?

✦ Where might I use a mobile device?

✦ Do I need training to use it?

✦ Do I need additional apps?

✦ What financial resources can I access?

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If you are interested in learning more about Assistive Technology, please call (302) 831-6974 or visit our webpage at: www.dati.org

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