



## **Assistive Technology Update**

# **Personal Communications Technology for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons**

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“Cell phone-size messaging gadgets like the BlackBerry and the T-Mobile Sidekick have caught on quickly with the deaf since being introduced a few years ago, giving them freedom to move around and communicate like never before.”

**Wireless Pagers Assist the Deaf-** By Peter Svensson The Associated Press

<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3607030/>

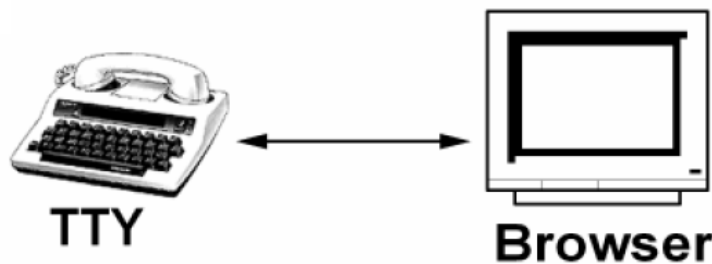
## • Communication Software



Nextalk Client

Nextalk Software

- NexTalk 4.0
- NexTalk Browser Application



## • Wireless Communications

- Two-way Text-Pagers
  - Internet enabled



## • Relay Technology

- Internet Text Relay Services
- Video Relay Services (VRS)
  - Sorenson VRS
  - Internet VRS Services
- Text/Voice Relay
  - IP Relay
  - Internet Relay Links



## • Relay Texas

- Types of calls and call options

# COMMUNICATION SOFTWARE

## NexTalk 4.0 from NXi Communications, Inc.

[www.NexTalk.net](http://www.NexTalk.net)

As the real-time instant messaging, text/voice relay, and TTY features of wireless devices improve, NexTalk will link TTYs, home phones, large business telecommunication systems, Computer/Internet Communications, and both cell phone and text-based wireless devices.

### What is NexTalk?

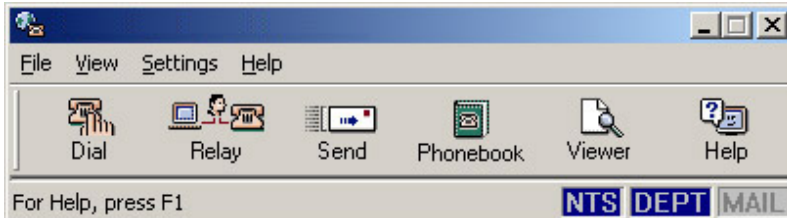
NexTalk is a network based system with special provisions for the communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing people, but with advanced communications and messaging features. It is a blending of telephone and computer technologies which links TTY callers with every NexTalk personal computer user on local/wide area networks and the Internet. With NexTalk, any TTY call can be answered and then transferred to another NexTalk user or group of users (department).

### Features:

- Make a Relay call
- Receive a Relay call
- Receive "Text Mail" messages that are forwarded to an email address
- Call or be called by any other NexTalk user over the internet
- Be called from any browser
- Transfer calls to other NexTalk users
- Create Conference calls
- Send and receive Instant Messages
- Call a TTY from the Nextalk.net software
- Receive a call from a TTY to the Nextalk.net software
- Call a TTY from a browser

To begin using NexTalk Software go to <http://www.nextalk.net/signupIP-Relay.html> and follow the 3 simple steps:

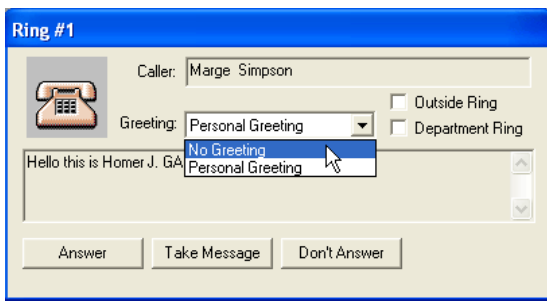
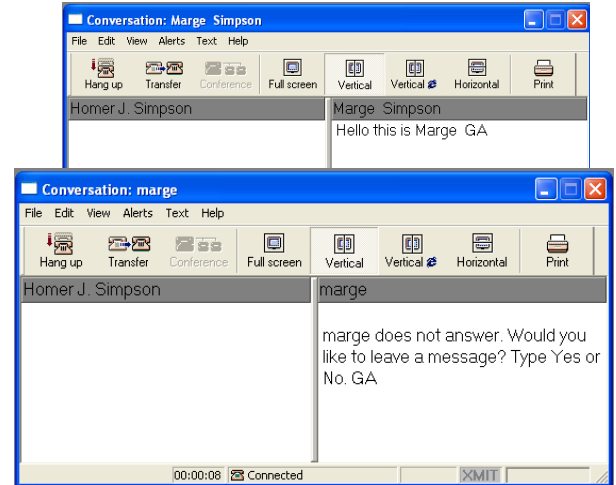
STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3
<b>Register for NexTalk</b>	<b>Download the Nextalk.net Software</b>	<b>Print the NexTalk User Guide</b>
Just a few minutes of your time and you are ready to download the best software of its kind on the web. <a href="#">Register Now</a>	If you have already registered for NexTalk.net, then download the software and start using it now. <a href="#">Download the Free NexTalk.net Software (2.5 meg)</a>	The NexTalk Quick Start User Guide is available as an Adobe ® ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) file. This will help you understand the functionality and features of this great service. <a href="#">View or Download the NexTalk Quick Start User Guide ( PDF)</a>



## NexTalk Basics

Simple interface provides a number of tools for communicating.

- "Dial" allows you to contact NexTalk users or TTY numbers.
- "Relay" connects with a Text Relay Operator calling and receiving mail from voice users.
- "Send" enables you to send a text message to other NexTalk users.
- "Phonebook" stores names and numbers.
- "Viewer" gives you access to saved conversations and text messages from Voice calls and IM.
- "Help" provides you with information for using NexTalk.
- You may forward NexTalk incoming messages to an email, pager, or other NexTalk user.



## Receiving Calls

In order to receive calls you must have the Nextalk.net software; you cannot receive calls on the browser version of Nextalk.net. **The caller will need to know your user id!**

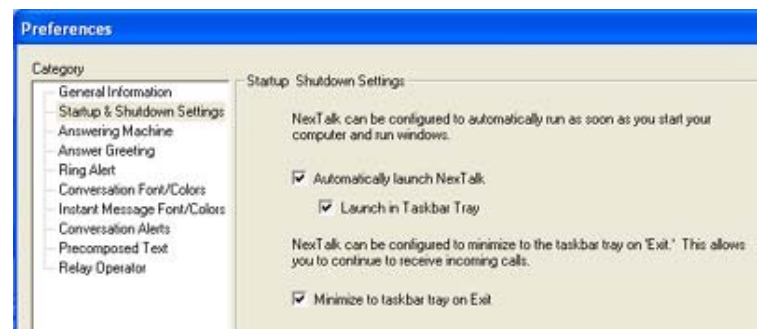
**The numbers to call to reach you:**

**VOICE callers: 1-877-IPRelay (477-3529)**

**TTY callers: 1-866-TTY-TOIP (889-8647)**

## Startup Preferences

If, like me, you want the program to start automatically and change to a small icon in the system tray near the clock, follow these directions: On the Menu click **Settings->Preferences** then **Startup and Shutdown Settings** and check all 3 boxes.



## Tutorial

If you need information on any features or not sure how to get started, the online tutorial is clear, concise and very easy to navigate: <http://www.nextalk.net/tutorial.stm>

# NexTalk Browser Application

Click **Make Calls** in the navigation bar on any web page on the www.Nextalk.net site.



From here you can call another user or TTY (you cannot receive calls from the browser application).

## Call Another Nextalk User

On the *Call a User* page, enter your name and the user id of the person you wish to call. Wait for the connection (a TTY call will take a little longer to connect than a call to a user id) and proceed with the conversation.



## Call a TTY

On the *Call a User* page, enter the number you wish to call. The callee will see a call coming from *Your Name*.



# WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS

## Two way Text-Pagers

These are currently the 3 most popular two way text pagers used by Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. All of these pagers send and receive Internet e-mail messages as their basic feature.



### Motorola T900

**Motorola T900 (Talkabout) Features:** Send and receive Internet e-mail. Reached by pager number or an email address. The T900 and its cousins are the pagers that led the way in taking deaf telecommunications to the next level, but too slow to have a real-time TTY or Relay conversation.

**You Receive:** Email, Instant Message



### Sidekick Pager

**T-Mobile Sidekick**

**Features:** IP Relay, Caller ID, Conference Calling, Call Waiting and Call Hold, Access to Directory Assistance, Emergency Calls, Detailed Billing, Voicemail with Message Alert, Call Forwarding. AOL Instant Messenger™ Service.

**You Receive:** Email, Voice Relay Operator, Nextalk TTY/Messages, AOL Messenger



### BlackBerry-7200

**BlackBerry-7200**

**Features:** Supports Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, WordPerfect and ASCII attachment viewing, email, Personal Information Manager, Radio, Speaker Phone, Touch Screen, TTY/TTD, USB, Vibration Alert TTY and Relay Operator calling.

**You Receive:** Email, Voice Relay Operator, Nextalk TTY/Messages, AOL instant message

# RELAY TECHNOLOGY

## Receiving Relay Calls

The origin of an operator-assisted relay call can be any of the following:

- TTY
- Internet Text Relay Service
- NexTalk Software/Internet (IP-Relay)
- Wireless Pager Device
- Internet Video Relay Service
- Sorenson VRS

From the receiving end, all video and text based relay calls will sound virtually the same. The relay operators will identify themselves as “relay operator #-xxx” and ask if you’ve received a relay call, then begin relaying the caller’s communication.

## Text Relay Services

- NexTalk (IP Relay, MCI) <http://www.IP-RELAY.com>
- SPRINT RELAY SERVICE ONLINE <http://www.sprintrelayonline.com>
- MCI: IP-RELAY SERVICE ONLINE <http://www.ip-relay.com>
- AT&T RELAY SERVICE ONLINE <http://relay.att.com>
- HAMILTON RELAY SERVICE ONLINE <http://www.hiprelay.com/>
- Relay Texas **1- 800 - RELAY TX (735-2989) -or- 711**

## VRS Video Relay Service

- SORENSON VIDEO RELAY SERVICE <http://www.sorensonvrs.com/>
- SPRINT TEXAS VIDEO RELAY SERVICE <http://www.sprintvrs.com>
- HANDS ON VIDEO RELAY SERVICE <http://www.hovrs.com>
- AT&T <http://www.relaycall.com/vrs>
- Communication Access Center <http://www.cacdhh.org>
- Hamilton <http://www.hipvrs.com>
- Hands On Video Relay Service <http://www.hovrs.com>
- MCI Global Relay <http://www.ip-relay.com>
- Sorenson VRS <http://www.sorensonvrs.com>
- Sprint/CSD <http://www.sprintvrs.com>
- Federal Relay <http://www.FEDVRS.com>

For more VRS sites outside of Texas, visit:

[http://www.tdi-online.org/tdi/fs\\_videorelayservices.asp](http://www.tdi-online.org/tdi/fs_videorelayservices.asp)

# RELAY TEXAS

## Voice Users

Standard telephone users can easily call a hearing or speech-disabled person through Relay Texas.

- Dial Relay Texas 711.
- A voice message will say: "You have reached Relay Texas. Press #1 to place a relay call." After pressing #1 the relay agent will come on the line.
- When the relay agent answers, give him/her the area code and phone number of the person you want to call.
- The relay agent will voice to you what the other person is typing, and will type to the other person everything that you say. Be sure to talk directly to the person you are calling and avoid saying "tell him/her." Also, make sure you say GA (go ahead) when it is the other person's turn to talk.

## TTY

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech-disabled uses a TTY to type conversations to a relay agent who then reads the typed conversation to a hearing person. The relay agent transmits the hearing person's spoken words by typing them back to the TTY user.

TTY users have two options:

1. Dial the Relay Texas number - 711. TTY users will see the flickering on their equipment and need to wait a few seconds. When the Relay Agent answers "RTX XXX (F OR M) NBR PLS GA" (NBR=number, PLS=please, GA=go ahead), you type the area code and number you wish to call and type "GA" (go ahead). The relay agent will then call the number and process the call.

2. Dial the Relay Texas TTY number - 1- 800 - RELAY TX (735-2989). The relay agent will answer with same message as above.

**Note:** Calling 1-800-735-2989 will process the call faster as it does not have the interactive voice message as used in 711. On the other hand, 711 is easier to remember.

## Voice Carry-Over

Voice Carry-Over (VCO) is an option for people who cannot hear but can use their own voice during a call. Using VCO and a specially designed telephone with a text screen, a VCO user can speak directly to the other person. As the other person speaks, the relay agent types back the words that are being said.

- Voice Carry-Over users call: **1-TRS-Voice Carry-Over-1RTX (877-826-1789)**
- The relay agent will answer and type "Voice Carry-Over or TYPE GA" Voice or type the phone number of the party you want to call.
- The relay agent will type the message "VOICE NOW" to you as your cue to start speaking. You speak directly to the hearing person. The relay agent will type to you what the hearing person says. Remember to say "GA" (go ahead) at the end of your responses.

## Hearing Carry-Over

Hearing Carry-Over (HCO) allows a person with a speech disability who can hear to type their part of the conversation for the relay agent to read to the standard telephone user.

- Dial the Relay Texas TTY number at 1-800-RELAY TX (735-2989).
- After the relay agent answers, type "Hearing Carry-Over PLEASE GA"
- The relay agent will make the connections and voice what you type to the other party. After you type "GA", pick up the handset and listen to the spoken reply.

For more detailed information about these types of Relay Texas calls, go to

<http://www.puc.state.tx.us/relay/relay/features.cfm>.