

Dragon Dyslexia Software

Is A "game-changer" for Master's Student Tom

About Tom:

- An intellectual student who has completed a bachelor's degree and has just started his master's degree in Political Theory.

Challenge

- To speed up the time it takes Tom to write and proof-read his essays to ensure he keeps up with the demanding nature of his course.

Results

- Dragon "radically improved" the quality of Tom's essays.
- Tom no longer needs to rely on his peers to check his work.
- His essays are written much more quickly and that has therefore made his experience at university a lot more enjoyable.

Background

Tom is a postgraduate student studying Political Theory. He enjoys listening to audio books, travelling and staying on top of current affairs.

It wasn't until Tom was due to start his master's degree that he decided he needed a way to better manage his Dyslexia.

Tom's Experience with Dyslexia

According to The British Dyslexia Association, "Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling."

Furthermore: "Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed."

"For me dyslexia can really get in the way of writing essays for my degree, my brain finds it difficult to decode words and then recode them on a page."

Of course, Tom isn't the only one, as the NHS predicts that up to 1 in every 10 people in the UK has some degree of dyslexia.



Tom explains how his Dyslexia affects him in his academic life:

"I can sometimes find it difficult to read and even more difficult to write coherent sentences. In order to compensate when I'm writing essays, I have to check over it again and again and use friends to proofread my work."

He expresses: "When I'm writing essays, it can take me far longer than my fellow students because of the amount of time I have to spend on quality checking."

New Beginnings, New Obstacles

When Tom returned from travelling Southeast Asia, he decided he wanted to go back to university to pursue a master's degree.

However, he was informed that the master's degree would be more intense and difficult than the undergraduate degree he had previously completed.

"I was told I would be left with far less time to quality control my work which I knew would seriously affect the quality of my essays and would impact my grades."

Therefore, Tom began to search for a way that could help him write his essays more clearly and communicate his ideas better than the first-time round.

Before reaching out to VoicePower, Tom was manually typing and using free text to speech programs online.

These programs read Tom's work back to him electronically and the computer and would help him to spot any mistakes.

"I was also asking friends to proofread my work; however, my friends couldn't always make the time to help me. I also felt that I was being a burden to them and so would hand my work in without someone else reading it even at the cost of quality."

Unleashing Potential

It was at this point that Tom reached out to VoicePower Ltd, the speech recognition experts.

VoicePower have been supplying assistive technology and training services for over 20 years making them the perfect fit to find a solution to Tom's struggle.

After discussing Tom's requirements and desired objectives, the team recommended that Dragon Dyslexia software would be the best fit for him – More specifically Dragon Professional Individual.

This particular version of speech recognition software is typically recommended for single users, as opposed to larger businesses.

However, it is also perfect for accessibility purposes too, From Dyslexia and other learning differences to physical impairment.

The software allows users to dictate freely, create custom commands and templates and read back text aloud – All of which are beneficial to Dyslexic users like Tom.

"VoicePower provided me with the Dragon dyslexia software as well as the Nuance PowerMic microphone. The software allowed me to speak into the microphone and let the computer type out what I said."

What Tom is referring to is real-time speech recognition, the words literally appear on your computer screen as you speak them.

Needless to say, this is extremely handy for those wishing to boost their productivity, but more so for those with dyslexia as it eliminates the worries surround spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

"Dragon dyslexia software was a game changer as I can articulate myself far better through speaking than I can writing or typing. Therefore, I was able to radically improve the quality of my writing because I was thinking far more about what to say but also how to say it."

As highlighted by Time 4 Learning, people with dyslexia usually have trouble translating written words into sounds and sounds into words.

Dragon dyslexia software takes away that pressure and allows the person to focus on the content rather than the formalities of writing.

“Using speech recognition software has meant that my essays can be written a lot quicker and at a fantastic quality which is made my experience at university a lot more enjoyable.”

Beneficial Inside and Outside of The Classroom

Tom tells VoicePower how Dragon dyslexia software hasn't just helped him whilst studying, but also outside of the classroom.

He explains: “Using Dragon has meant that I can respond to emails and even respond to people on social media far more efficiently.”

“Instead of having to read over what I had written multiple times and relying on spellcheck I can now simply speak into the microphone look over the writing once and press send.”

“As someone who has struggled throughout education and social life to communicate my ideas and points clearly through text messages, emails, or my work, this is sped up the process and improve the quality which is brilliant.”

There Every Step of The Way

As recommended for any accessibility user, Tom opted to attend VoicePower's specialist Dragon software training.

In Tom's case, the training sessions were led by Matt Hartley who has extensive experience working in the SEN sector meaning he understands dyslexia and its manifestations at an expert level.

His knowledge of the Dragon software is also second to none which makes him the perfect teacher when it comes Dragon software training.

“The training was really good; I was slightly worried that I was going to be in some sort of large class with someone dictating instructions at the front in an impersonal and drone-like fashion. However, that was not the case voice Power's training is really calm simple and friendly.”

As a supplier, VoicePower doesn't present users with their software and disappear, we're there every step of the way, from consultation to installation, to training and technical support.

“The team of Voice Power seemed down to earth, friendly, and really supportive. I felt like all my concerns and issues were addressed in an effective and professional way.”