

For Immediate Release

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**Bookshare.org Partners with Don Johnston
to Provide Free Text Reader for Print Disabled Students**

**Read:OutLoud® Bookshare.org Edition ‘Text Reader’ will Provide Technology
Access to Thousands of Online Educational Materials**

March 13, 2008 — Volo, IL and Palo Alto, CA — Bookshare.org and Don Johnston have announced a partnership to provide qualified print disabled students with a free text reader to access electronic books from the Bookshare.org library.

This technology access partnership announced at the 2008 CSUN conference in Los Angeles, CA, will serve an estimated 1-3% of the total K-12 student population, specifically those who receive special education services and qualify under the 1996 Chafee Amendment.

Beginning at the start of the 2008-09 school year, qualified students will have the opportunity to use Don Johnston’s Read:OutLoud Bookshare.org Edition text reader (Windows Version) to access more than 36,000 books, magazines and newspapers in the Bookshare.org library.

The Read:OutLoud Bookshare.org Edition text reader offers embedded reading comprehension strategies and instructional supports that align with state educational standards. The text reader software includes audio feedback, electronic highlighting and note-taking features that allow students to effectively capture ideas. A Macintosh version will follow in 2009.

“Don Johnston and his products have a solid reputation in the special education community,” says CSUN keynote speaker Jim Fruchterman, CEO of Benetech, the Palo Alto, California-based nonprofit organization that operates Bookshare.org. “We chose Read:OutLoud because of its strong support tools for students with reading disabilities and its ability to read DAISY files that have the richness that comes from the NIMAS publisher files. Benetech and the team at Don Johnston are working closely together to create more equality for students with learning disabilities and special needs.”

The goal of this partnership is to help eliminate barriers for print disabled students and provide the tools needed to ensure access to educational texts. Bookshare.org offers digital books produced from the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) and delivers them to students in the BRF Braille file format and the Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) standard for Digital Talking Books. Don Johnston’s Read:OutLoud

Bookshare Edition text reader gives students better access to books and effective reading instruction through a direct connection to Bookshare.org's digital texts.

"Now that students with the most significant print disabilities will have free technology access to Bookshare.org's library of texts, we want to make sure that they will also benefit from using our technology to improve their reading comprehension skills and study habits," says Ruth Ziolkowski, President of Don Johnston.

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About Bookshare.org

Bookshare.org is an online community that allows people with print disabilities to legally download books and periodicals to be read as Braille, large print or synthetic speech. In October of 2007, Bookshare.org received a \$32 million five-year award from the U.S. Department of Education to significantly expand the availability of accessible digital books and software for reading those books. Over the next five years, Bookshare.org expects to add over 100,000 new book titles and textbooks to its collection.

About Don Johnston Incorporated

Don Johnston empowers educators with supplemental instruction and intervention solutions to help struggling learners build core literacy skills with confidence. Since 1980, the company has partnered with literacy experts, psychologists, teachers, researchers, and scientists to develop over a dozen educational technology access products. The company also publishes Start-to-Finish®, a collection of paperback, audio and computer books to engage struggling readers and ESL learners. 800-999-4660 - www.donjohnston.com

Resource Links:

Read:OutLoud Bookshare.org Edition Text Reader

http://www.donjohnston.com/products/rol_bookshare/index.html

CSUN – California State University at Northridge Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference - <http://www.csun.edu/cod/conf/2008/>

American Foundation for the Blind - Chafee Amendment: Initiated by the late Senator John J. Chafee (R-RI), enables students with visual and print disabilities to qualify for specialized technology to access print materials.

<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=44&TopicID=16&SubTopicID=33&DocumentID=1785>

US Copyright Law: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/reference/factsheets/copyright.html>

Watch NIMAS 101: What Educators Need to Know

http://www.donjohnston.com./prof_services/nimas/index.html