Introduction

• What is the current state of accommodations in the testing environment?
• Brief overview of legislative requirements via ADA

The Experience of Testing With Accommodations

• The goal is making sure the test-taker with accommodations has a successful and fair testing experience...how do we make sure that happens?
The Role of Security With Accommodations

- Do assistive technologies pose security threats?
- What is the interaction between assistive technologies and the security of the testing environment?
- Will test-takers with accommodations always be treated as the exception with security protocols?

Assistive Technologies

- Any method used to provide test takers with an equal opportunity to successfully test
  - Software solutions: text-to-speech, voice recognition, graphic magnification
  - Physical devices: keyboards, trackballs/mouse, large monitors
  - Human assistance: readers/recorders or scribes
  - Comfort accommodations: table risers, adjustable desks, noise/distraction reducers
- Accommodations from each type often provided to the same test taker

Assistive Technologies - Software

- JAWS
  - Text-to-speech, reads all text and location tags on screen
  - Most often supports test takers with vision impairment
  - Challenges to delivery
    - Test Taker - familiarity with features available, most likely requires use of a headset
    - Deliverer - affects testing environment for others, limited to tests without advanced question types
Assistive Technologies - Software

• Dragon
  - Voice recognition, converts speech to text and verbal commands to computer actions
  - Most often supports test takers with learning disabilities or those with limited upper body mobility
  - Challenges to delivery
  • Test Taker - familiarity with features available
  • Deliverer - QA intensive as each test is unique

Assistive Technologies - Software

• ZoomText
  - Enlarges or highlights screen text and graphics with no reduction of clarity
  - Most often supports test takers with vision impairment or learning disabilities
  - Challenges to delivery
  • Test Taker - some frequently used functionality often not available

Technology and Tests

• What does the test taker need the technology to do?
• Will that actually happen with your test?
• What is your test measuring, and will the technology interfere?
• If the technology won’t work with your test, what can you do about it?
What is the Technology Supposed to Do?

Examples:
• Screen magnification (ZoomText, MAGic)
• Speech recognition (Dragon Naturally Speaking)
• Screen reader (JAWS, Window-Eyes)
• Example video

Will It Work with Your Test?

Maybe, and maybe not.

Examples:
• The obvious: If your test is on paper, it needs work before it can serve as computer input.
• For security reasons, many computer testing platforms lock out other applications.
• Many PDFs can’t be “read” by screen readers.
• Try reading a “click & drag” item aloud!

How Do You Click If You Can’t See the Cursor?

Example: Four events in American history are listed below. Click on each and drag them into chronological order, ending with the most recent.
• War of 1812
• Constitutional Convention
• Boston Tea Party
• End of Revolutionary War
How Do You Click If You Can’t See the Cursor? (continued)

Example: Each of the two beakers below contains a different unidentified liquid. Click on Beaker 1 and drag it to “pour” its contents into Beaker 2.

What Are You Measuring . . .

. . . and how does the requested technology affect it?
Examples:
- How important are your graphics? Are they decorative or are they crucial to the items?
- In reading test, are you measuring decoding ability or comprehension?
  - Which of the following rhymes with “weight”? (a) sight, (b) height, (c) plate
  - What if the test taker uses a screen reader?

If It Won’t Work, What Do You Do?

- If the requested technology is compatible with what you’re measuring, but it won’t work with your system
- If the requested technology is NOT compatible with what you’re measuring
The Future and How To Prepare

- What research is being for future assistive technologies?
- What are the rising challenges in the field?
- Planning/budgeting for costs associated with accommodations since costs cannot be passed along to the test-taker

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