

Remote C-Print Captioning

in the Educational Environment

What is Remote C-Print Captioning?

C-Print captioning is a computer-aided speech-to-text service for people who are deaf/hard of hearing and prefer printed text rather than sign language as an accommodation. C-Print often is used in educational settings (see C-Print Tipsheet <http://www.netac.rit.edu/publication/tipsheet> for further information or visit the C-Print Web site at <http://www.cprint.rit.edu>). Remote C-Print captioning occurs when a service provider or captionist is not in the same classroom as the instructor and students, or not even necessarily on the same campus. This can be a benefit to schools where it is difficult to find local C-Print captionists.

Remote C-Print captioning can be provided:

- From one campus to another
- From a private agency to a campus
- Between buildings on the same campus

Advantages for deaf students and their campuses

- Remote captioning allows campuses without access to local captionists to better meet the needs of students. It also allows students more flexibility in choosing an institution to attend.
- Remote C-Print captioning requires no paid parking or travel time, as the captionist is connected to the classroom via the Internet.
- Many students prefer the feeling of independence gained by not having the service provider in the classroom.

- Remote C-Print captioning services offer a wider variety of available captionists to meet specific student needs. For example, if a postsecondary student has a specific major, it makes sense to hire a captionist who has expertise in that field.

Advantages for C-Print Captioning Providers

- Job stability--Captionists who have "down time" when they are not captioning on their own campuses can be sub-contracted to other schools or universities, while retaining their positions at their home campuses.
- Job variety--Captionists get to work with different students and faculty, in diverse courses, while gaining skills in providing remote services.
- Time and equipment efficiency--Captionists do not need to drive to a campus, nor walk between buildings with equipment. That means less wear and tear on captioning equipment because it does not have to be transported to and set up in the classroom.

Challenges for Providers

- Prep materials--These are essential for all service providers, whether remote or onsite. A good relationship with faculty members will help ensure that a remote captionist has the appropriate course vocabulary, is aware of the syllabus and schedule, and knows where and how to locate appropriate preparation materials, such as texts or online

Technical Requirements

C-Print Provider Site

- High speed Internet connection
- Computer
- C-Print Pro Server software
- Appropriate processor, RAM and hard drive space for software
- Speakers/headset if preferred
- Preferred: Web camera so captionist can see the classroom

Student Classroom Site

- High speed Internet connection
- Laptop or PC for student to view the captioning
- C-Print Pro Client software
- Appropriate processor, RAM and hard drive space for software
- Microphone attached to computer so captionist can receive the sound from the classroom
- Preferred: Web camera so captionist can see the classroom

readings. Getting these materials may require extra effort on everyone's part.

- **Situational limitations**--In college settings, remote C-Print captioning often is used in large lecture hall situations in which only the professor is speaking. It can be more challenging to have small group discussions or a class in which there is ongoing student participation. This might require a specialized microphone system. Each situation can present unique circumstances.
- **Voicing for students**--Classes where student participation is popular can be challenging for a captionist working with a student who does not use his/her voice. In a small class situation, the student can type his/her comment or question to the captionist and the captionist can then voice the comment for the class. This remedy does not work as well in large lecture halls.
- **Technical backup**--Campuses receiving remote services might require a technical assistant in the classroom, a service not needed for live captioning services. Some campuses have trained student assistants from the disability services office to set up and troubleshoot for Remote C-Print.
- **Visibility issues in the classroom**--Captionists are at a disadvantage when they are not in the same room as the students and the professor. In general, captionists take many cues from watching the students and instructor during class, noting when instructors point to items on a board or Power Point presentation, or refer to people or items in the room that contribute to the lecture's meaning. Unless a Web camera is used, the captionist might inadvertently miss information.
- **Technical challenges**--Some technical difficulties, such as electrical problems or faulty Internet connections, are beyond anyone's control. It is important, therefore, that campuses have a back-up plan, such as audiotaping the lecture so it can be transcribed later.

Helpful Skills for Onsite and Remote Captionists

Much of what is taught in interpreter training programs with regard to ethics, professional behavior, etc. is equally applicable for a speech-to-text service provider in the educational environment. The following skills are helpful for both onsite and remote captionists:

- * technological savvy
- * ability to work independently
- * good interpersonal skills
- * good English skills
- * good (60+ wpm) keyboarding skills
- * flexible personality/schedule
- * knowledge of professional ethics

Onsite Captionists: These individuals are onsite at an educational institution and need to have the ability to transport equipment. Interpersonal skills and professional ethics are important especially for an onsite captionist because he/she is interacting with the student(s) and instructional staff face-to-face on a daily basis.

Remote Captionists: These individuals need to be tech savvy in more areas than onsite captionists. They must have knowledge of Internet connections, remote software, microphone, speakers, Web cameras, etc. Remote captionists often serve as troubleshooters for problems on the other (student) end as well. In this case, the ability to work independently is especially important because the individual is generally isolated in a small room/studio when providing the remote service.

Future Potential

Increasing connectivity and availability of high speed Internet access between campuses make remote C-Print captioning a growing service. Technology will also allow for greater convergence of a variety of technologies to make remote services readily available at the click of a mouse.

For more information, contact:

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