

Popular Threads on Solosez

Dragon Naturally Speaking

Two or three years ago there was much discussion about voice activated word processing. Although many different law practice applications have been discussed in the past year, i.e. TM, PCLaw, Amicus etc, I've seen nothing about the Dragon type applications. Was it a fad that came and went, or are people still using it? Assuming that I take the time to train it and to maintain it, is it worth the money/effort. I was thinking of using it mainly to make notes to file and to do first drafts.

Curtis Drew, Arizona

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For the purposes you have described I think that the current version of DNS would be fine. Only things you need are a good quality USB microphone and some patience. Accuracy is much better than ever before and comes close to a baseline secretary in most cases.

Bruce Dorner, Londonderry, New Hampshire

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Specifics:

Dragon NaturallySpeaking v. 8 Preferred Edition
(<http://www.scansoft.com/naturallyspeaking/preferred>)

Headsets that work great:

http://www.plantronics.com/north_america/en_US/products/cat640035/cat1430032/prod440038

http://www.plantronics.com/north_america/en_US/products/cat640035/cat1430032/prod5300004

http://www.plantronics.com/north_america/en_US/products/cat640035/cat1430032/prod440040

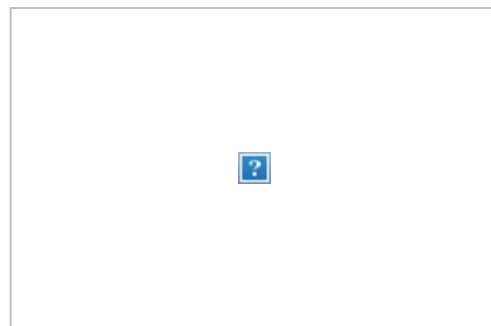
<http://shop.voicerecognition.com/itemdesc.asp?CartId=7077698-EVEREST-OLBAP586&ic=VXI%2DTALKPRO+USB&Cc=&tpc=>

<http://shop.voicerecognition.com/itemdesc.asp?CartId=7077698-EVEREST-OLBAP586&ic=AND+%2D+NC7100&Cc=&tpc=>

Ross Kodner, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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I have used Dragon NaturallySpeaking since version 1. This response is being dictated with Version 8 Preferred. I find it very helpful for the purposes you mentioned, and certainly worth the time and effort. The preferred version is good enough, the legal specific version does not seem



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to be worth the added expense. Also, the program is a resource hog, so make sure you have plenty of RAM (I have found 512 K to be the minimum, even more is better).

If you search the Solosez archives you'll see a variety of messages responsive to your inquiry. I'll be happy to answer any specific questions you might have

Gil Shuga, Mesa, Arizona

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Oh, Gil, and you think you're old.....I worked with DNS when their office was in Newton, MA and the system was an add-on board in a computer. It required discrete speech and we still thought it was pretty amazing. Boy, did it require training in those days!!

Bruce Dorner, Londonderry, New Hampshire

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Unless I missed it, there was not a single presentation at TechShow this year on voice recognition, nor did I see any vendors in the Exhibit Hall.

Offered only as an observation -- for what it's worth . . . if anything.

Steve Terrell, Indianapolis, Indiana

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I used to use it but, despite substantial training, decided it didn't suit my writing style. It works best if you can dictate a complete sentence without pausing to think about something in the middle. That is because it evaluates your speech against potential word choices (such as "their" "they're" and "there") in the context of the other words in the sentence. So, if you pause to compose your sentence, DNS will start making mistakes. I also found it best to ignore formatting and do that later manually.

I think it should be fine for rough drafts and notes. When you use it, also try to minimize room noise. I had problems with an echo off the wall next to my desk (moving a couple feet solved it).

Andrew G. Pizor

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I use it mainly on my laptop, which I use for "creative" thinking/working, with my morning coffee, before I get to my desktop. I like it as an option, and will keep using it and get better with it -- I know I can do commands, for example, and I have started. I do have a problem with it, though, and I wondered if anyone has had it, too -- it used to do fine, to "select" a word to correct the spelling (you say "select" and it is supposed to highlight what you say, and give you correction options) -- but it has turned deaf to that command. It doesn't highlight anything.

Gini Nelson, Santa Fe, New Mexico

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Gini --- my memory fails me as to accuracy, but isn't there a particular key that you can hold down that will put the software into "command" mode so it knows you are issuing a command rather than dictating text? I haven't used DNS in a while but think it was either SHIFT or ALT. Using that key helps to train the software to respond properly.

Bruce Dorner, Londonderry, New Hampshire

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Thank you, Bruce -- I just sat down and tried, and pulled out a text. I found reference to using both "CONTROL", and "SHIFT" keys, and neither worked -- that is, neither worked in Word Perfect. I experimented, and find that SELECT is working in Word, but not in Word Perfect! I would think that training would be within DragonVoice, but perhaps the training is also specific to the program you are in???

Gini Nelson, Santa Fe, New Mexico

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For those of you familiar with DNS... any version/insights for Spanish speakers?

Miguel Angel Baez, Dominican Republic

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Google is your friend: <Google "Dragon Naturally Speaking" Spanish> (omit the carets) and you find a link to <http://www.dragonvoicerecognition.com/>

Then link on Products to get to <http://www.dragonvoicerecognition.com/ourproducts.html>

Scroll down and you find Preferred and Professional versions en Espanol.

Mike Riddle, Papillion, Nebraska

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Here's the manufacturer -- they do make a Spanish version.

<http://www.scansoft.com/>

Gini Nelson, Santa Fe, New Mexico

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Thanks, I had read about the Spanish version, yet since I am not familiar on how the program works, I was wondering about quality and accuracy.

Miguel Angel Baez, Dominican Republic

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Thank you, Bruce. I just did that and identified two possible glitches: (1) it says testing for compatibility with Windows XP SP2 is not done, and installation of SP2 is not recommended until testing is done -- and I did install SP2 relatively recently, possible in between when it seemed to work, and now doesn't; and (2) it says running a system restore may cause the application to fail to run properly -- and I think I did do a system restore because I had some failures after I installed SP2. But I can't remember exactly what happened (darn it, I know I should keep a detailed log). It suggests uninstalling and reinstalling.

So it seems likely the next thing to try is uninstall and reinstall Dragon, and hope that fixes it. Another option would be to uninstall SP2, and then uninstall and reinstall Dragon.

Gini Nelson, Santa Fe, New Mexico

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How does it really work in the English version? Is it like you need a particular accent or do you really 'train' the program to fit your own? People from the Dominican Republic (same with many other Latin American countries) pronounce some letters in a distinct way. (e.g. phonetics for /z/ /s/ and /c/ are almost the same; /b/ and /v/ may be too close to distinguish, etc.)

Miguel Angel Baez, Dominican Republic

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You can train it to fit your accent. As I understand it, it takes some time, but the more you train it, the better it works.

Jake London

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Miguel --- as you probably know, people from the U.S. have many accents. Those from Louisiana would likely find a Boston accent a bit difficult to understand. Those from New York have a distinct speech pattern. DNS can deal with all of them. As part of the training process it learns your accent and responds with greater accuracy the more you use the software. You are more likely to have difficulty if you have a severe cold and stuffy nose.

Bruce Dorner, Londonderry, New Hampshire

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