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# Introduction

The first M-Enabling Summit, which was organised by The Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ICT) and E.J. Krause & Associates, in co-operation with The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), took place in Washington DC on December 5th and 6th, 2011. It co-located with the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health's 2011 mHealth Summit. The Summit was attended by over 370 delegates from over 30 countries, representing organisations of persons with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, Governments, industry and academia.

The full Agenda for the Summit may be found at:

<http://m-enabling.com/agenda.html>

# Monday, December 5th

The Summit began with a session entitled "Global Policy Briefing on Mobile Accessibility" and was hosted by the FCC in their premises in downtown Washington. Ms. Karen Peltz Strauss, Deputy Bureau Chief of the FCC Consumer and Government Affairs Bureau, and Mr. Axel Leblois, Executive Director of G3ICT, welcomed the attendees.

Mr. Kareem Dale, Special Advisor to President Obama for Disability Policy from the White House Office of Public Engagement, described actions undertaken by the President in relation to disability issues. These include signing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and signing into law the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA). He said that The President also supports on-going actions to improve access to ICTs using Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the CVAA.

FCC Commissioner Ms Mignon Clyburn described some of the legal instruments that have been put in place to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities into society. ITU Secretary General, Dr Hamadoun Touré described the work undertaken by the ITU in the area of accessibility, particularly relating to standards, development and Human Factors. He announced that a new report entitled “Making Television Accessible" is available on the ITU web site at:

[www.itu.int/ITU-D/sis/PwDs/Documents/Making\_TV\_Accessible-E-BAT.pdf](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/sis/PwDs/Documents/Making_TV_Accessible-E-BAT.pdf)

Ms Karen Peltz Strauss gave a presentation on the history and contents of the CVAA. This was followed by 2 panel discussions. The first described various aspects of the CVAA, including national legislation which preceded it over many years. The second concentrated on similar actions internationally. It included speakers from the UN, Canada, South Africa, India, France, the DAISY Foundation and the Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C).

The morning was concluded with an address by Mr Julius Genachowski, Chairman of the FCC. He described how a review of the Universal Service Fund, now renamed to the Connect America Fund, is no longer limited to telephony services, but aims to increase the availability of broadband services nationally.

Delegates returned to the Gaylord Convention Center, National Harbour for the official Opening of the Summit. Mr Leblois welcomed delegates and introduced Mr Ron Atkins of E.J. Krause. Mr Atkins explained that their company organises large conventions and Expo events around the world. He announced that they plan to include the question of accessibility at these events during 2012.

The afternoon Plenary Panel session was entitled "Mobile Accessible and Assistive Applications and Services for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities: Challenges and Opportunities, Success Factors ". Mr Paul Schroeder, Vice President, of the e Programs and Policy Group of the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) made some introductory comments. He spoke about something he called the 3 C's; Collaboration, Communication, and Co-operation. Leonard Cali, Senior Vice President, of the Global Public Policy, , AT&T Services, Inc., gave the keynote address and spoke about the economic imperative of inclusion and described AT&T actions towards this end. For example, they have made software freely available on the Cloud to convert text to speech.

A panel discussion followed chaired by Mr Rizwan Khaliq of IBM and with members from Sweden, Japan, France, Egypt and USA. The emphasis of the session was the importance of liaising with customers at an early stage of development through to testing and on-going support and that this can lead to real economic benefits for industry.

A video was shown revealing the recipients of the Vodafone Smart Accessibility Awards. The ceremony was conducted by Mr Joel Roxburgh, Head of Sustainability, of the Vodafone Group and Mr Sanjeet Matharu, Principal Manager for Developer Marketing, of the Vodafone Group.

# Tuesday, December 6th

The morning session was introduced by Mr. John D. Kemp, President and CEO of ABILITIES!. He described how the ADA Restoration Act had clawed back some losses following legal challenges to the ADA, but expressed concern that it had not declared access to the Internet a human right.

Ms Sarah Herrlinger, the Senior Marketing Manager, Education, Apple, Inc. then told us about accessibility features in Apple products. She said that accessibility has been built into their products for over 20 years and was not bolted on as an after-thought. They are available at no extra cost to the user. Details of the products and services she described can be found at: [www.apple.com/accessibility](http://www.apple.com/accessibility)

A plenary panel session entitled "New Frontiers for Mobile Accessible and Assistive Solutions" then followed chaired by Ms Susan Schorr, Head of ITU-D's Special Initiatives. She again mentioned the new ITU report “Making Television Accessible” and said that ITU are working on another one around mobile phone accessibility

The members of the panel represented industries involved with mobile device hardware, software and accessories. They talked about emerging mobile technologies and efforts to include accessibility. The importance of Cloud Computing was mentioned several times. The session was summed up for me by Mr Randy Freeman of HTC who said that industry wants to do the right thing, but it must see a Return on Investment.

The remainder of the morning consisted of a number of concurrent panel Sessions. I attended the one entitled "Innovator's Session - Leading Apps and Solutions for Visually Impaired Users". Speakers described initiatives in the areas of indoor and outdoor geo-positioning, mobile phone accessibility, scanning technologies and actions by the DAISY Foundation towards improving document accessibility.

After lunch I was the rapporteur for a breakout session entitled "Cloud-based Solutions for Assistive Technologies,. Latest Implementations and Developments for the Workplace, e-Government, e-Health and e-Education". The session was chaired by Ms Sue Swenson, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, of the U.S. Department of Education. My report is available separately as a PowerPoint presentation. The key messages from the session were that the importance of Cloud technologies is not over-hyped; we must act now in collaboration with industry and other key stakeholders to ensure that Persons with Disabilities are present when key decisions are made.

The breakout sessions were followed by a plenary panel session entitled "Making Mobile Innovations Work for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities" and was chaired by Mr John D. Kemp. . Each Rapporteur reported back on the deliberations and conclusions of their breakout session.

Ms Karen Peltz Strauss, Ms Susan Mazrui of AT&T and Ms Frances West of IBM each gave a short speech summarising the value of the M-enabling Summit. They all agreed that there was an amazing amount of information available at the Summit. They stressed the importance of building key strategic alliances to ensure that we have access to technology because without this we cannot have true inclusion.

Mr Leblois made a special presentation to Mr Atkins from E. J. Krause in recognition of their involvement with the Summit. Mr Leblois said that the CRPD sets goals for Governments, but does not prescribe how they should be met. We need to engage with Government and other stakeholders to ensure that they are met. He thanked everyone involved in the Summit and concluded its proceedings.

# Wednesday, December 7th

The FCC hosted a meeting at its premises in downtown Washington entitled "Joint FCC & G3ict International Inquiry: Broadband Adoption and People with Disabilities". Although this was not part of the Summit, it was attended by a number of Summit participants.

FCC Commissioner Clyburn and Mr Leblois welcomed participants and introduced the day.

Mr Daniel Aghion, Executive Director of the Wireless Internet Institute Digital Inclusion Forum, stated that of the 100 million broadband adopters in the USA, 39% are people with disabilities. The aim of this meeting was to start a process of improving this position. However, these efforts were not limited to the USA but will become a worldwide initiative. The aim was to develop a process which can be used as a Benchmarking Tool into the future.

Mr Larry Irving, President and CEO of The Irving Group, gave the keynote address. He emphasised the importance of Universal Design and of showing that inclusion has a relatively small cost when spread across the entirety of society. He cited closed captioning which now costs only pennies per set to implement.

A plenary panel followed consisting of people from the USA, South Africa, Canada and myself from Ireland.

In my contribution I stressed

* The importance of ensuring that inclusion must accommodate a diversity of languages and cultures. We must not allow a situation develop where different approaches develop in different parts of the world.
* The importance of ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are taken into account in the rapidly developing area of Cloud Computing. As more information is held in the Cloud and as more processing takes place there, the cheaper and simpler the products can become for the end user. If assistive technologies and personal settings are held in the cloud, a person with a disability can use any device without having to load expensive software onto it. For further details, see

[www.gpii.net](http://www.gpii.net)

* The importance of the inclusion of the needs of persons with disabilities in standardisation and related work, particularly in light of the CRPD.

CEN, the European Committee for Standardization (Comité Européen de Normalisation, Europäisches Komitee für Normung), is an international non-profit organization set up under Belgian law. Through its services, it provides a platform for the development of European Standards (ENs) and other consensus documents including CEN Workshop Agreements (CWAs). I was part of a group of people who developed a CWA entitled "Curriculum for training ICT Professionals in Universal Design” (official reference number CWA 16266:2011). I briefly described its contents and said that it is aimed at integrating Universal Design as a module in mainstream University and industry ICT courses. This CWA could become a key resource to ITU and other organisations in the area of standards development for ICT products and services. The CWA is available for free at

<http://www.cen.eu/cen/Sectors/Sectors/ISSS/CEN%20Workshop%20Agreements/Pages/eAccessibility.aspx>

The meeting then split up into 4 breakout sessions. The one that I attended marked the start of a year-long process to gather information on broadband adoption and literacy rates amongst people with disabilities. The purpose of this session was to ask the participants for their ideas on how best to achieve this. After much discussion, we decided that in light of the timeframe and the target of gathering worldwide figures, a review of existing literature would be the best approach.

I left the meeting after the breakout session as I had to catch a plane. However, it consisted mainly of feedback from the breakout sessions and targets for next steps.

Mr. Gerard Ellis

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