Providing university students with an **accessible method** of working with recordings

Sonocent case study

Laurie Osbaldeston is a Senior Assistive Technology Specialist at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Canada.

For the past 14 years Laurie has worked with students with disabilities to ensure that they receive the support that they need at university. In 2012, she came across **Sonocent Audio Notetaker**, multisensory software which enables students to record lectures and seminars, annotate their recording as they listen, and revisit those recordings to create meaningful, comprehensive notes. After attending a demonstration of the software, she decided to trial it with a select group of students.

*"Audio Notetaker fills a hole as far as technology goes for students. There's nothing else on the market that **allows you to approach audio just like you would text,** which is the thing that both the students and I think is so brilliant. It is really innovative."*

A 5-point value proposition for MacEwan University

By implementing Audio Notetaker, the university's students gained in **five key areas**:

- *Better notes*
- *An accessible method of working with audio recordings*
- *Improved productivity and organization when studying with lecture material*
- *Increased independence*
- *Reduced anxiety*

The journey

Step 1 | The challenge: requirement for a note-taking solution which is conducive to independent learning

A number of the students at MacEwan University find it exceptionally difficult to take written notes in lectures, seminars, and group-work sessions. This is due to disabilities such as ADHD which affect their working memory, attention span, processing speed, handwriting, and vision.

Consequently, they often require additional support to take notes which results in a loss of independence and disengagement from their studies, both of which are unconducive to effective learning.

Furthermore, the resulting written notes are as inaccessible for these students as any other teaching materials delivered in a text format.
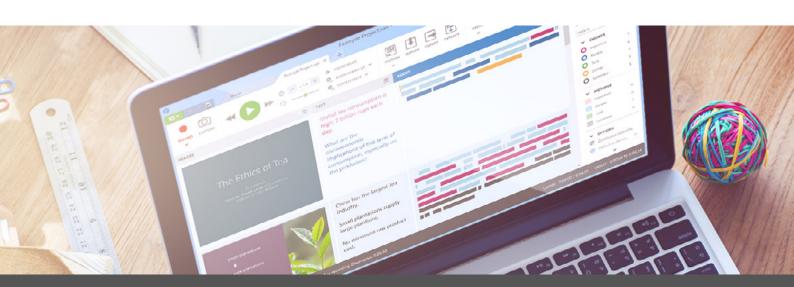
Step 2 | The solution: work with speech in an accessible format using Audio Notetaker

With the software, the students were able to take notes independently by recording into Audio Notetaker through their laptops, color-highlighting key information, and importing PowerPoint and PDF slides alongside.

The highly visual nature of the software suited the way the students preferred to learn. They could also customize the interface, which was important for the students with colour or light sensitivity.

The students liked the fact that with Audio Notetaker they could keep everything organized in one place. They also really benefited from the ability to color-code audio and text in order to label information that was important or that they didn't quite understand.

MacEwan University have also discovered that the software can also be employed to support a range of other study strategies, including mind-mapping, presentation practice, foreign-language practice, and planning and composing essays. Meanwhile the staff have begun to use the software to record meetings and highlight action points.

*"I have even used Audio Notetaker myself to take minutes in a professional meeting setting. I like recommending products that I am excited about and that I would use. **It is nice to use products that you believe in.**"*

Laurie Osbaldeston, Senior Assistive Technology Specialist, MacEwan University

*"**Audio Notetaker has been a life saver.** It gives me the opportunity to be independent. I no longer have to reduce my self-worth based on something I have no control over.**"***

A MacEwan University student with ADHD

About Sonocent Audio Notetaker

Students at schools and colleges including UC Davies and the University of Central Florida are using Sonocent software to take better notes, compose better written work, and create better revision resources. In 2014, Audio Notetaker won an Educational Resources Award (ERA) and in 2015 Sonocent picked up a Bett Award in the ICT category.

How to find out more

For more information about Sonocent software, email **sales@sonocent.com**