SCREEN READER PROGRAM COMPARISON

OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

- What are screen readers?

- Introduction to JAWS and NVDA

- Software comparison

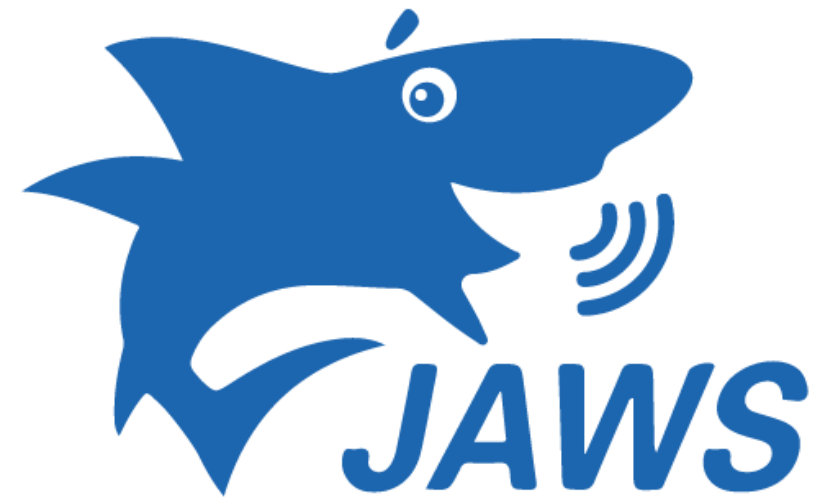- Impressions of each program

WHAT ARE SCREEN READERS

Screen readers are an assistive technology that allow people with low vision or other impairments to use a computer (Göransson, 2019). Screen readers read all text on the screen and convert elements on a screen, including images, buttons, and navigation items into speech or braille.

Photo by *Mikail Nilov*

INTRODUCTION TO JAWS

- JAWS is short for Job Access With Speech

- Created by Freedom Scientific, which is based in the United States

- Initially released in 1995

- Can be downloaded from [Freedom Scientific website](#)

- Advanced customization by users can be programmed with the proprietary JAWS Scripting Language

INTRODUCTION TO NVDA

- NVDA is short for NonVisual Desktop Access

- Created by NV Access, which is based in Australia

- Initially released in 2006

- Can be downloaded from [NV Access website](#)

- Programmed in Python, a widely available, open-source language

SOFTWARE COMPARISON

Software	Compatibility	Price	License	Support
JAWS	All versions of Windows	$95 - $1495	Proprietary	Large user community, extensive documentation, and official support from Freedom Scientific
NVDA	All versions of Windows	Free	Open Source	Large user community, extensive documentation, and programmers who contribute code to the project

IMPRESSIONS OF EACH PROGRAM

- Both programs integrate extremely well with Windows, including browsers, Office programs and all operating system features.

- There is a steep learning curve to learning the keyboard shortcuts and features for both programs, but based on reviewing user videos of both programs, experienced users can navigate them effectively and efficiently.

- Neither program is compatible with MacOS, but Voiceover is software built into the MacOS operating system that could be used instead.

- Because it is open source and written in a standard programming language, users are free to modify and contribute improvements to NVDA. The use of a proprietary scripting language by JAWS means it is more difficult to modify to suit individual user needs.

THANK YOU!

Any questions? Please [email Matt McGrievy](mailto:)

REFERENCES

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