

AT in the Workplace Study: Key Findings & Takeaways for Workers & Job Seekers

1

FINDING

Most workers need skills with multiple AT, including smartphone apps. Computer access software was the most commonly and most frequently used. On average, people used about 7 different AT on the job.

TAKEAWAY

For most jobs, you will need skills with the appropriate computer access software (screen reader or screen magnifier) and the ability to use multiple apps on your smartphone at work. OCR+ apps (like Seeing AI) were particularly popular at work.

2

FINDING

Most legally blind people used braille at work, and more than half used a refreshable braille device. Most users believe these braille devices are essential or very important to help them accomplish their work tasks. They are considered most helpful for certain tasks such as reading and comprehension.

TAKEAWAY

If you are a skilled braille reader, consider utilizing a refreshable braille device at work. Many employers purchased participants' refreshable braille displays (but were less likely to purchase braille notetakers). If you are not familiar with braille, consider learning braille. It's never too late to learn!

3

FINDING

Most people who used a screen reader at work utilized more than one brand of screen reader – and those who did were less likely to report experiencing the challenge of working less efficiently than their sighted peers.

TAKEAWAY

If you are only using one brand of screen reader, consider learning how to use another one.

4

FINDING

Mainstream technology has come a long way in terms of accessibility. Three of the biggest tech companies (Microsoft, Apple, Google) put a lot of effort into making their tools accessible for people who are blind or have low vision. They offer built-in screen readers and magnification, which are continually improving. Use of these built-in tools increased between 2022 and 2024 among study participants. The companies also offer help desks to use when you encounter problems.

TAKEAWAY

Utilize their tools and free assistance; built-in screen readers or magnifiers can serve as backup tools to improve your flexibility and ability to deal with inaccessible material at work.

5

FINDING

Experiencing challenges associated with AT use was common; people reported an average of 7 challenges. The most common challenges for people with limited or no vision had to do with encountering inaccessible and hard-to-use digital content (documents, websites, software). For people with usable vision, the most common challenges were reading handwriting and print.

TAKEAWAY

You will likely experience challenges at work related to technology; be prepared to problem-solve to deal with the challenges. It's important to know how to access help systems and features within AT.

6

FINDING

AT companies are constantly updating their products with advancements in technology, such as artificial intelligence. The updates are meant to improve efficiency and resolve problems users have reported.

TAKEAWAY

It's important to be aware of updates to the technology you are currently using. AT companies release update notes that describe new features – take the time to review these! Their updates may address one of your challenges.

7

FINDING

Although most people preferred hands-on training to learn new AT, participants reported that self-teaching was the primary way they learned to use most of their workplace AT. AT changes quickly today – new devices are introduced and existing AT is regularly updated.

TAKEAWAY

Getting training for your AT is very helpful, but you must develop the ability to continue learning independently. Many resources are available to help you learn, and a mindset of continuous learning related to your AT is needed. Learning how to use a new AT or the latest features of your current AT can be time-consuming, but it can pay off in terms of increased efficiency both at work and in daily life.

8

FINDING

Almost all participants used word processing and video conferencing software on the job, and more than 90% used spreadsheet software. More than half of all current users of these three software said they would benefit from more training on how to use the software with their AT.

TAKEAWAY

You likely do or will need to have skill with all three software for your job. If you have the opportunity to receive AT training before you start working, ask that the training include how to use productivity software with your computer access AT. If you're already working and need more training, consider using existing free training resources found online or participating in a more intensive training program, such as [ProMOTE](#). To find free resources, do a search with your computer access AT brand name, plus the productivity software name, plus "training."



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