



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 1, 2015

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Michael Snyder at (202) 418-0997
E-mail: <mailto:Michael.Snyder@fcc.gov>

FCC CHAIRMAN WHEELER HONORS INNOVATORS IN ACCESSIBILITY COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY WITH ANNUAL AWARDS

Washington, D.C. – FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler today announced winners of the fourth annual Awards for Advancement in Accessibility (Chairman's AAA). These awards recognize and honor innovative achievements in communications technology that benefits people with disabilities.

The Chairman's AAA, a project of the FCC's Accessibility and Innovation Initiative (A&I Initiative), recognizes outstanding private and public sector ventures in communications technology accessibility and innovation. The Chairman's AAA is part of the A&I Initiative's goal to facilitate ongoing exchanges among industry, assistive technology companies, app developers, government representatives and consumers to share best practices and solutions for accessible communications technologies.

Winners were chosen in seven categories: Augmented Reality, CAPTCHA Alternatives, Internet of Things, Real-Time Text, Teleconferencing, Video Description and Miscellaneous. Awards will be presented to the winners at a ceremony on Monday, June 1, 2015 at the M-Enabling Summit at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel in Arlington, VA starting at 4:45 p.m. The award-winning technology will be displayed at a reception immediately following the ceremony.

Winners of 2015 Chairman's AAA

Category: Augmented Reality

Winner: Blind Square

Description: This iOS app helps blind travelers navigate routes, discover points of interest in the environment and network with friends around venues of mutual interest. Last year's 2.0 release was a major upgrade in features and connections to other services and won the 2015 Winston Gordon Award for Excellence in Accessible Technology, awarded by CNIB (formerly known as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind).

Category: CAPTCHA Alternatives

Winner: Google's no CAPTCHA reCAPTCHA

Description: reCAPTCHA provides a technological advance to CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart) security protocols by eliminating the need for users to type the characters or audio clips into a login box. Instead, this new service provides website security via a risk analysis of the user's web behavior. For many users, this means eliminating the sometimes difficult-to-read CAPTCHA challenge text words encountered when visiting various websites.

Category: Internet of Things

Winner: Convo Lights

Description: This VRS application leverages recent advancements in off-the-shelf lighting technology to enable users to customize visual incoming call notifications to trigger multiple colors, locations and types of lighting in users' homes and workspaces.

Category: Real-Time Text

Winner: Beam Messenger

Description: This app allows people to communicate seamlessly via text messages on mobile devices. Unlike the current methods of text-based communication that happen in turn-based fashion, Beam Messenger allows people to chat the way they would in person – in real-time – coming in at any point in the conversation and without waiting for the other person to hit "send."

Category: Teleconferencing

Winner: AT&T Video Meetings with BlueJeans

Description: This mobile optimized and cross-platform interoperable video conferencing solution extends video collaboration to smartphone, tablet and laptop users and supports a range of mobile clients and platforms, including iOS and Android. The web, iOS and Android apps have all been enhanced to make the service available to a wider range of customers with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these. AT&T worked with Blue Jeans Network, creator of the Blue Jeans video conferencing service, in developing this video conferencing solution.

Category: Video Description

Winner: Comcast's Talking Guide

Description: Voice Guidance on the X1 Entertainment Operating System "speaks" what's on the television screen to allow viewers who are blind or visually impaired to navigate user interfaces and video program information from cable set top boxes' on-screen menus. With this tool, viewers without sight can easily find, select, record and watch anything on their channel lineup. The Talking Guide also allows customers who are blind or visually impaired to independently access settings to enable or disable the Secondary Audio Program to access content with video description.

Category: Miscellaneous

Winner: OpenAIR, by Knowbility

Description: Accessible Internet Rally (AIR) is a competition, organized by Knowbility, that encourages developers to learn about web accessibility and apply that knowledge by building a prototype website for a nonprofit organization. In 2014, AIR was made available via IBM Connections, a web collaboration platform that complies with advanced accessibility guidelines. Registered professionals can use the platform to gain accessible design skills.

For more information about the FCC, visit www.FCC.gov .

--FCC--