

*****NEWS RELEASE***NEWS RELEASE*****

AlphaSmart's NEO now offers greater functionality

AlphaSmart, a division of Renaissance Learning, is pleased to announce some significant and important updates for its NEO and NEO 2 writing tools.

'Text2Speech' utilises NEO's in-built infrared facility to allow writers to hear what they have written, letter by letter, word by word or sentence by sentence through headphones or speakers. The software can be customised for students of all levels by selecting settings for automatic read-back, volume and speed. Like all AlphaSmart products, 'Text2Speech' has a massive battery life of over 30,000 words from just two AA batteries.

NEO 2 now works with the documents setting within Google Docs, allowing students and teachers to access, store, edit and share documents. This enables documents to be easily sent back and forth wirelessly between NEO 2 and the Google Docs website, which encourages collaboration and increases writing practice. This development allows users to easily create assignments and track writing progress, facilitates peer editing and keeps them focused on writing.

NEO 2 also now supports Renaissance Learning's MathsFacts in a Flash program, which offers students at all levels by providing valuable practice on their addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts. Other mental skills, such as squares and fraction/decimal conversion can also be practiced.

Richard Courtney, Head of Hardware Products at AlphaSmart, comments:

"These developments – particularly 'Text2Speech' and the introduction of Google Docs – represent a major step forward for AlphaSmart, and adds another dimension to the practicality and versatility of NEO 2."

For more information visit: www.alphasmart.co.uk

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About AlphaSmart

AlphaSmart, a division of Renaissance Learning, is committed to helping all ages of pupil to learn and writers to write. Since 1992 its goal has been to make technology more affordable, accessible, and easier to apply to the challenges of the classroom.

NEO provides low-cost, simple and trouble-free computing. With over 700 hours battery-life and an extremely robust design, the portable note-takers can be found working in classrooms and on field-trips worldwide, everyday. NEO is also frequently the portable word-processor of choice by many writing professionals, including journalists and authors. NEO 2 builds on this by including full wireless voting and assessment functionality, wireless printing, and Accelerated Reader compatibility.