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The Able Channel

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With the advent of new technologies introduced to the Web, e.g., video streaming, the subject of Web site accessibility often is not regarded as a primary issue. What exactly is video streaming? Video streaming is the ability to play and view video content via the Web without having to download the video to your PC. The video is buffered or streamed into your PC through your modem and once your video buffer fills, the video will start playing. You can control the actions of the streamed video content like it was a video in your VCR at home; the difference here is that you are viewing it over the Web.

One group stands out as an exception as an info-mediator. The Able Channel, in a cooperative partnering effort with TV onthe Web, is changing this situation by meeting the requirements of individuals with disabilities.

Both the American Census Bureau and the World Health Organization estimate that there are over 50 million people in America and approximately 750 million people worldwide with an identified disability. These numbers are increasing daily due to an aging population, illnesses and accidents. The principal founder of the Able Channel particularly understands the importance of Web site accessibility. Jeffrey Pledger, President, lost his sight 15 years ago due to illness.

The mission of the Able Channel is to provide and share information on a variety of subjects concerning people with disabilities. By providing the information in an accessible format, the Able Channel will assist in empowering this growing segment of the world population to make value added choices.

We plan to accomplish this through the power of the human spirit in cooperation with the tools of science and technology. The Able Channel will bring you the activities, information and assistive technologies of the differently-abled communities. Our vision is to be the central repository on the Web for storing data about activities, assistive technologies and general information concerned about and for all types of disabilities.

The information presented will be in an accessible video format, including audio descriptions and closed captioning. The use of the WWW as a delivery mechanism for this type of product has two main strengths: world wide coverage and affordability.

Both TV onthe Web and the Able Channel have the ability to provide this leading edge technology via the Real Network's G2 video player. With the recent implementation of the

Real Network's G2 server software, the capability of delivering accessible videos through the Web via video streaming techniques can be realized by all people. We are also investigating the use of Microsoft's Windows media player as another choice for you the public to choose as your video player.