

MENUS THAT TALK™ SHINES AT BLIND COUNCIL MEETING IN TEXAS

American Council of the Blind—San Antonio Chapter Meets in Lion and Rose Pub to Sounds of a British Bar Maid

December 15, 2007: San Antonio TX— The Lion and Rose, a fast-growing English pub-style restaurant chain headquartered here opened its doors to the **Alamo Council of the Blind (ACB)**, a local chapter of the American Council of the Blind of Texas. But instead of traditional Braille menus, council members were treated to Menus That Talk, an audio alternative to printed menus for visually-challenged guests.

As ACB members gathered in the English pub-style restaurant they heard a cheery English girl's voice describe items on the Lion and Rose's authentic menu. In a few moments most of the council members had decided what to have for lunch and were ordering.

Alamo (ACB) President, Rosalyn Benavides was thrilled with the idea of having complete and detailed access to one of her favorite restaurants. She commented that "...this menu is so easy to use—we should have them all over San Antonio."

Her words were echoed by ACB Technical Advisor Ismael Herrera who couldn't get over how many different kinds of beer the Lion and Rose offered. "This menu system is a snap to use. I especially like the way it interfaces with hearing-aids," he said.

Lion and Rose president and CEO Allen Tharp said, "We are always looking for ways to add to our guests' comfort and the pleasure of their dining experience. We were fascinated when we first saw Menus That Talk, and this application proves that it effectively addresses real problems."

ABOUT MENUS THAT TALK

Diners press buttons representing food categories, like **STARTERS**, **SANDWICHES** and **BRITISH FAVORITES**. The menu responds instantly by describing the cuisine, prices and special offers. About the size of a DVD case, it features Braille characters for blind customers. Its portability allows diners begin browsing the menu even while waiting to be seated. Menus That Talk can speak in two languages simultaneously.



ABOUT THE LION & ROSE

The Lion & Rose is a Texas-based franchise that brings American diners the sights, sounds and eclectic tastes of old England in the genre of an authentic pub complete with darts, pints, suits of armor and genuine "public house" good cheer.

"Menus That Talk answers basic questions that our managers deal with day to day," Lion and Rose's Tharp said. "How do you bring your restaurant services to sight-impaired customers? How do you make changes to your menu without the trouble and expense of reprinting them? How can technology reach out to customers in ways they will truly remember and value?"



Alamo Council of the Blind President Rosalyn Benavides and Vice President Larry Johnson with Menus That Talk

Inspired by a true-to-life experience, Menus That Talk CEO Susan Perry was having lunch with her niece, a young woman with advanced macular degeneration who cannot read a menu from any distance. “When my niece Jessica asked if I would read the menu specials to her, I realized I had forgotten my glasses, and we had a good laugh,” said Perry, “but the incident begged the question, why can’t menus talk to customers?” After nearly a year of development she and partner Richard Herbst showed the first completed menus to restaurant owners.

“Restaurants face some unique challenges,” says Herbst. “They are serving more diverse customers with shrinking wait staffs. Managers are under pressure to get food choices and cuisine descriptions in front of customers. We’re filling that need with a simple audio device that anyone can use. And, Menus That Talk satisfies basic Americans With Disabilities requirements,” he added.

The Menu supports two languages simultaneously; the company currently offers English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, Italian and Russian. Customers simply press the language of their choice, and browse the menu. A detachable external earpiece provides privacy, also interfacing with modern Telecoil®-equipped hearing aids for added service to the elderly and hearing-impaired.

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