e-CourtReporter Presents:

e-Tips Newsletter

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"A candle loses nothing of its light by lighting another candle."
James Keller

Wil Wilcox: "Send to" CD Burner
Keith Vincent: The Passport Stenowriter

e-Power Video Tutorial Training

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Upcoming 3-day Total Eclipse e-POWER Workshops

Honolulu, HI   October 8-10, 2004

For more details: www.EclipseNT.com

Wil's e-Tip

Using "Send to" in WindowsXP to Burn CDs

Windows XP has a quick and easy Send-To command to burn or copy files to CDs. Here's how it works.

First, place a CD-R disk in your CD-RW drive. Then from within Total Eclipse press the speedkey or keyboard shortcut CTRL-F to open the File Manager and then ALT-E to open the Windows Explorer. Next right-click on the file you want to copy and select Send To. On the drop-down menu select your CD drive. A Bubble will pop up at the bottom of the screen that says "You have files waiting to be written to the CD. To see the files now, click this balloon."

You will see a list of the file or files ready to be written to the CD. On the left of the screen, click on Write these files to CD. You may give the CD a name or keep the current date of the backup as the default name. All you need to do now is click Next to burn your CD. If you're attempting to back up your master dictionary, you will need to close your Total Eclipse Window before copying your dictionary to the CD.

The Send-To command is very powerful and also allows you to send files to the 3 1/2 Floppy and/or Mail Recipient for e-mailing files.

Note: Total Eclipse is very protective of your master dictionary and will not let you copy it to the CD with Total Eclipse open. Simply leave the Windows Explorer open and close Total Eclipse before attempting to copy your master dictionary to the CD.

Keith's e-Tip

A New Stenowriter Is Unveiled: The Passport

For the past two years, Advantage Software has been quietly developing a new writer. As you might expect, the makers of Total Eclipse weren't content to build "just another writer" any more than they'd be satisfied to create just another CAT system. As Greg Seely has said, "If we're going to put our name on something, it has to be the best."

For competitive reasons, not all the details about the *Passport* can be released at this point. However, here's a sampling of the reactions among the lucky

folks who got to see and touch the prototype at the March 2004 Eclipse Users' Group meeting in Las Vegas.

Love the keyboard! Whether your touch is very light or very heavy, this writer will adjust to you.

I couldn't believe how little it weighed! If only it were always this easy to shed a few pounds!

I was impressed by the high-strength but lightweight metals that were chosen. Plus, every element has been carefully thought out to protect against accidental falls. Clearly this writer was designed to last.

My current writer has given me such a problem with stacked strokes and shadowed strokes. If the Passport will see the difference between perfect and imperfect strokes, I can't wait to see how much better my steno will translate.

The folks at Advantage Software have outdone themselves. Put my name on the list. This is the writer I've been waiting for. I want to tell all my friends: Don't even think of buying anything else. The fact that it will cost substantially less than its closest competitor is an unexpected bonus!

This year Santa doesn't need to ask what I want.

To me, the most exciting parts of the Passport writer are the optical sensors that go beyond detecting WHAT key you pressed and actually register HOW you pressed it. Until now, the keys of our steno machines registered like old-fashioned light switches -- either off or on. Like me, you've probably seen your steno strokes getting stacked together or -- "he he he" -- registering more than once. In contrast, the optical sensors of the Passport are more like dimmer switches and can detect more than 1,000 different degrees of touch. This ShadowTrackTM technology can provide a much richer range of information to the CAT system. I can't wait to see how Total Eclipse will take advantage of that richer input. It's bound to improve steno translation.

It may take a while, but I foresee a two-way communication between Eclipse and the Passport. The Passport will give Eclipse a better idea of how you're pressing your steno keys. After you've edited your translated text, Eclipse will be able to analyze your corrections and tell the Passport which keys need to be adjusted to work properly with your fingers. Until now, proper adjustment of your steno keyboard's electronic detectors has been a hit-or-miss proposition. I can see the Passport and Eclipse working together to make your keyboard adjustment much more exact so that your steno translation can be that much better.

Over and over again, I was struck by the brilliance of Dave Siebert's design decisions. He selected Linux as the operating system for the computer within

the Passport. Using Linux means the Passport can take advantage of the present and future work of thousands of programmers. Linux is the most reliable and secure operating system on the planet. That security and reliability are terrific advantages in light of the Passport's built-in wireless and networking connectivity. I also like the fact that you can have multiple backups for steno, text, and audio. I love the idea of built-in audio recording. Even if I'm at a doctor's depo and there's no room to hook up my computer for realtime transcription, I'll still have the benefits of audio synchronization. I like the use of lightweight but super-tough metals. I was struck by how carefully Dave positioned every element of the writer to protect against damage from accidental falls.

It really was a pleasure to witness the unveiling of the Passport prototype. I think we can all take pride in Dave Siebert's design, which has been made possible by Greg Seely's unflagging support. When Dave said that the Passport did not contain even one part that was made by S (you know the company I mean), that got the biggest applause of the day. However, it's equally important that all the components of the Passport are at the beginning of their product life, and the only part that is not made in America is the large, new, color screen by Kyocera. It's obvious that Dave understands that you can't just throw a writer together from parts that happen to be available now but might not be offered a few years down the road. When people buy a writer, it's a long-term commitment.

By developing the Passport, Advantage Software has once again demonstrated its commitment to writers of machine shorthand. I certainly appreciate that. However, I also appreciate that the company will not sell the Passport until it is ready to be delivered. At this point the most you can do is put your name on a waiting list. As Greg Seely said to me, "We understand how important it is to get this right. We do not want to over-promise and under-deliver. We can afford to wait until we are certain that the Passport is absolutely ready." That's the kind of solidity and integrity that I respect in a company.

So when can you get your Passport? Not just yet. I know it's hard to wait, but patience will be rewarded. In the meantime, you can see an artist's rendering of the Passport at the "Writer" page of my website: www.KVincent.com. That same page also has information on a nice courtesy discount that is being offered to the first 100 people who put their names on the waiting list.

It has been a long time coming, but the day is rapidly approaching when you'll have an alternative in quality writing machines.

Who Are We?

Wil Wilcox is a freelance court reporter in Los Angeles, California, and has been a technology consultant for reporters since 1995. Since 1998, he and Robert Denos have been the Advantage Software representatives for Southern California.

Keith Vincent is a freelance court reporter in Houston, Texas. He's been an Advantage Software rep, trainer, and tester since 1992. In 1997 he wrote the Hyperkeys tutorial for Eclipse users.

Robert Denos is the manager and event coordinator for e-CourtReporter, LLC.

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