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e-Tips Newsletter

In this Issue

Keith Vincent - p. 1

Audio AI Boost in Eclipse 10

Wil Wilcox - p. 2

Speedify VPN



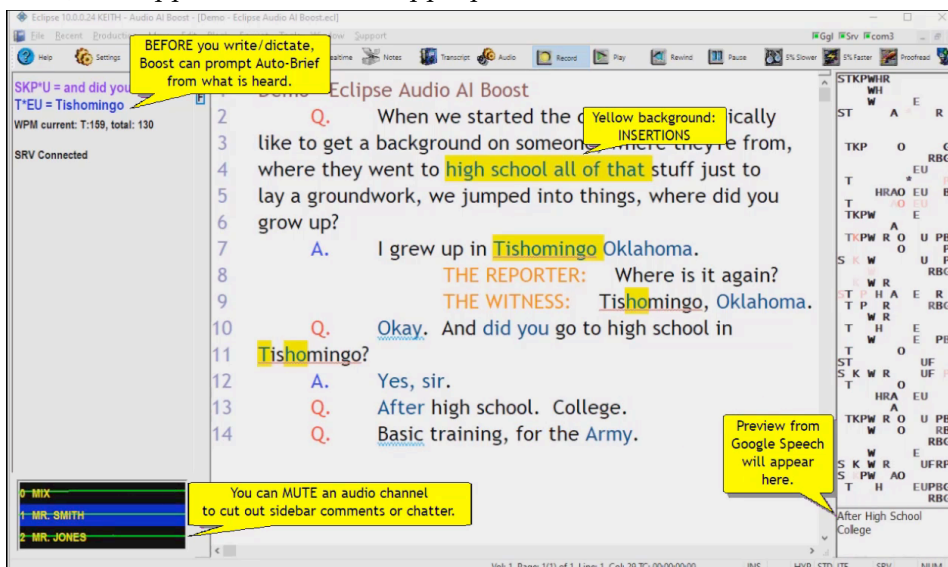
Keith Vincent

Audio AI Boost in Eclipse 10

Given the immense threat of COVID-19, **the Eclipse Users Conference, October 22-25, 2020, will be online this year instead of in Las Vegas.** I hope that not having the expense and risk of travel will enable more folks to participate. Stay home, relax, learn.

Upcoming **Eclipse Version 10 will be the focus of the conference.** Chief programmer Jeremy Thorne has been working nonstop on this version for more than a year, and many of its features were shown at the NCRA virtual conference in August. The most spectacular new feature is called **Audio AI Boost**, or simply **“Boost.”**

Here’s a screenshot from one of 20 Visualizers I’ve created for Eclipse 10. The text in **yellow is where Boost compensated** for spots where I did not hear well or did not have an unusual name in my dictionary. Eclipse sent my audio to Google Speech, got back suggested text, and applied edits where appropriate.



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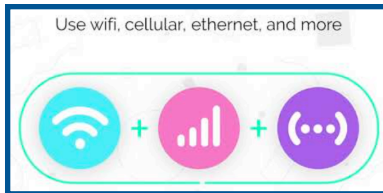
(Continued on page 3)

Speedify VPN



One of the most challenging aspects of remote reporting work is making sure you have a robust internet connection. **Speedify VPN from Connectify has a unique feature called channel bonding that combines multiple internet connections to increase speed and reliability.**

There is a free option and a paid option. Because the free option limits the data to 2GB/month, **I would opt for the paid plan, which is \$5.99/month for 12 months to as little as \$2.99/month for three years.**



If your internet options are very poor, you can combine internet sources resulting in faster speeds. For instance, if you have a hard-wired Ethernet connection to your modem, Wi-Fi, and a tethered phone or mobile hotspot, Speedify will merge these together into a single faster connection for both downloads and uploads. I have found in my testing that it works great.

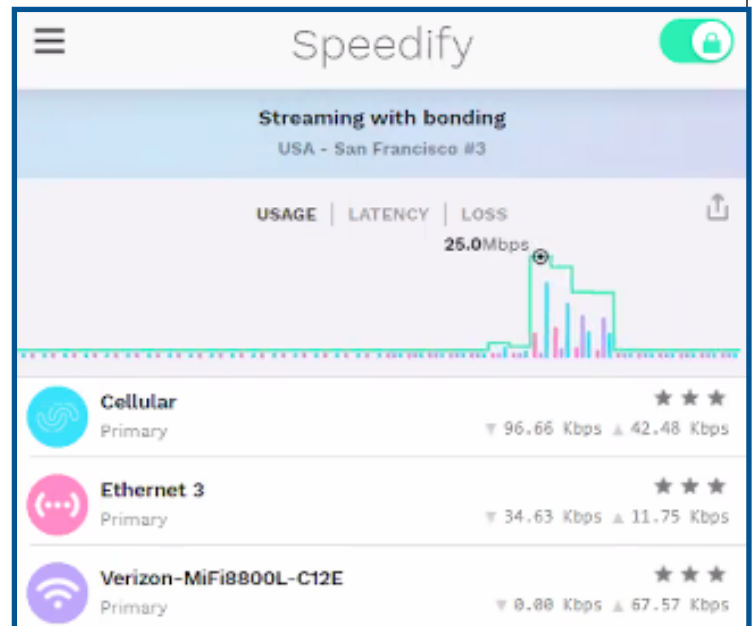
Speedify is the solution to getting faster internet speeds for court reporters that do not have fast internet available at their location. So if in Zoom depositions you are constantly getting buffering and drop-outs, Speedify is one solution that is able to correct this.

For instance, you may have slow internet in your courtroom, depo conference room or office, but if you have multiple connections available when Speedify combines the connections, it very often will make it fast enough for your remote jobs or for use with the upcoming Eclipse v10 Audio AI Boost feature that Keith Vincent wrote about.

One little quirk of using Speedify is that when you look in Windows at your network and internet settings, it may show connected but no internet. Do not be alarmed. **Windows is just reporting no connection because the internet connections are all being routed through Speedify. You will see your bonded connections in the Speedify app which also clearly indicates the speed you are achieving.**

Since I've been working from home and I have gigabit internet which is blazing fast, I do not stand to really gain anything by adding Speedify, other than the

VPN service. However, **when working at a remote location, I can use the public internet, my cell phone and a hotspot bonded together and get excellent results.** This is what I do to be able to use Eclipse v10 Audio AI Boost during my in-person jobs.



You will notice in the screenshot that there are three connections in use; cellular, Ethernet and a Verizon MiFi hotspot. Each of those connections is represented in the graph by colors showing the connection speed.

One of the great things about Speedify is that **if any of these combined connections fail, Speedify still has the others bonded together so you do not lose your internet connection.** I love this because I do not want to ever be disconnected from a remote job. That is just unacceptable to me.

I've had the power go out while connected to my wi-fi router and Speedify automatically used my cellular data connection. I'm a big proponent of getting a laptop that you can put an LTE sim card in from a cellular provider. My Lenovo Thinkpad X1 carbon has LTE data active at all times. See e-Tip No. 163 for more information about LTE mobile data enabled computers.

So if you want to get the best internet connection wherever you are, Speedify will automatically bond your internet connections together for superior results.

Audio AI Boost in Eclipse 10

(Continued from page 1)

What does Boost need to work? First, it needs human-based transcription (steno or voice) to compare to Google Speech. This is NOT an automated process that would replace the human reporter. No reporter? No boost. For its part, Google Speech needs internet and good audio.

I've been using Boost on most of my jobs for more than a year now and have been meticulously analyzing log files to work with Jeremy. **Even since January, I have seen a huge improvement in Boost results.** The words that I drop are often getting filled in, and my mangled steno is often getting corrected. In fact, **sometimes Boost shows too much respect for my imperfect steno;** but each user can control how open Eclipse will be to Google Speech suggestions.

Boost is not just for steno reporters. It can help EclipseVox users as well because Google Speech may recognize words that Dragon does not know. Also, whether you drop steno or drop dictation, it's still a hole in your text compared to the audio that is sent to Google for analysis.

"Compare" is the key word here. As your text is translated, **Eclipse is comparing the confidence score from your steno/voice input as opposed to the Google Speech confidence score.** The comparison process is subtle and includes a lot of fine-tuning to, among other things, exclude noise words and repetitions that you tend to skip as you're reporting.

Boost also inspires Auto-Briefs. In my example, Google heard "Tishomingo." I froze and did not write it at first. By the time I did try to write it, Boost had already offered an auto-brief for this name that was not in my dictionary.

For really good steno reporters who only want Boost to suggest auto-briefs, there is an "Experts only" mode. In this mode, Boost can offer text corrections but only in response to a "Google, help!" stroke, defined as {AIB}.

As already mentioned, **Boost is using Google Speech, which needs good audio.** My audio is good but not perfect, yet I've gotten some amazing results. Also, I've been doing only Zoom depositions for the past six months. Zoom audio is not perfect, but it is like having speakers with separate mics. It has produced great Boost results.

After over a year of testing and refining Audio AI Boost, I've found several ways to improve Boost results. These involve **fine-tuning dictionary entries**, and it is part of what Jeremy and I will share about Boost on **Sunday, October 25th, during the online Eclipse Users Conference.** When we showed Eclipse 10 at the NCRA online conference, a lot of folks were saying "I want to learn much more." Well, now you can.

At this point **Eclipse 10 is in "open beta" status.** If you want to try the new version and help make it better for the wait-and-see folks, you will be most welcome. In any case, join us on October 25th.

Eclipse Users Conference Online - October 22-25, 2020

In light of coronavirus concerns, the 28th annual Eclipse Users Group conference will not be held in Las Vegas this year. Instead, it has been changed to an online event.

Details are available at EclipseUsers.com, but here's a quick summary. A three-hour class is planned for Thursday evening, and three hours of instruction on

Friday. Six hours are planned for Saturday, at the basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. On Sunday, six hours of various classes will be offered, with a focus on **preparing for exciting Eclipse Version 10.**

Please join us for the October 22-25 online conference. If you're looking for continuing education credit, the online conference offers 1.8 CEU.

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