



Using IP Relay Service

by Clarke Christianson

Technology continually advances at such a rapid speed that various types of older telecommunications equipment quickly becomes obsolete. This is especially true for the traditional text telephone, known as the TTY. There are people out there who still prefer to use the TTY for multiple reasons, and also those who do not have a computer or Internet access who still use phone landlines. Use of the TTY is not completely out of the picture (yet).

The '80s and early '90s was the hey-day of the industry known as "Telecommunications Relay Services" (TRS) when the provision of traditional relay services was specifically for those using TTYs/TDDs. Other services — like voice carryover, hearing carryover and speech to speech — were also provided. By the year 2000, there was a significant drop due to the introduction of the newer wireless technology and video technology. Today, it is obviously notable that the majority of people are using a computer and the Internet. That is where the Internet protocol (IP) relay service comes into the picture. A person does not need to acquire a TTY but simply use a computer to communicate by text and access the IP relay service.

How Does the IP Relay Service Work?

Here is the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) definition of the service: Unlike traditional TRS, where a TTY user contacts a TRS center via telephone lines and the communication agent (CA) at the TRS center calls the receiving party via voice telephone, the first leg of an IP relay call is via the Internet. The IP relay center is usually accessed via a Web page. The second leg of the call, as with traditional TRS, is from the CA to the receiving party via voice telephone



through the public switched telephone network.

The nice thing about using IP Relay is that there are no additional costs to consumers for IP Relay, except for the computer or other Web-capable device and an Internet connection.

Benefits of IP Relay

- Availability – IP relay is available to anyone who has access to the Internet via computer, personal digital assistant (PDA), web-capable telephones, etc.
- Convenience – Consumers do not need to have a separate TTY or log off the Internet to use a TTY phone line. Using a computer

screen and keyboard is easier than using a TTY and allows a consumer to type much faster, see more of the conversation, and adjust fonts. IP relay allows users to print out and save conversations.

- Multiple Calls – IP relay users can initiate multiple calls simultaneously and make conference calls.
- Quality – Transmission quality may be faster via IP relay than via a TTY.

How to Get Started Using IP Relay?

As mentioned above, a person will need a computer and Internet connection and access one of several IP relay providers. In the state of South Dakota, one can go into www.sprintrelay.com to learn more about IP relay services and get started by downloading Sprint IP. It is both easy and quick to set up.

If you have any questions or need further information, contact:

Outreach Services, 102 N. Krohn Place, Sioux Falls, SD 57103
(800) 642-6410 Voice • (866) 272-3323 TTY
sdrelay@c-s-d.org • www.sdrelay.com



Clarke's Column

by Clarke Christianson

As I write this column, my mind goes back to the times and places where we have exhibited booths to promote Relay South Dakota and the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program. Some of the events proved to be very productive, while some others weren't as successful, so it may mean some areas are "saturated" — in other words, people already know about or currently receive our services. Yet, every year, there are always newly-identified people who find themselves having challenges with some level of hearing loss.

It is interesting to note, sometimes those who wear hearing aids walk by our booth and suddenly look away as if our services are not for them. Sometimes a spouse

will try to pull a husband or wife to the booth, but to no avail. It is obviously a real case of what is called the "stage of denial" and that is very understandable, as those people may need time to cope with their hearing loss. Really, our services and the special telecommunications equipment do help make lives so much better and allow a return to some level of "normalcy."

Booth exhibitions are being planned for this spring and summer, so if you happen to be in one of these areas, please feel free to stop by and say hello, and learn more about who we are and what we can do for you.

- ➔ Technology & Innovation in Education Conference, Sioux Falls • April 18 - 20
- ➔ Meade County Health Fair, Sturgis • April 28
- ➔ Health & Human Services Fair, Rapid City • April 30
- ➔ Active Living Expo, Sioux Falls • May 6
- ➔ Brown County Fair, Aberdeen • August 17 – 22
- ➔ South Dakota State Fair, Huron • September 2 – 6

Sprint IP using AIM.

- > Use SprintIP on any device that runs AIM.
- > Add SprintIP to your Buddy List.
- > Escribe **ESPAÑOL** para servicio en español
- > Type **HELP** – connect to Live Customer Service

More information:
www.sprintrelay.com



SprintIP

CSD of South Dakota Introduces New TEDP Staff

Jonathan Soukup joined the Centers of Excellence team last December as a TEDP specialist. In this role he will be mainly focusing on the distribution of telecommunications equipment. Soukup was born and raised in Sioux Falls, S.D., along with two siblings. After graduating high school he attended the University of South Dakota before finishing at Gallaudet University with a degree in business administration. While at Gallaudet, Soukup was involved with several organizations, which increased his knowledge of deaf and hard of hearing culture. Soukup looks forward to serving the TEDP needs the South Dakota deaf and hard of hearing community.

Hailing from Sioux Falls, S.D., Teresa Nold joined the Centers of Excellence team last December as a Community Specialist, assisting the TEDP Program. Her previous experience includes working for the USD Sanford School of Medicine, Center for Disabilities' Deaf-Blind Program as a family specialist. Nold also was a supervisor at JCPenney in Sioux Falls, and worked for Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired as a deaf-blind specialist. Her work and personal experiences have helped her



Paula Souhrada, Jon Soukup, Teresa Nold and Lance Sigdestad are the new team at CSD of S.D.

gain a great deal of knowledge that she is able to apply to her position with the TEDP program. She is married to Tim and together they have two boys, Isaac and Caleb. Nold said, "Being a parent to a child who is deaf with additional disabilities, having a hearing loss and knowing ASL greatly helps me in my ability to support consumers I work with. From kids to adults, everyone is unique and it keeps me on my toes!" In her spare time, Nold likes to read and go for walks, spend time with the family, or work at the never-ending job of keeping the house clean.

South Dakota

TIPS & HINTS

Speech to Speech (STS) serves as a vital link between hearing people with speech disabilities using standard telephones and those who are hearing, deaf, hard of hearing, or other speech disabled customers.

Specially trained operators re-voice the STS user's conversation to the other party, phrase by phrase, while all three parties are on the line at the same time. The operator will continue re-voicing even if the outbound person understands the speech disabled caller until instructed otherwise by the STS user in control of the call.

At the set up of your call, the operator has a little more leniency than a traditional relay operator to ask questions to help facilitate your call successfully. For example, they may ask if you want to provide the person you're calling with your name or if you would like to ask for a specific person. Other questions they may ask are, "Are there any special instructions you have for me?" "Would you like me to voice everything?" "Would you like me to voice only what the outbound does not understand?"

If the operator is having difficulty understanding your conversation, they may go through a specially designed alphabet to spell out some of the words; however, STS operators go through a specialized training program to become familiar with specific speech patterns for various disabilities (Lou Gehrig's Disease, Aphasia, Cerebral Palsy, Stroke, Parkinson's, etc.). STS operators are also required to have periodic hearing tests conducted.

One of the great features of STS is that we recognize the operator and the STS user may spend a long period of time obtaining a message. If the line is busy or the party doesn't answer, the message may be held in the customer's personal-

ized database. The STS user may then call back within 24 hours and attempt to leave that same message again without having to repeat the message! It doesn't matter which operator you reach when you call back in, they will be able to access it for you from your Retained Messages database. The message will be automatically purged after 24 hours or the operator will delete it once the message has been left. You can also call back in anytime within that 24 hour period to edit the message.

In addition to the customer's traditional database that lets you set up your personal preferences, STS users have an added feature that will allow someone calling you to contact you based on schedule information. You can put in up to 10 entries for home, work, cell and when the best days and times are to reach you at those numbers. For example, let's say you can be contacted Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at work. If a person calls you at 10 a.m. on a Tuesday, the STS operator can pull up that information and enter your work number based on the schedule you provided. If the person is calling you after 5 p.m. or on the weekend, the operator will see from your database that the best number to reach you on is your cell phone. If you choose to use this feature, you must supply the person calling you with a code word that they will be required to provide to the STS operator so they can access your information.

As with all relay calls, STS also has a Privacy feature. If you instruct the operator that you want to use Privacy, when the voice person responds to the STS caller the operator would not hear the voice person's response.

Hospitality is known as being gracious to guests and each operator should serve each customer as a guest. Our goal is to provide a warm, friendly and comfortable atmosphere for you to process your relay calls.



102 N. Krohn Place
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

Your feedback is important to us!

Did you just have a successful relay call and the CA did a fabulous job?

Did you have some challenges during a relay call and you feel that the CA might benefit from your feedback?

Your feedback, comments, and suggestions are extremely valuable to us, as they help ensure the quality of the relay services we offer to you. Not only that, positive feedback means the whole world to a CA and brightens up their day! Even your feedback to help a CA improve for the next relay calls will be greatly appreciated. By providing specific infor-



mation using the example below, you will help us provide continuous training and specific feedback to our CAs.

Date of Relay Call: March 17, 2010

Time of Relay Call: 9:15 a.m. (Central time)

CA ID Number: CA 1234(F)

Comments: (be specific). This CA did a wonderful job relaying my call. She typed with no spelling errors, and typed efficiently and smoothly with a great positive attitude. My hearing friend felt like she was talking directly to me. Keep up the great work!

Please send your comments to:

Clarke Christianson
South Dakota TRS Outreach Manager
102 N. Krohn Place
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

or email:

cchristianson@c-s-d.org