

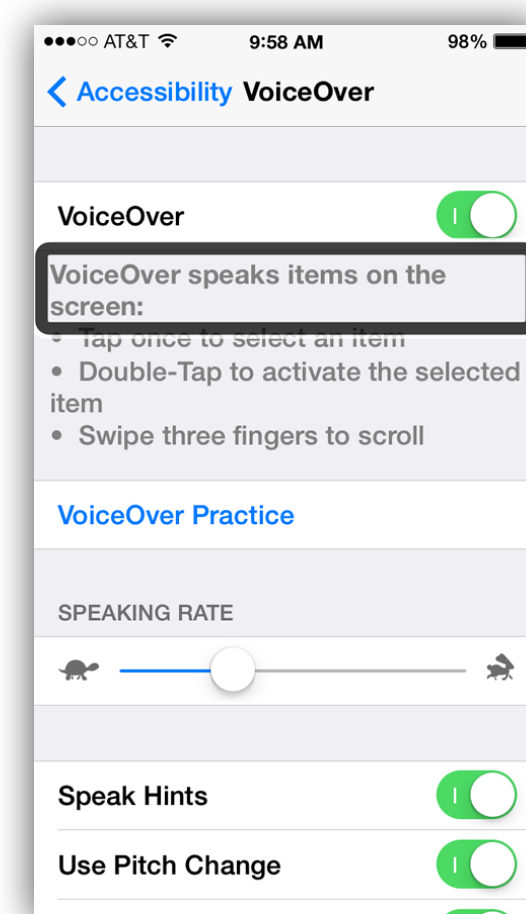
## Flippin' Our Brains: Disability Benefits Everyone

Jaimi Clifford and students in DIS 300, Faculty mentors: Stephen Gilson and Liz DePoy

Disability is often thought of as an object in need of change. Accordingly, products designed for disabled populations aim to improve function and help individuals adapt to their environments. Curiously and often unrecognized, products designed for the atypical and extreme human often find their way into mainstream use, improving the world for everyone. This presentation analyzes the process of disability product to commercial success. We illustrate the “disability” genesis of products such as Doc Marten footwear, speech-to-text and text-to-speech software and applications, automated doors, and closed captioning.



BLEEX-exoskeleton: for military and disaster relief personnel



VoiceOver: from hearing impaired technology to ubiquity



Jacuzzi: therapy to recreation



Tobii Eyegaze now for gamers



Doc Martens: from therapeutic to fad



OXO kitchen tools-arthritis to T. J. Maxx

### The influential factors and change process

- Population parameters shift (aging boomers)
- Commercial potential-money speaks (e.g., OXO)
- Distribution moves mainstream (e.g., rehab catalog to T. J. Maxx)
- The product has contemporary relevance (e.g., for multi-tasking)
- Seamlessness (anyone can buy and use it)
- Technology and science make it possible (exoskeletons)
- Aesthetic appeal (OXO kitchen tools)

### Benefits for disabled populations

- Stigma reduction
- Seamlessness
- Aesthetic appeal
- Sales outlet
- Cool factor



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