

Kurzweil Educational Systems

Customer Profile

Marc Terrance Thorne

Deputy Solicitor General, Trinidad and Tobago and Kurzweil 1000 User



Believe you **can**

The Situation

When Marc Terrance Thorne, the Deputy Solicitor General of Trinidad and Tobago, who happens to be blind, needs to read legal briefs or monitor and amend complex legal documents, he depends on Kurzweil 1000, reading software that makes printed or electronic text accessible to people who are blind or have limited vision.

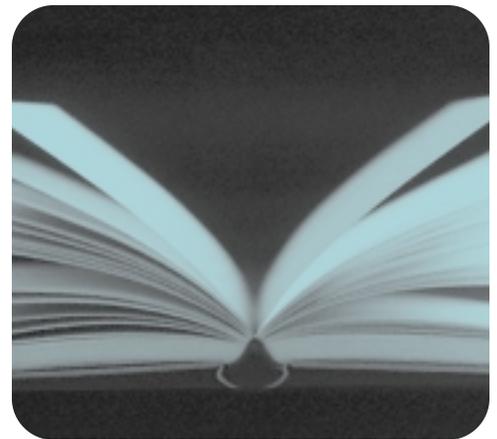
"Terry", as he is affectionately called, became State Counsel in 1981 after a brief period in private practice. In 1983, he lost his vision in his right eye as a result of radiation treatment for cancer of the nasopharynx. Unexpectedly, in 1985, he lost his vision in his left eye as well. Determined to continue his career, he underwent extensive training at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind where he was first introduced to Kurzweil reading technology. While impressed with the technology, Terry was unsure it could handle the complex and sometimes archaic language of legal case reports and documents. He chose, instead, to rely on assistants to read material to him and produce written work under his direction.

The Solution

Since losing his sight, Terry had hoped that improvements in technology would provide an avenue for greater productivity. In 1990, when a friend called his attention to a Newsweek magazine article about the updated Kurzweil Portable Reader, he was immediately interested. Kurzweil technology had changed in the five years since Terry's first encounter with it. New features had been added, it was less expensive, and far more portable than earlier versions. After some further investigation, Terry decided to purchase the Kurzweil Portable Reader as a back up for his secretaries and assistants.

As Terry's career progressed from State Counsel to Senior State Counsel and finally to Deputy Solicitor General, so did Kurzweil technology. The Portable Reader evolved into the current Kurzweil 1000 software. Using Kurzweil 1000 on a personal computer added a new dimension to Terry's

For more information on Trinidad and Tobago, please see www.gov.tt.



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Terry Thorne Deputy Solicitor

productivity. In addition to scanning and hearing text read back, he could now edit, mark and save files. "Not only was I more productive — I could do things in half the time it took to explain something to others — but I also experienced a new sense of freedom." Terry was now able to focus better, track information and formulate ideas with far greater ease as well as access and review documents when he needed them. In short order, Kurzweil 1000 became his principal tool for keeping an organized archive of important cases and quotes on hand for writing and arguing in court.

Kurzweil 1000 gave Terry the on-the-job independence he had long dreamed about and he found himself relying less and less on his assistants. He could use his assistants in a more traditional manner to gather information, and spend his own time in strategizing and case preparation. He now uses the auditory file management system to keep track of documents as well as such accessible features as bookmarks, searching, skimming and summarization to isolate the most important facts and concepts in court filings, transcripts or case reports. With Kurzweil 1000, Terry estimates he is able to increase the speed in which he handles cases by up to 25%.

The Results

With each product update, Terry has found new ways to use Kurzweil 1000 in his personal and professional life. As a replacement for the Braille printouts he uses in court, he's thinking of using portable note takers to make use of Kurzweil 1000's ability to exchange information with other assistive technology devices. Terry is also intrigued by Kurzweil 1000 features such as online book searching for the pleasure reading he continues to pursue, multi-level bookmarks for more refined indexing of his legal archives, and emphasis voice — the ability to associate unique voices with text which is italicized or underlined — to bring words to more vibrant life during his many hours of listening.

Terry's growing technical competence with Kurzweil 1000 has helped him keep pace with his increasing responsibilities. As second in command of the legal department of Trinidad and Tobago, he feels confident that he has the tools to meet whatever challenges his work presents. "Sometimes," Terry says jokingly, "I feel the people at Kurzweil Educational can read my mind. Just as I'm thinking that a particular feature would be nice, I find that it is available." Like any accomplished legal professional, Terry is quick to acknowledge the importance and competence of his office staff, but he is just as quick to place Kurzweil 1000 among his most trusted assistants.

Marc Terrance Thorne (cont.)



About Trinidad & Tobago

Trinidad is the most southerly of a chain of islands stretching from Florida in the United States to Venezuela in South America.

Tobago is situated 30 km to the northeast of Trinidad.

Christopher Columbus discovered Trinidad in 1498 and took possession of it on behalf of the Crown of Spain. It remained a Spanish colony until 1797 when it was captured by the British. In 1802, Trinidad was formally added to the British Crown.

Tobago remained unknown until 1596 and then for 250 years changed hands among the Dutch, English and French. In 1814, the island was ceded to the British and in 1889 Trinidad and Tobago united as one territory.

When Trinidad and Tobago achieved independence in 1962, a monarchy was created with Her Majesty the Queen of England continuing as Queen of Trinidad and Tobago. In 1976, after many years as a monarchy, Trinidad and Tobago became a Republic in its own right.

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