



Age:	45
Location:	London, UK
Marital status:	Married
Education:	Ph.D.
Job:	Professor
<b>Impairment:</b>	<b>Moderate motor problems</b>

## meet Caroline Combs...

Caroline Combs (45) lives with her husband Marc (48) and two children Anthony (18) & Robert (16) near London. She is a professor in Ancient History at the University College of London.

Caroline suffers from muscular dystrophy, causing weakness and stiffness in her upper limb muscles. Caroline is always very busy, when she does find some time to relax you will probably find her in her garden. If she is having a good day, she will trim some of the flowers that grow there.

### technology use

Caroline has been using her desktop PC with Windows XP installed for several years now. She often surfs on the internet to search for academic publications. Caroline doesn't like to travel, it can become very inconvenient with her sore muscles. That's why internet is a very important tool for her to stay in touch with her friends and family that don't live close by. She uses the computer in total up to 30 hours per week. She considers herself to be an advanced user, so when she can't figure something out within a reasonable timeframe, she blames the software or system.



Caroline can use the keyboard and mouse, but only for a very short time before she becomes too tired. That's why she likes the use of speech input and output on the computer. Caroline also has a few switches that help her open her favourite applications.

Caroline uses a basic mobile phone to call and send text messages. She bought a durable phone that supported assistive technologies. This was a very important argument to buy that particular phone. Besides the mere availability of assistive technologies, the phone also provided the possibility of changing and customizing many settings. She only tries to call someone when she is in a private place and can't be overheard.





## problems

- Caroline feels her mobile and computer often respond too slow, which sometimes confuses her into thinking she did something wrong.
- The buttons of her previous phone were very hard to push, especially in combination with the drop down keypad it was very uncomfortable.
- The phone has quite a few assistive capabilities but mastering the settings and learning how to use the phone is very difficult and time consuming.
- Plugging in the USB devices to her PC requires a lot of effort for Caroline. Not only are the USB-ports in a difficult location, it also requires quite some pressure to insert the cables correctly.
- Caroline never received thorough AT training and feels there's still a lot to discover.
- The missing consistency on web pages in relation to assistive features is another issue; especially social sites are very overwhelming.



## needs & wants

- Caroline wants a better connection to the phone from the computer. For example, she would find it much more convenient to access the mobile AT settings from her desktop.
- She feels she could benefit from good AT training for her computer.
- She wants a personalized page when accessing the internet that is compatible with her assistive technologies.
- Caroline needs a reliable handsfree for the phone.
- "I wish there was a facility where the user could hear the person on the mobile without anyone else overhearing. Usually the voice can be heard out loud"
- Caroline wants her PC to have more easily accessible USB ports or intuitive wireless connection means as an alternative.
- She could use voice recognition on her computer and mobile that has a higher success rate of understanding what she says.

## last month...

Caroline recently had to buy (yet again) a new mobile phone. It's not that she wants to be on the cutting edge, it's just that due to her condition, Caroline occasionally lets something drop out of her hands. Her previous phone was seldom in one piece, so this time she chose an extra solid one. According to Caroline, every phone on the market lacks grip when handling, that's why she bought a rubber skin as well. One problem remains however, she would like her mobile to be a bit heavier so it would have some more stability.