



Age:	25
Location:	Murcia, Spain
Marital status:	Single
Education:	High school
Job:	Unemployed
Impairment:	Blind

meet Paulina Reyes...

Paulina, born blind, lives in a very happy family in Murcia. She is the second oldest of four children; only the youngest one, Hernàn, is a boy. Paulina has a very good relationship with the oldest, Amelia (27). She was always around, especially at school, to help her out and support her. Due to her visual impairment, Paulina was unable to find a job after finishing high school. The only job oppor-

tunities she had required her to move, which Paulina and her family didn't like.

Paulina loves to go hiking with Amelia at the coast, and at the national parks just outside Murcia. She also loves music a lot; she discovered flamenco when she was little and visited Cordoba with her family. She started taking guitar lessons and by now she can really play quite well. But it wasn't easy in the beginning. She can't read regular music scores, so she had to resort to music Braille.

technology use

Paulina uses her PC (Win Xp) on a daily basis to use a text editor to write letters of job applications, and to visit Yahoo and check her emails using Internet Explorer. She tried Hotmail and later Gmail first, but there just was too much information on the page. So she ended up with Yahoo which works quite well with her Jaws screenreader.

She also uses OCR software, a Braille embosser and Adobe reader speech output. The combination of all these technologies enable Paulina to use her PC to a satisfactory degree. However, the investments she and her family had to make to acquire all this put quite some pressure on the family budget.



The Internet was also an enormous help in finding information, Braille music scores, and mp3 music.

Paulina bought herself a smartphone she uses practically all the time. Her choice for a smartphone had a lot to do with the ease of use and the recommendation of a friend, who is also blind. The device has large enough keys that provide lots of tactile feedback when pressed. Paulina uses it to call friends & family, texting, maintain her calendar and listen to audiobooks she downloads from the internet. She uses a VOCA to read her sms messages, but unfortunately the Spanish output often has a faulty pronunciation.



Recently she started using the GPS function to go hiking when nobody is around to go with her. Her mum is not very pleased with that idea because the park is definitely a different environment compared to a city where she can walk with her stick. If something happens in the city, she can always ask someone for help. Her mum says this is not the case in the park. Paulina then says she could always use her phone in those situations.





problems

- Paulina has some problems using Jaws; it occasionally crashes without any apparent reason and can only access certain programs.
- She is unable to install and start new software without the help of Hernàn. Only after he has done the initial setup is Paulina able to access the freshly acquired software.
- Paulina finds it difficult to find music scores in Braille because most of the websites dedicated to contemporary music are in English, which she doesn't really understand.
- Internet still holds many pitfalls for Paulina. Most sites are only accessible to a limited degree; especially flash sites, popups, graphic links and RIAs form a challenge when surfing online.



needs & wants

- Paulina uses quite a lot of assistive technologies but she can only do so in her home environment where everything has been setup especially for her. She would like to be able to use the AT in public places as well.
- Armed with her text-to-speech (TTS) software, she is a regular user of mobile internet to download her audiobooks and buy new music. However, this service is still rather expensive so Paulina is hoping prices will drop soon. She would use the internet connection on her PC more if it weren't so difficult to transfer data from her PC to her mobile.
- More RSS feeds could make even the most inaccessible online content available to Paulina through her RSS client.
- She needs batteries that have a longer life expectancy.
- She absolutely dreams of GPS navigation software that is fully compatible with her mobile voice output software.

last month...

Nowadays, more music is available in Braille which makes things easier; nonetheless, a lot of music still hasn't been transcribed into Braille. Paulina wants to do this via her computer, but she hasn't been able to get her screenreader software to work with the music software. By digitizing the music in the program she could generate the Braille score automatically. Sometimes her music teacher does this for her, but it requires a lot of time which he doesn't always have. Her brother Hernàn is studying informatics at the university and really knows how to get stuff to work, but even he still has not found a way to get it working. One configuration seemed to work at first; unfortunately, that configuration made her screenreader software crash quite often, which meant that she would lose her unsaved progress, and lose a lot of time rebooting and starting over once again.