



Realtime Captioning Resources

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What is Realtime Captioning?

Realtime captioning is the immediate word-for-word translation of the spoken word into text. A stenographer uses a stenograph machine to translate what she hears into spoken text. The stenomachine is connected to a computer that is loaded with software that converts the steno code into English text. The text is viewed either on a computer monitor or on a projection screen. Individual users tend to use only a computer monitor or a smartphone, while use of a projection screen is primarily seen in conference and meeting venues where multiple users are served.

When realtime captioning is projected onto a screen, using as many lines as the screen or monitor allows for, the process is called CART: Communication Access Realtime Translation. For example, at conferences, it is common to have a separate projection screen set up onto which the CART text is projected. The CART text covers the full space of the projection screen and scrolls upward as more text is added.

In contrast, when the text is limited to four lines or less, and is positioned below a primary image on a monitor or projection screen, it is referred to as captioning. For example, realtime captions can be projected on a screen below the video image of a speaker at a conference. The captions would be limited to four lines at most, placed directly below the image of the speaker.

What Should I Look for in Seeking a Realtime Captionist?

Just like signed language interpreters, realtime captionists have certifications. The National Court Reporters Association and the National Verbatim Reporters Association issue certifications when captionists successfully pass examinations. The certifications that you should look for are:

- CRR - Certified Realtime Reporter
- CBC - Certified Broadcast Captioner
- CCP - Certified CART Provider
- CVR - Certified Verbatim Reporter

Captionists should be able to translate 100% of what is said with a minimum of 96% accuracy.

Many companies offer both remote and onsite CART. Remote CART is when the captionist is located in a different location, but connected to the event via an Internet connection and phone connection.

Alternative Communication Services (ACS)

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