

Smart Caption Glasses

A transformative way of using AR to offer d/deaf and hard of hearing audiences access to theatre.

Producing theatre on the South Bank

Produce 25 original productions a year staged in our 3 theatres

91% seats sold

30% of our tickets cost £20 or less.

Touring

2017-18 there were 10 shows on tour in 36 towns and cities across the UK. All this added up to 115 weeks-worth of performances.

In Cinemas

NT Live broadcasts productions to 2,500 screens in 60 countries, including over 700 screens across the UK from Penzance to the Shetland Islands.

Worldwide

8 million engagements with us in 2017-18 through live theatre and events, NT Live broadcasts, television and radio broadcasts.

Open Captioning

- Only 5% of performances have open captioning or 3 or 4 specific open-captioned performances per production run
- Limited choice of performances, often matinees
- Limited seating options – have to be in view of the screens
- Can be distracting to other audience members & performers
- No significant service evolution since 2006

**National
Theatre**

*At the National Theatre, we make world-
class theatre that is entertaining,
challenging and inspiring.
And we make it for everyone.*

Open Access Smart Capture

Develop an automated 'always-on' Closed Captioning Service on every performance in all 3 of the NT's theatres.

Provide same accuracy as live captioning

Offer CHOICE and equality to d/deaf hard of hearing audiences, to come to any performance and sit in any seat, with family and friends.

Fulfil the NT's leadership role to raise the bar in the development and provision of inclusive access services for the arts sector as a whole.

**National
Theatre**

Smart captioning glasses trailer



Smart caption glasses rolled out in November 2018

- 80% of NT performances now captioned
- More immersive - less distracting
- **Free** to the user
- 228 users over 62 performances
- 53% not on the NT's Access list
- 36% never previously attended captioned performances
- 10% of users completely new to the National Theatre



Acclaimed as “a revolutionary new way for people with hearing loss to enjoy performances”, for once the blurb more than lives up to its billing

“truly innovative and potentially life-changingly good.”

“feel like the future coming to life in front of your very eyes”

“I just wanted to write and say how much I appreciated the opportunity to try the Smart Caption Glasses at last night's performance of War Horse. As I am hearing impaired you can not imagine the feeling of inclusiveness after many years of not being able to follow shows or avoiding them altogether.”

“Amazing. thank you, but now as an actor we have to be even MORE exact on our lines since folks can see them!.”

“It is a mind blowing realisation that we can now attend any mainstream performance at the National without being tied to special Access performances at limited times.”

Learnings that can be transferred to the application of SCG in Cinemas

- Booking, dispensing and collection of heads-up glasses with audience members
- Communicating reliably with multiple pairs of heads-up glasses.
- Delivering the required content at the right time
- A high quality, comfortable experience

Film content is 100% repeatable and plays out to a fixed and predictable timeline, which means that prepared timed captions and other access content will always be cued accurately. In that sense, the overall quality is potentially superior to that currently offered in a live environment

Current areas of focus

We are working to achieve end-to-end operability based on industry standard caption transfer and timing protocols, which will allow the caption data included in the media content played out from a conformant DCP to be accessed by the prototype display control system and distributed to heads-up glasses in the auditorium.

Where are we now?

Prototype software has been written and is available for testing, and we now await arrangements to be made for access to a conformant DCP with the test content.

Next

Testing as above and any software tweaks to protocol handling which arise as a result



Thank you

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