

Orbit Research and the Transforming Braille Group Announce Agreement to Produce Low-cost Refreshable Braille Display

WILMINGTON, DE – August 6, 2014 – Orbit Research LLC and the Transforming Braille Group LLC are pleased to announce an agreement to produce a low cost, refreshable braille display.

Orbit, an international engineering company based in Wilmington, Delaware, specialising in high quality, low cost products for blind and partially sighted people, will be undertaking the research, development and manufacture of this unique product.

The Transforming Braille Group LLC is a global consortium of organisations of and for the blind which is investing \$1m in the project.

The objective of the project is to produce a stand-alone 20-cell refreshable braille display for \$300 (or £200) which will bring refreshable braille within the reach of children in developing countries and will provide libraries in developed countries with a viable alternative to hard copy braille. The product will be launched at CSUN in 2016.

The display is designed to work through USB and Bluetooth connectivity with 'smart' phones and tablets. It is not intended to compete with high specification refreshable braille display already on the market, primarily used in education and employment but is intended to bring braille displayed e-books to a wide audience at an economical price.

"The agreement with TBG is a landmark in our journey to develop and manufacture essential products at an affordable cost through the application of mainstream technology in unique and innovative ways" said Dr. Gina Spagnoli, Orbit Research's Founder. "While each of our previous products has brought a multi-fold improvement in the state of the art in terms of performance, cost, size and features, we are thrilled that through this partnership with TBG, we will be able to offer a game-changing product that will impact the daily lives of millions of blind people across the world"

TBG President, Kevin Carey said: "At last we have a technology which will guarantee the survival of braille. It has been my long-standing, publicly stated objective to find a disruptive technology which will radically force down the cost of refreshable braille so that the world's digital content becomes available in a tactile format. This new device will bring braille within the price range of educators in developing countries and will enable most blind people to access e-books and other internet material without resorting to specialist libraries."

TBG estimates that its new product will retail at a unit cost less than 20% of the current market price.

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