



**AMERICAN  
PRINTING  
HOUSE** 

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Braille on Demand: Software Creates Equal Access to Learning Materials**

*BrailleBlaster revolutionizes text-to-braille transcription for students who are blind or visually impaired*

**LOUISVILLE, Ky.** (October 25, 2017) – When the braille code was introduced in the 1850s, it changed the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired, empowering them to read and write. The next major transformation is here: BrailleBlaster™ is revolutionary new software that translates text into braille—more quickly, easily, and accurately. This breakthrough means that, instead of waiting weeks or months to receive complete textbooks, braille reading students can have learning materials on the first day of class alongside their sighted peers.

The American Printing House (APH) for the Blind announced the launch of BrailleBlaster on October 12 at its Annual Meeting, marking a significant milestone in accessibility for braille readers.

BrailleBlaster efficiently converts print into braille, helping transcribers speed up the delivery of accessible materials. BrailleBlaster gives students with visual impairments the tools to keep pace with their sighted classmates. What’s more, BrailleBlaster is available to download at no cost to anyone who wants it.

“Making BrailleBlaster available for free is the right thing to do, and it reflects the American Printing House for the Blind’s commitment to making sure people who are blind or visually impaired have the same educational and entertainment opportunities as anyone else,” said APH President Dr. Craig Meador. “This innovative technology puts students with vision loss on equal footing with their sighted peers—letting them show everyone they can achieve just as much as anyone else, if they’re given equal access to information. We think everyone should be able to have this technology in their hands.”

BrailleBlaster can be used by braille transcribers, teachers, students, and parents—anyone who needs to produce braille material. Multiple features of this software provide the tools necessary to easily create a high-quality embossed braille textbook from an original publisher file using Liblouis ([liblouis.org/](http://liblouis.org/)), an open-source braille translator. Early testers of BrailleBlaster saw a substantial increase in the number of pages a braille transcriber could produce compared to current methods.

The BrailleBlaster project was adopted by APH after being initiated by APH, View Plus, and Abilitiessoft. For the past few years, APH and the BrailleBlaster team have sponsored and developed BrailleBlaster.



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[Learn more about the technology behind BrailleBlaster, which includes many special features, and download the software at \[brailleblaster.org\]\(http://brailleblaster.org\).](#)

### **About American Printing House for the Blind**

American Printing House for the Blind is a worldwide leader in designing innovative lifelong learning solutions for children and adults who are blind or visually impaired. In this fast-changing world, we believe in the power and necessity of learning to open the doors to educational success, satisfying employment, social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal well-being. We level the learning playing field by providing specialized technology, materials, products, and services that are essential for education and life. American Printing House for the Blind is headquartered at 1839 Frankfort Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky. For more information, please visit [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org).

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