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## **Assistive Technology 25 Years After the ADA**

*As the nation celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the [ACL Blog](#) is featuring guest posts from leaders in the disability community. In this post, Missouri Assistive Technology (AT) Director Marty Exline reflects on how AT advances the goals of the ADA and how the ADA has led to the development of newer and better technology.*

Some of us can remember AT in the years after the ADA was signed into law.

The Internet was in its infancy and a 1995 Newsweek article called the promise of the Internet “baloney.”

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices were big boxes that cost at least twice as much as some tablet AAC options available today. Speech recognition software was not available to most consumers in the early 1990s, and what was available had discreet word, not continuous speech, functionality. And video magnifiers (CCTVs) were available in limited and bulky sizes, and none of them had any OCR text recognition capabilities.

Assistive technology has made “reasonable accommodations” easier to achieve in employment. It has made home and community based services more available in long term care. And yes, it has even allowed businesses to have more accessible sites on that Internet fad thing that seems to still be around.

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