Steve Kelley CVRT, CRC, CATIS

[lowvisiontech@gmail.com](mailto:lowvisiontech@gmail.com)

[www.lowvisiontech.com](https://hadley0-my.sharepoint.com/personal/stevenk_hadley_edu/Documents/Documents/NEAER Conference/www.lowvisiontech.com)

# The Smart Choice May Be the “Dumb” Phone

1. Have you ever worked with a client new to vision loss and new to Smart Phones?
2. How did that work for you?

## **Here’s my story:**

Client goes into ATT store and walks out with the bottom of the line ZTE Android that is “accessible” according to salesclerk. Clerk also tells client that no one is using flip phones. They have turned Talkback on. Client is unable to make a phone call with this phone. I discover that Talkback immediately enters the number as soon as it is touched, making it virtually impossible for client to make a phone call.

The saga continues: more of my story:

VRT meets with local AT&T stores and discovers all models of client’s ZTE Android respond the same way with Talkback on. Flip Phones are, in fact, still offered but not always in display cases or even stocked in store. These include an Alcatel Go phone which has a text to speech menu. In fact, one clerk went so far as to say that the Alcatel was a much higher quality phone than the ZTE Smart Phone the client got.

## **What are the client’s goals?**

* Learn to use a smartphone and apps.
* Make a phone call with basic features.
* For assistance or emergency,

## **What are the options?**

* 1. Choose an iPhone for greater support and overall standardization—for the most part, they work the same way across the various models,
  2. Android training; [Hadley Android instructional video](https://hadley.edu/InstructionalVideos/Android.asp)
  3. Advocate for an accessible flip phone, even if it’s not on the display shelf.
  4. Search Gari (Global Accessibility Reporting Initiative) and other resources.
     1. “[Flip Phones for the Visually Impaired are Still Relevant](https://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/blog/flip-phones-visually-impaired-are-still-relevant),” Perkins
     2. February AccessWorld article, “[Accessible Cellphones Open Doors for People with Visual Impairments](https://www.afb.org/aw/20/2/14981).”
     3. “[Best Cell Phone for Visually Impaired and Blind](https://blogs.systweak.com/cell-phones-for-visually-impaired-and-blind/)”
     4. [GARI database at Access Wireless](https://www.accesswireless.org/find-accessible-devices/phones) (Global Accessibility Reporting Initiative) cited in the February AccessWorld article above article provides searchable accessibility features
  5. Gari Selections (using “Advanced Feature Search”): selections include voiced menus and screen reader plus other options. Advanced feature supports searching by type of phone, manufacturer, and many specific features for vision, hearing, dexterity, etc.
     1. [Sonim XP3](https://www.sonimtech.com/xp3/) flip phone
     2. [ZTE Z2321U](https://www.zteusa.com/catalogsearch/result/?q=Z2321U)
     3. [LG Exalt LTE](https://www.pcmag.com/review/358284/lg-exalt-lte)
     4. [Alcatel models](https://us.alcatelmobile.com/?s=flip+phones&tab=devices)
     5. Alcatel models overall offer many accessibility features.

## [**GreatCall Jitterbug**](https://www.greatcall.com/)

With some simple accessibility features

1. AccessWorld April 2019 “[A Review of the Jitterbug Flip and Smart2 Accessible Cell Phones from GreatCall.](https://www.afb.org/aw/20/4/16402)”
2. AccessWorld July 2019 “[The Jitterbug Flip Continued](https://www.afb.org/aw/20/7/16708).”
3. Jitterbug Features
   1. Voice Dial-software installed on the phone from GreatCall customer service. Users may initiate a call to a contact listed in the phone book by saying their name when prompted. Voice Dial is started when the phone is opened, replacing the dial tone.
   2. Unlimited Operator Assistance- this is available at no charge to users with a verified vision impairment. Confirmation of vision impairment must be sent on doctor letterhead with the phone number of the Jitterbug user. The letter may be faxed to: 858-724-2750, or mailed to:Attn: Care Ops VID Phone number or Acct number PO Box 4428 Carlsbad, CA 92018
      * 1. Place a call
        2. Directory assistance
        3. Access user’s phone book
        4. Additional features
   3. This feature is also available with the “Ultimate Health and Safety Package” for $34.95/month."
   4. Note: The Jitterbug Smart2 offers an Easy Mode that reduces apps and smartphone features to basic menus, much like Dolphin Guide on Windows.

## [**Blindshell**](https://www.blindshell.com/) **Classic Phone**

* New to the U.S., previously available in Europe
* Candy bar-style phone
* Hybrid with completely accessible apps, spoken menus, screen reader, and utilities for labeling, color ID, etc.
* U.S. Model available mid-November 2019 from [AT Guys](https://www.atguys.com/store/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=53&products_id=308&zenid=34b9416788cccee17ed626613dcf31f3) and LS&S Products for $349 and will use GSM Network (AT&T, T-Mobile)

## **Blindshell Classic Features**

1. Accessibility built-in, not bolted on
2. Screen reader options— option for voice, speed, intonation
3. Menu items-Large Print, Icons, Voiced
4. Built-in User Guide and Interactive Tutorial
5. Tactile, widely spaced, high-contrast buttons
6. SOS button speed dials a predetermined contact for assistance

## **Blindshell Classic Advanced Features**

Blindshell Classic may be used simply as phone to make and receive calls as easily as a basic flip phone. It also includes a variety of additional apps for those seeking additional features:

1. Alarm and timer
2. Email and text messages
3. Accurate dictation for notes, email and text
4. Color ID
5. Labeling app
6. FM radio and Internet radio (where are the Radio Reading Services)
7. Media Player (includes both audio and book player)
8. “Localization,” GPS coordinates or nearest address