

My experience with accessibility, for Smart Phones and the like has been hit and miss. I was a guinea pig, as it were, for an HTC My Touch Slide Android phone, through T-Mobile, in recent months. There was little, if any documentation or Tutorial information, sent along with the phone and the interface was next to impossible to figure out how to access. I write these words, to inform the FCC about Google's lack of attention, to helping visually impaired people to utilize the Android platform, the concentration being, rather, on marketing, than on actual accessibility!

I am not a "tech geek", which means that my knowledge of Smart Phones, is limited, at best. I began trying to get tutorial information, on the Android phone, several months before the phone actually was in my possession. It was a daunting task, trying to figure out what was going on, on the Eyes Free blogs or on the You Tube recordings, whose audio (the latter) was overmodulated and hard to understand, due to the accent of the person giving the verbal tutorial. The Apps for Android web site was, to my way of thinking, mainly a marketing and "Mission Statement" tool.

I had been using the Owasys 22C Screenless Phone, prior to trying out the HTC My Touch Slide. The Owasys 22c, made in Spain, was a workhorse, but, to my knowledge, is soon going to go out of production, due to lack of interest! It had large buttons, a serviceable contacts section (or phone book, if you will), could allow one to send text messages and receive voice mail , as well. I had to give the T-Mobile phone back, to the provider, then switch back to A T & T, to get an iPhone, in order to get towards anything like accessibility, on a Smart Phone! I am slowly learning the iPhone, which is slightly more accessible, than other phones that I have tried, in the past. A T & T used to be more responsive, but has become a lot more bureaucratic, in recent years, to my way of thinking, but, after several days of trying to get things done, I was able to get the iPhone into my possession; the bureaucracy is another story, altogether! I am formerly sighted, which puts me into a unique niche, where trying to utilize some of these technologies is a daunting task, as I said above, all unto itself. Any help, that can be given, to visually impaired people, in getting to the point where they can use this new technology would be a boon, both to the customer and to the manufacturer, as more people will certainly become clients of the manufacturers and the providers, should such help be ongoing!

