TEA: The Evaluation Assistant
Non-expert caregiver support for evaluation of clients with disabilities and their assistive technologies

Overview: There are hundreds of assistive technology tools on the market many of which attempt to assist the widest possible range of clients, each having unique combinations of cognitive, physical and sensory abilities. While this allows many to potentially benefit, it makes selection and configuration of the tools complex. Currently approximately one-third of all tools designed to empower people with disabilities are abandoned.

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Identifying and personalizing assistive technology (A.T.) to meet the unique characteristics of an individual and the skills they wish to acquire is a time consuming and expert process. The goal of TEA is to provide caregivers with the means to make appropriate recommendations and configurations regarding A.T.

TEA is intended to help non-expert caregivers evaluate clients and recommend appropriate assistive technology tools by
- identifying relevant questions and systems for caregivers to answer them, in order to make appropriate technology choices,
- analyzing the sub-skills involved in the tasks that clients wish to accomplish,
- forming recommendations based on the unique characteristics of the client and
- assisting with the manual and, in some cases, automatic configuration of A.T.
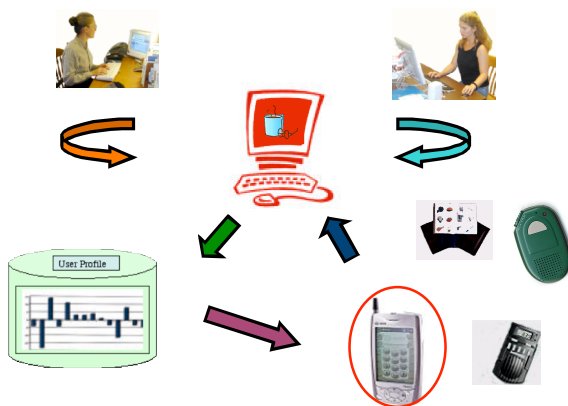
TEA:
- Solicits information about the client's cognitive, sensory and physical strengths as well as environment.
- Assesses client on features not measured through traditional methods.
- Develops recommendations of appropriate assistive technologies.
- Aides in the configuration of A.T.
- Assists with reconfiguration based on feedback data.

Current Status:
- Surveyed assistive technology assessment tools currently in use.
- Delineating which client features should be measured and used by the recommender and configuration systems.
- Exploring strategies for building a comprehensive and flexible assessment architecture for client features not already measured through traditional means.