



**BARTIMEUS**

**CONSULTING**

## The use of ICT with clients with multiple disabilities and visual impairment (MDVI)

### Enabling client independence

Bartiméus is a nation-wide organisation in the Netherlands that provides personal advice and support to individuals with a visual impairment, and to those who are professionally or personally involved with them. A proportion of our clients live, work and receive education within the organisation's regional centres.

### Mission

When life, learning, working and living with a visual impairment raises questions, Bartiméus is there to provide a personalised and professional answer.

It is our vision to enable visually impaired people to lead full and independent lives; with the right provisions individuals with sight loss can participate in society independently with equal access to resources.



When a person has multiple (intellectual and physical) disabilities in addition to sight loss, overcoming the challenge of enabling access and independence requires specific adaptations and strategies. Bartiméus has developed a range of innovative products and leads ongoing projects specifically for clients with MDVI.

Information computer technology (ICT) offers powerful possibilities for people with multiple disabilities. Technology interfaces can be adapted to accommodate different access requirements. Bartiméus has developed and implemented various products for clients with MDVI:

- **B-Link:** This program enables people with moderate to severe learning difficulties who are blind or partially sighted to participate in an on-line community and independently communicate via e-mail (audio and video messaging) to friends and family.

The website [www.b-link.nl](http://www.b-link.nl) is fully self-voicing and combines high-contrast graphics and pictograms with an easy-to-use log-in and navigation structure. The community provides information and entertainment (a jukebox) as well as serving as a social network.

- **Digital Lifebook:** When an individual has severe (and progressive) cognitive disabilities, it can be very important for them to have a 'memory book' with a collection of photos with text that represent their most important memories. They can access these with the help of a carer. The digital lifebook is a web-based resource that enables the creation of personalised lifebooks containing self-voicing pictures, movies and sounds. With the digital version individuals with MDVI, including those with no remaining vision, can independently access their lifebooks and can choose what content to use. The format is flexible, which means that clients can also use the tool to watch youtube movies or listen to their favourite songs.
- **Sound Sofa:** From a distance the Sound Sofa looks like any ordinary sofa, but when you take a seat you will be in for a surprise! With integrated vibro-acoustic speakers, movement sensors, switches

and RFID readers, anyone who sits on it (regardless of age or ability) can trigger a series of cause-and-effect events, from conducting an orchestra to unleashing a hoard of elephants! The sofa is fun but also encourages interaction, exploration and sensory stimulation.

- **Models and maps** can help us understand indoor and outdoor environments. Bartiméus is currently redeveloping its centre for people with MDVI. The use of tactile models with RFID labels enables our clients to familiarise themselves with the new layout of the centre, including the residential accommodation and the layout of furniture in their new apartments. The use of RFID enables these individuals to independently activate and listen to 'audio labels' on each part of the models and maps.

All of these products are available from Bartiméus. Bartiméus can also advise and assist in the development of new products and welcomes cooperation with international partners. The Accessibility Foundation is an initiative developed through Bartiméus, and provides expertise in the area of accessible website and product design (such as the Sound Sofa).

We welcome contact and exchange with individuals and organisations with expertise within the field of MDVI. If you would like to know more, please get in contact with Dick Lunenburg: [dlunenburg@bartimeus.nl](mailto:dlunenburg@bartimeus.nl)



Would you like to know more about the possibilities at Bartiméus? Then go to [www.bartimeus.nl](http://www.bartimeus.nl)



or contact the Bartiméus Info Line  
0900 - 77 888 99 (€ 0,05 p/m)



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