



ALDAcon 2006  Paper 17 of 22

EMERGENCY TECHNOLOGY IN TELECOMMUNICATION

John Kinstler

JOHN KINSTLER: How many of you have a CapTel phone? How many of you have no clue what a CapTel phone is? Well, I'm glad you're here.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I don't believe they have it in Georgia.

JOHN KINSTLER: No, not yet. Not yet. That's why we need people like you to empower other people to sign up and scream for it: "We need a CapTel phone!" But we can talk about that, about how you can get a CapTel phone in your state.

I've been working with CapTel customer service for so many years, and I've been seeing CapTel grow from the trial to the way they are now. I've been with CapTel/Ultratec for over six years. I use it every day. I have a sister who is deaf also, and she uses CapTel. And my mom is elated that we have CapTel now because we don't have to keep saying, "What? What? What? What?" How many of you have experienced the frustration of not being able to understand what people are saying on the phone? (Show of hands) Or how many of you tend to keep conversations short because you're afraid of having to figure out what people are saying all the time? Now I find myself using CapTel, I use it all the time; that I have a longer conversation with the person, the way it should be. Nobody should be without a phone. Nobody should be taken away from communicating with their loved ones.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I would just like to make a comment for the people in Georgia.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Frank from New Jersey. We did not have CapTel in New Jersey until last year, and we put a lot of pressure on the State of New Jersey, specifically the phone companies, to provide CapTel service. It took two years, but we finally got it last year. So for those of you in Georgia, don't give up!

JOHN KINSTLER: Thank you. Thank you. Right now, we are growing, growing, growing. We're opening up another call center in Milwaukee. We have a call center in Madison, Wisconsin, and now we're setting up another call center in Milwaukee because we are growing. Customer service before, in the past, was just me. With all these trials, how many of you were involved in the CapTel trial? (Show of hands) Remember those evaluation forms you had to fill out? All of those evaluation forms came to me and I had to go through them all, look for any problems, share them with the marketing department, share them with the engineering department, and with research and development on how to improve the phones. So we thank you all for being involved in the trials to help us perfect CapTel.

We will talk more about advocacy and getting CapTel in your state if you don't have it. (Phone ringing) Is the phone ringing?

INTERPRETER: Yes.

JOHN KINSTLER: Okay. CapTel. It is an amplified telephone that includes written word-for-word captions of everything the caller says. The captioned telephone allows you to listen to the other person as well as receive captions of everything said. Now it can do more.

How many of you use VCO, voice carryover? (Show of hands) Then you know how it is non-active. You have to say, "Go ahead" and you don't hear the other person speaking; then you have to read, and then finally when you get the "go ahead," then you get to speak. Then we got two-line VCO where you could hear the other person. It's cumbersome to set up because you have to do flash, hold, you have to tell the relay operator to type in abbreviations, and then call. It was a wonderful feature, but what good is it if you don't know how to set it up?

My mom doesn't even know how to read the remote control for the VCR. (Laughter) She's comfortable with going up to the VCR, pushing a button and going back and sitting down. So two-line VCO is not a great thing for some people. For those in states who don't have CapTel services, they will be using two-line VCO. CapTel is an enhanced product of two-line VCO.

Basically, how does it work? You need to have a CapTel phone. The CapTel phone itself dials to our call center, where we have the live operator to listen in to what the hearing person is saying, and revoicing everything verbatim through a voice recognition software program. When you pick up the handset, you first automatically dial into the CapTel call center, which is dialing to the person you're calling, too. With the traditional relay you have to tell the operator, "Please enter in this number, I want to dial this

number and call," and then they make the call. CapTel has made it simple.

The CapTel CA, the communication assistant, is invisible. It is unlike a traditional relay, where the operator might intervene and ask the hearing party to talk more slowly, or say, "I'm sorry, I'm still typing. Please wait." It's intrusive. It's like a third person is involved in the call. My mom hated that because my mom talks a mile a minute. When the operator said "Please slow down," my mom would wait. When the CA said, "Okay, carry on from there..." then my mom would have already lost her train of thought. Also, the hearing party would have to dial the traditional relay voice number, before dialing the number of the person she wanted to reach.

With CapTel, the CA simply listens to the hearing person's voice, revoices what the hearing person is saying verbatim. CA's do not change whatever the hearing person is saying. They repeat everything word for word. They say it through a voice recognition software program, which then gets transcribed into captions on the HH or deaf receiver's CapTel phone.

Basically, you need a CapTel phone, and a connection to the caption call center. Most people think, "Oh, I can just have this CapTel phone here and dial 711." 711 is an entirely separate call center. 711 exists for traditional relay. We are able to provide you with faster captions on the display screen than possible if a person just typed. People speak 120 words to 180 words per minute, but it's impossible for a CA to type that fast. With voice recognition, it comes through faster.

Here's how the CapTel phone works. Behind the scenes, a specially-trained operator at the captioning service transcribes everything the other party says into written text using the very latest voice recognition technology. As the hearing person is speaking, the operator listens and revoices the words through the software program so that the words show up on the display screen. We're talking three to four seconds delay. If the person says, "Hi, how are you" -- one, two, three, four, and then the words show up.

The CapTel user can talk back and forth with the hearing party, since you can hear the other person and you can talk to them. You don't need to say "Go ahead." You can if you want to, because some CapTel users cannot hear at all, but they can speak. They can use CapTel. But they have a hard time knowing when the person is done speaking, so the speaker needs to say "Go ahead" after she's done speaking.

The benefits of using CapTel are you can call in a natural manner. You can dial directly! You pick up the phone and dial the number! No CA interaction. You don't need to say, "CA, please explain to me -- like I need you to do this, I need you to enter in my account number." No interaction. Since the CA is never heard by the other party, the CapTel users have to explain to the other party that they are deaf or hard of hearing, and how to use the captioning service, if necessary.

There are no complicated procedures to follow. All words, sounds, emotions, are present. And another nice thing about CapTel is you can interrupt when needed. If a person is talking too much, like my mom, for example --(Laughter)-- I can interrupt her.

Another nice thing is the ease in managing those menus. How many of you use the traditional relay to call a number where you have to press 1, press 2, press 3, etc.? Lots of times the menu choices go by too fast and you're not able to enter in the numbers fast enough or tell the operator, "Please enter 2." Then, they say, "Sorry, we need to call again." It's so frustrating. I'm on my lunch break and I don't have time to do this. I should be able to access my bank account like a hearing person should on their lunch break. How do I do that with CapTel? Simply push the buttons. You don't need to wait for all the captions to show up. If you can hear what's being said, go ahead and start entering the numbers. You have full control of your own call.

With two-line, which we will talk about in a minute, you can ask for all incoming calls to have automatic captioning support. The difference between one-line and two-line is, one-line you only have one phone line to dial out. Not a problem. But for incoming calls, the hearing people have to dial a toll-free 800 number to set up captions for you. But with two-line, which means you have another phone line with a different number hooked up to the CapTel phone. By the way, your state needs to offer two-line. The CapTel has to be turned on in menu options, which means that any incoming call, telemarketing calls, job interview calls, anybody would be captioned automatically provided by the second line.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How do you know if your state offers this service?

JOHN KINSTLER: I have a list here, and the states that are in white do not offer CapTel service. However, people who are involved in the federal CapTel program or work for the federal government or a retired veteran or belong to a Native American tribe can get a CapTel phone through the federal CapTel program anywhere in the United States. What state are you from?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ohio.

JOHN KINSTLER: We have CapTel in that state. Any other questions before I move on? Yes?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm a little confused about the two-line. So let's say you live alone. You have one phone, and that's the CapTel. Why do you need two lines?

JOHN KINSTLER: The CapTel phone dials out to the call center. You have text and voice on that line. Right? Now, when I pick up the phone, it automatically dials out to the caption center. But when people call me, they're calling on a voice line. The CapTel phone does not have that connection to the caption call center, and they say, "Oh, I need to make that connection to the call center to provide captions." So I need a second line to go outbound, get connected, and be conferenced in to listen in on Line 1.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Does that mean that you need a second telephone number?

JOHN KINSTLER: Yes.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh, I didn't understand that, because people will call me at home, and we have one number and...

JOHN KINSTLER: Right. So what happens when CapTel is in a one-line mode, you have to give your friends and relatives and your doctor, etc. a CapTel 800 number. You tell them, "If you want to call me, you have to call this number first. It's a toll-free number." When they call that number, they hear a recording which says, "Please enter the area code and phone number of the person you are calling, followed by the pound sign." The person calling you enters your phone number, and then your phone will ring. You pick up the handset and the caption light comes on. That means that incoming call will be captioned. If the caption light does not come on, that means it is not a captioned call and you need to say, "Please call me back at the CapTel voice number," and you give them the CapTel voice number. That's one-line mode.

With two-line CapTel, you can just call my number direct. When I pick up the phone, and make sure the caption light is on, it will dial out on the second line to conference in CA who is listening.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If the family has hearing people, do you have different number for yourself?

JOHN KINSTLER: No. You can use the same primary number that you always had. The second number is just an additional line, you can use this line for a fax machine, for example, but the phone itself needs to be able to dial out. You can't dial out on the same line that you're on because that's being used. So you need two different phone numbers hooked up to the CapTel phone.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Of course the work-around with a single line is to have caller ID and say, "I need to call you back and get captions."

JOHN KINSTLER: You can do that. With a CapTel phone, you can have caller ID show up on the display screen, but you have to pay for the caller ID service. It's the same with regular phone service. People have to pay for the second phone line.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If you have one of the first CapTel phones from the trial which I do, does that have a two-line?

JOHN KINSTLER: You have the one-line. If you have a trial phone still, that needs to be exchanged.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Suppose the person uses that 800 number to call you and you're not there, and it's left on an answering service. When you call back, will the CapTel work with the voice mail?

JOHN KINSTLER: No. If a hearing person calls you through the CapTel voice number and it goes through your voice answering machine, a series of beeps will be heard and the caller will be asked to please leave a message. There will be captions. Right, but you have to call back. I mean you can't really call back from the answering machine to then play the message back, unless you want to call back and use the CapTel captioning external answering machine. That's a feature where you can actually place the handset on the answering machine and press "Play" and then it will caption whatever message is left on the machine.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm hard of hearing, and I have problems with word comprehension, word recognition. I still do well on the phone. I envision listening to somebody in real time and I envision a little bit of a delay with the captioning. Would this be confusing for me, or would I turn off the voice and just do the captioning?

JOHN KINSTLER: I'm a CapTel user myself, and now I have an 80% gain with my cochlear implant. When I first tried to use the CapTel, it was very confusing for me because I'm hearing something and then I'm reading something that's slightly delayed, and then I have to think about what am I going to say and I just couldn't do it. What I found that was helpful for me was to listen first. If you have the ability to really hear with your hearing aid or implant, try to listen first. If you're not sure what is being said, just tell the person to hold on and then read the captions. You have about five lines to read to catch up. Or if it's going too fast, you need to tell the person to slow down. So, yeah, it takes a while. You have a tone switch on the CapTel phone which allows you to be able to hear a little bit better and there's a volume boost as well.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If you have a one-line CapTel phone and you want to convert to two-line, how do you activate the phone after you get the second line? What's the procedure?

JOHN KINSTLER: First, a customer service representative, myself, will find out if your state offers two-line. If it does, we can simply send an over-the-wire update to your CapTel phone. You won't need to send your CapTel phone to us. The next time you make a captioned call, it will pick up this update, and then we would send you instructions on how to turn it on.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: But how will you know that I ordered the second line? How do we notify you?

JOHN KINSTLER: First, I would ask you what your second line is. Some people think that they can get one phone line and get a duplex jack and split it into two and put both

those lines in, thinking they have two different lines. That's why I always ask them, "What's the number for phone Line No. 1, what's the phone number for phone Line No. 2." So I have to step by step try to make it clear that CapTel needs to have two different analog lines. Then, I can go ahead and activate your CapTel phone for two-line, just as you need to contact your phone company and order a second analog line. When you do that, you don't need to have anything fancy on that line. The phone company will push for all of this fancy stuff on it but the second line is only going to be used for the toll-free number. So when they say, "Do you want this, do you want this package, do you want caller ID?" You say, "No, no, no, no, no."

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How do I get in touch with you or CapTel to tell you that I have a second line so you can activate the phone?

JOHN KINSTLER: Call CapTel customer service number that's in your manual. It's 1-888-269-7477. We will need the serial number on the bottom of the CapTel phone. Make sure that you have two different phone numbers, because we would check that. Then we would send you instructions on how to use two-line. It's very easy.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a CI. I may have missed something that you've already said, but I can't just get CapTel on my own? It has to be something provided in the state?

JOHN KINSTLER: It depends on which state you're from. Some states provide the CapTel phone for free. Some, you have to purchase it for a certain price. There are so many states that offer different programs. So what state are you from?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Georgia.

JOHN KINSTLER: Georgia. There are no CapTel services in that state yet, so you need to put on your boxing gloves and start fighting.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a recommendation for the woman from Georgia. If your state has a department for the deaf and hard of hearing, contact them. Tell them you heard about the CapTel phone, and you really want your state to offer it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm from the state of Virginia, and that's how we got started in the first place.

JOHN KINSTLER: You can also contact CapTel customer service and give us your name and contact information. We keep a list of people, and then should your state be ready to offer it, we contact you that CapTel is ready for your state and here's how you can get one. But before that, you need to get connected with a bunch of people in your state and fight for it. Scream for it. Say "We want a CapTel phone."

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm from Georgia too. And I want to know if I were lobbying for this, do I have to lobby for two lines? If you have to lobby for two lines, it doubles the cost. So do you have to have two lines if you're totally deaf?

JOHN KINSTLER: No, you don't have to have two lines. You can use the CapTel on your one line, the phone line that you have now. You don't need to have a second line to be able to see the captions on the display screen.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What about if you have Internet?

JOHN KINSTLER: That is something that our engineering department is looking into. We are ready for what we call Internet Protocol. Internet connection. But FCC has to approve it. So right now, that's all I can say about that. I'm going to go and finish the presentation because some of your questions may be answered by some of the slides that I'm going to be going through.

With two-line CapTel, you can turn the captions on or off anytime during the call, so if I have a hearing person in my household that does not need captions, I can just turn it off and give them the phone. Then if the phone comes back to me, I can press the caption back on and it dials back out the second line to conference in the captionist. With two-line, 911 is fully supported by the call centers, there is a 911 call taker. With two-line, you can dial internally to an extension and transfer inside offices.

Features on the CapTel phone. The CapTel phone has a caption button. It has a volume control. It goes up to 18 dB. And it has a volume boost which brings it up as high as 35 dB. Then it has a tone control for some people who hear high tones, some people who hear low tones. When you get your CapTel phone, make sure the tone switch is set on low first because a lot of times when it's all the way up to high and people can't hear high tones and they say, "I can't hear anything." So the first question I ask: "What setting is the tone switch on?" Try bringing it down lower.

Then we have graphic meters which are designed to help those who have no capability of hearing whatsoever, they don't use hearing aids, they don't have any means of hearing with their ears, but they can speak. The problem with that is that they don't know when the person has stopped speaking, so they don't know when to start speaking. We put in a signal meter, which is way up here (indicating). It flickers when the person is speaking. When it stops flickering, that means it's quiet. And you need to say, "Hold on one second. I'm reading captions." A lot of times people with a cochlear implant or on T-coil, telecoil have no way of regulating their voice. The graphic meter helps me regulate my voice.

Then we have a redial and speed dialing especially for those who are trying to remember a long distance number within the certain amount of time that is provided. When you pick up the handset before the CapTel phone connects to the call center, you have to enter all the numbers fast, or the call center will not get all of those numbers.

That's where you can use the speed dialing to enter in those numbers quickly for you (snapping fingers).

Another nice thing about CapTel is you can review conversations up to 500 lines. First in, first out. You can review conversations during the call or after the call.

This next feature is external answering machine messages. You simply go to menu, select captioned external answering machine messages, place the handset next to the answering machine, press play, and it's captioned.

The CapTel phone also has an audio jack because from the evaluations we received from cochlear implant users, and people who use hearing aids, they say, "Well, I wanted to use it with hands-free. I don't want to have to hold onto the hearing set all the time." Or, "I'm busy on the computer and I don't want to have a crick in my neck." I plug it into here, or I have a neck loop, which allows me to hear with both with both ears, and talk in a handset like this (indicating).

So the CapTel features: Caller ID, so if you own or rent a caller ID box from the phone company, you don't have to do that anymore. We can have caller ID show up on a display screen. Captioning external answering machine messages is another feature. And we have Spanish to Spanish captioning. We have a way of having the volume boost always on. We can have pulse or tone dialing settings.

You can call to a voice mail number. You can retrieve answering machine messages, and you can press touchtone selections for menu options.

Using auto-attendant telephone systems with CapTel, users press touchtone keys to select menu options they want during the call. You do not need to call back.

And the hours of service are 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Central Standard Time 7 days a week, every day of the year.

Here's my favorite: CapTel USB. I use it every day at work in customer service. With the CapTel USB, I have the ability to hook it up to my computer and see larger captions. And as with anything on your computer, you can change the font sizes, italics, font style, or if it's Halloween and you want a scary font like monster font, whatever style you want. So with CapTel USB, you control the size, color and font style of the captions on the computer screen for reading ease. Choose large font sizes, high-contrast colors, or special fonts to create optimal viewing. And with that, you can save and print conversation captions on your computer.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Would that work with a Mac also?

JOHN KINSTLER: No, it's not compatible with Macintosh or Linux operating systems. You need Windows.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If you have your CapTel phone in one room and the computer in another, for this feature do you have to run a connection between the two?

JOHN KINSTLER: I think at some department stores you may be able to purchase a long USB cable. I just hope you don't trip. If you want to use it with your CapTel USB, the CapTel phone needs to be near that computer, because you need to be able to talk into it and read the captions.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you have more than one CapTel phone? Could you have two of them?

JOHN KINSTLER: You can have two CapTel phones in your home. But only one CapTel phone will be on the line. If you try to use that other phone, you wouldn't, because it's using the same line, just like any other phone extensions.

JOHN KINSTLER: Now, I'm going to demonstrate the CapTel phone. And CapTel USB. When you get the CapTel USB, you will get an installation disk. It comes with the box. It's here somewhere. And You get step by step installation instructions and when it's done, you would have it on your desktop, as you can see right up here (indicating) Let's make a phone call. Anybody want to make a phone call to somebody? Let's call CapTel customer service. So I'll put my implant on "T" for telecoil.

(captioned) Thank you for calling CapTel customer service. May I help you?

JOHN KINSTLER: Hello, this is John.

(captioned) Hi, John.

JOHN KINSTLER: Hi. How are you?

(captioned) Great. How about you?

JOHN KINSTLER: Good. I'm doing a demonstration and this call is being viewed by many people.

JOHN KINSTLER: Done! Now, the computer will then ask me if I want to save conversation. I'm going to press, "Cancel." If I wanted to print it, I could change the font and color, whatever I want, and I have that call saved. Isn't that nice?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Do you need any program on your computer to read the captions?

JOHN KINSTLER: No, because we have an installation disk and you can put it on the computer. You just need to make sure that the requirements are Windows 98, SE, Windows ME. The CapTel phone has a standard USB port. Your computer needs to

have a USB port connection. We give you the installation CD-ROM drive, and on that CD-ROM, we have Adobe Acrobat "Reader," and you need to have administrative rights. But it's not compatible with Macintosh or Linux computers.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: You can convert your captioning from the CapTel to a computer but can you also put it on a cell phone?

JOHN KINSTLER: You mean CapTel cell phones? Wireless captioning? The engineering department is working on that. The UK, England is working on that right now.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you explain 911 a little bit, because I do a lot of training with 911.

JOHN KINSTLER: When the CapTel dials to a 911 call center, the CapTel phone converts to VCO. That is so the regional 911 call center would have your phone number and know where to send the emergency service vehicles to. Also, all 911 centers have been trained on how to handle VCO calls. Why reinvent the wheel? Otherwise, we would have to retrain everybody all over again, all over the United States, on how to use the caption service. The CapTel phone will convert to VCO mode, which means the captions that you see on the display screen will only coming from a 911 call taker while they're typing on the TTY. It would not be the same as from the caption call center where we use voice recognition.

Now, with two-line, you're connected with the 911 voice line. They have your first number. The second line, it doesn't matter. The second line conferences in the captionist, so it doesn't matter. You still have the first number connected to the 911 center. And the captioning is provided by our call center from the support of the second line.

For call waiting, you get a beep signal on the first line. The captionist hears "beep" and puts in parentheses "beep." That means, oh, I got another call. Hold on. And go to just whoever is calling you on that first line.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I somehow hook into a corporation's phone system with the CapTel? And how do I do that?

JOHN KINSTLER: CapTel has to be hooked up to an analog phone line. Most businesses are digital. It would not be compatible to work on a digital network until we have the Internet protocol coming up. But CapTel cannot work on any other line other than analog.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have two lines. One line goes to the CapTel. My other line goes to a fax machine and a DSL Internet. Do I need a third line?

JOHN KINSTLER: No. You need to make sure when you have DSL that you have an in-line filter in place. In-line filter. But, yeah, you can use one line, and the second line can be a DSL line. So you need to make sure you have an in-line filter.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: The DSL line also goes to the fax machine.

JOHN KINSTLER: If the fax machine is being used, then it won't be able to dial out.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Will the fax machine pick up before the phone picks up?

JOHN KINSTLER: If that second line is being used, the fax machine line would be busy because the CapTel phone is using the second line. If you get a fax coming in, the CapTel line would be busy because that line is being used.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: This is a rather more general question, John. I come from England, the other side of the Atlantic. We do have CapTel, but it is not funded by the state or by the government or anybody else. We have to pay for it. I have it and it costs \$1.75 a minute. Now, my question is: Here in the USA, where does the funding come from, if it comes from the state, where does the state get the money from?

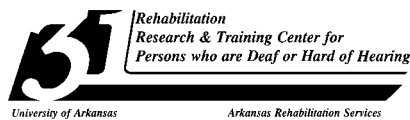
JOHN KINSTLER: Taxes. When people pay taxes for phones, everybody -- Okay? Moving on... Here's a testimony of someone I just want to share with you. In two-line, this lady says, "I just used the 2-line CapTel feature. It's awesome! I can now pick up the telephone when it rings with confidence."

Here's another testimony: "Now I'm able to use a five-digit extension number calling other people inside the university. It was working verry sweet! Coworkers are happy they don't have to remember two different phone numbers." Here's another one. "Our community, we can't tell you which one it is because of confidentiality. "has a rolling automated calling system for emergencies. I received a call telling me to boil water because it was not safe to drink. Without CapTel, I would not have been able to understand a word."

This is our website, I'm going to take you right into there. Now, when you go to www.captionedtelephone.com, the first page you will see is this (indicating). It explains to you how it works. Here's what people have said about CapTel. You can ask questions. Maybe some of your questions aren't going to be answered. There's information about two-line. News and awards. So this website explains everything, and people over here were talking about federal CapTel. You can click here to learn more about it. And then there's information on how you can do that. If you're from, let's say, Texas, click on the state and get information about how you can get a CapTel phone. And that concludes our presentation for CapTel. It's now time for lunch! I will still be here to answer any questions. Thank you for coming. Thank you, interpreters.

Biographical

John Kinstler has been employed by Ultratec since 2000 working in both the marketing and Cap Tel Customer Service Departments. He has provided numerous presentations and training sessions on CapTel and personally has been using Cap Tel since the onset of the technology trials in 2001. John previously worked as a professional Deaf Actor traveling the country with three different companies, Sunshine Too, National Theatre of the Deaf and Cleveland Sign Stage Theatre. He conducts workshops on various topics focusing on Deaf Culture, Disability and Empowerment as well as stand up Comedy.



Edited by:

Douglas Watson and Carolyn Piper

Formatted by:

Wanda Simon