

## First professional workstation for the visually impaired at DRS1

Yvonn Scherrer, a visually impaired editor at DRS1, has a new workstation at her disposal since February 2009. A unique software environment together with a special keyboard allows her to mix feature radio presentations independently. This is certainly revolutionary for Yvonn Scherrer, but also for other visually impaired individuals who work extensively with sounds.

Today, radio journalists produce their features presentations using the "self-directed" method. They not only cut original sounds themselves, but they also mix the feature "on their own initiative". This presents great challenges to visually impaired editors like Yvonn Scherrer, who is part of the editorial staff of "Lives and Living" at DRS1. Since conventional audio processing tools are based on graphic user control, many activities are only possible with the use of a computer mouse. However, visually impaired users cannot use a mouse, which is why multi-track mixing has hardly been manageable for them, until now.

In February 2009 DRS1 established a new, ready-to-go workstation equipped with "Sequoia" audio prep software provided by the German supplier MAGIX. The adapted software permits the implementation of all necessary commands with a special keyboard. Yvonn Scherrer works with a Cherry keyboard, with an extra keypad that includes 96 programmed shortcuts.

She makes use of a JL Cooper hardware controller as a second aid, with a jogwheel and eight motorized faders. This allows her to cut and fade (fade

sounds in and out) and thus mix entire feature presentations on multiple tracks. She also uses JAWS 10 as her screen reader.

The system is adapted to allow Ms. Scherrer to monitor the item and the track being worked on at any time, instantaneously. “Comprehending the “larger picture” on a non-visual display is very demanding, but even “fader automation” is available to me, thanks to the controller“, Ms. Scherrer explained.

Her new opportunities to be creative are not the only source of pleasure for Yvonn Scherrer: “With my “Sequoia” environment is it now possible for other visually impaired journalists to do professional mixing without seeing the display – flying blind, so to speak.” The newly provided workstation is also very efficient; projects are completed rapidly and reliably after acquiring somewhat of a routine. “Since my perception results through my sense of hearing exclusively, and I do not process sounds with my eyes, the cut and the mix turn out to be particularly precise.”

This robust and refined solution allows DRS1 to contribute to the integration of physically challenged employees. “My workplace remains safe, while other visually impaired individuals have the opportunity to remain in – or newly enter – the field of radio,” Ms. Scherrer noted.



For questions relating to the workstation for the visually impaired

Yvonn Scherrer, Tel: 044 366 13 57, [yvonn.scherrer@srdrs.ch](mailto:yvonn.scherrer@srdrs.ch)

For questions to Swiss Radio DRS

Elias Loretan, Tel: 044 366 12 30, [elias.loretan@srdrs.ch](mailto:elias.loretan@srdrs.ch) / [kommunikation@srdrs.ch](mailto:kommunikation@srdrs.ch)

Further info on «Sequoia» by MAGIX

<http://www.magix.com/de/sequoia/>