

S P E E C H R E C O G N I T I O N

# Speak to Me

## SpeechProfessional

**Custom Speech USA Inc.**

(219) 662-3800  
 www.customspeechusa.com  
 Price: \$549  
 Windows 98/Me/NT/2000/XP

*Reviewed by Grace Suarez, a sole practitioner and knowledge management consultant based in San Francisco.*

SpeechProfessional is a bundled speech recognition program that takes dictated audio files in Dragon NaturallySpeaking or IBM ViaVoice and runs them through both the Dragon and IBM transcription engines to produce the most accurate text possible.

Audio files, recorded in Dragon NaturallySpeaking (Preferred or Professional) or IBM ViaVoice (Personal or Professional), are converted by the acWave utility to the proper format so SpeechServers can transcribe the text and create session files. Then, the files

are transferred to SpeechMax, the multi-window text processor.

After starting SpeechMax, the transcriber opens the single session file. The program processes the files, compares them and presents four windows of transcribed text – final, Dragon, IBM and verbatim. Words that were transcribed differently by the two engines are highlighted.

The transcriber then plays the audio file by selecting the text he or she wishes to hear, and makes corrections to the text file. The advantage of using SpeechProfessional over the transcription software that comes with Dragon or IBM is it uses both engines at once, increasing accuracy. In addition, as the program transcribes more documents, it learns and retains repetitive corrections.

There are many practical uses for SpeechProfessional. Aside from its use in the office, an attorney who is on the road a lot can send his or her recorded

dictations to an assistant. The assistant can then use SpeechProfessional, and send the transcribed product back to the attorney, or mail it directly to the client.

One thing to consider with SpeechProfessional is cost. The program requires the dictator purchase either Dragon NaturallySpeaking or IBM ViaVoice to create the audio files.

Until voice-to-text programs become 100 percent accurate, a solution such as this, which puts a human transcriber between the audio file and the final product, is a smart idea. SpeechProfessional does 95 percent of the transcriber's work. The only thing left for the transcriber to do is make sure the end product is accurate. **E:|**

### Closing Argument

**Pros:** Easy to use; does what it claims to do.

**Cons:** It takes a while to understand what the product does. It needs a video tutorial. It also requires IBM ViaVoice or Dragon NaturallySpeaking, to create the audio files.

**Verdict:** I recommend to attorneys who would like to increase their productivity by dictating and who have the support staff available to transcribe.

As seen in the December/January 2003 issue of **LAW OFFICE COMPUTING**

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