



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **First Cell Phone that Reads to the Blind and Dyslexic Released by Joint Venture of Kurzweil Technologies and the National Federation of the Blind**

### *Tiny Device Will Change Lives for Millions*

**Baltimore, Maryland (January 27, 2008):** K-NFB Reading Technology, Inc., a company combining the research and development efforts of the National Federation of the Blind and Kurzweil Technologies, Inc., today unveils an exciting product line that will revolutionize access to print for anyone who has difficulty seeing or reading print, including the blind and learning disabled. The company's world-renowned reading software has been especially designed for and paired with the Nokia N82 mobile phone to create the smallest text-to-speech reading device in history. A press conference to demonstrate the Reader Mobile product line, including the knfbREADER and the kREADER, will be held on January 28 at 10:00 a.m. The demonstration will take place in the Columbia Room, Holiday Inn Capitol, 550 C Street, SW, Washington, DC.

This truly pocket-size Reader enables users to take pictures of and read most printed materials at the push of a button. Blind users hear the contents of the document read in clear synthetic speech, while users who can see the screen and those with learning disabilities can enlarge, read, track, and highlight printed materials using the phone's large and easy-to-read display. The combination of text-to-speech and tracking features makes interpreting text much easier for individuals with learning disabilities.

Using the state-of-the-art Nokia N82 cell phone running on the powerful Symbian operating system with its integrated high-resolution camera, the Reader puts the best available character-recognition software together with text-to-speech conversion technology—all in a device that fits in the palm of your hand. The product includes Kurzweil's unique intelligent image processing software to enhance real-world images captured by a handheld device.

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Dr. Marc Maurer, President of the National Federation of the Blind, said: "The knfbREADER Mobile will allow the blind unprecedented access to the printed word, affording a level of flexibility and capability never before available. No other device in the history of technology has provided such portability and quick access to print materials. The NFB promotes equal opportunity for the blind, and this Reader will make blind people dramatically more independent. The result will be better performance at work, at school, at home, and everywhere else we go. This Reader will substantially improve the quality of life for the growing number of blind people and people who are losing vision, including seniors."

Blind users will have access to all of the functions featured in the most advanced cell phones on the market including video and music playback, GPS, wireless communications, photography, e-mail, text messaging, calendar and task functions, and more. The combination Reader and cell phone weighs 4.2 ounces and can store thousands of printed pages with easily obtainable extra memory. Users can transfer files to computers or Braille notetakers in seconds.

"The knfbREADER Mobile allows me immediate access to printed information, whether it be a menu or a letter," said James Gashel, vice president of business development for K-NFB Reading Technology, Inc. and a blind user of the product. "So many people already carry cell phones. This innovation is exciting because it puts all of the functions that users need into one product, eliminating the need to carry multiple devices. The Reader's simple user interface makes it ideal for the growing number of blind seniors."

"Technology that enlarges the printed word or converts it to speech has dramatically improved the lives of millions of Americans with many types of disabilities, enabling them to read and comprehend printed materials to which they never before had access," said Ray Kurzweil, President and CEO of K-NFB Reading Technology, Inc. "This innovation has created opportunities disabled people had never considered before due to the large amounts of reading required in certain occupations. The first machine of this type was the size of a washing machine. As optical character recognition technology is integrated into smaller and smaller devices, access to print becomes available almost instantaneously."

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**About the National Federation of the Blind**

With more than 50,000 members, the National Federation of the Blind is the largest and most influential membership organization of blind people in the United States. The NFB improves blind people's lives through advocacy, education, research, technology, and programs encouraging independence and self-confidence. It is the leading force in the blindness field today and the voice of the nation's blind. In January 2004 the NFB opened the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute, the first research and training center in the United States for the blind led by the blind.

**About K-NFB Reading Technology, Inc.**

K-NFB Reading Technology, Inc. is a joint venture between Kurzweil Technologies, headed by CEO Ray Kurzweil, a thirty-year innovator and pioneer in assistive technologies and the inventor of the first print-to-speech reading machine for the blind; and the National Federation of the Blind, the largest, most influential membership organization of blind people in the United States. The company's latest products, the Mobile Reader Product Line, which includes the knfbREADER Mobile, designed for blind and low vision individuals, and the kREADER Mobile, designed for use by sighted individuals with reading difficulties, is being launched in January of 2008. The products are distributed in the U.S., Canada, Western Europe, and the Pacific Rim. For more information, please visit <http://www.knfbreader.com>.