

Samsung has assistive tech trio for Galaxy Core Advance

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(Phys.org) —Samsung Electronics introduced a trio of accessories on Friday that are designed to help users who are disabled and visually impaired—those with partial or greater loss of vision. Their smartphones can be transformed in this way into tools that enable easier handling of messages and more.

The three newcomers are called the Ultrasonic Cover, Optical Scan Stand, and Voice Label. The three are designed for the Galaxy Core Advance mobile device. Samsung said that the accessories are already available and are offered separately from the device. To be sure, smartphone handling, not to mention struggles reading small-screen text, have been barriers for those with special needs for vision support. Back in December, Samsung had already revealed its intentions of providing an Android smartphone with accessibility options. Assistive technology was on its agenda. The company referred to the Core Advance, which it said would be available early 2014. At the time, it spoke of an Optical Scan which "can automatically recognize text from an image and read it aloud to disabled and visually impaired users."

Samsung officially described the three on Friday as the Ultrasonic Cover, which allows users in unfamiliar places to detect obstacles and navigate by sending an alert through a vibration or TTS feedback. "By holding the Cover in front of the user," said the announcement, "it can enhance a visually impaired user's awareness of their surroundings by sensing the presence of a person or object up to two meters away." The Optical Scan Stand positions the device to focus on printed materials; doing so automatically activates the Optical Scan application, which recognizes text from an image and reads it aloud to the user. With the Voice Label, users can make notes and tag voice labels on-the-go. "With NFC technology enabling a seamless connection to their smartphones, users can record, stop and access their notes. This feature can also help a user distinguish how to use electronics by allowing them to record a short explanation."



In the United States alone, approximately 10 million people are blind or visually impaired, though [estimates](#) vary. Samsung said the accessories are the result of research and in-depth interviews, resulting in their being specially designed with the needs of specific communities in mind. Among the tech sites responding favorably to Friday's announcement *TechCrunch* made the point that "these hardware add-ons really show Samsung is committed to provided the best phone experience possible for those who might ordinarily find smartphone operation frustrating."



More information: [Press release](#)

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