

Comcast remote lets people with physical disabilities control the TV with their eyes

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Most TV viewers take for granted the ability to change the channel from their couches with a remote control. That task may be near impossible for viewers with the most severe physical challenges.

On Monday, Comcast launches a free web-based remote on tablets and computers that lets Xfinity X1 customers with [spinal cord injuries](#), ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) or other disabilities change channels on the TV, set recordings, launch the program guide and search for a show with their eyes.

The free X1 eye control works with whatever eye gaze hardware and software system the customer is using, as well as, "sip-and-puff" switches and other assistive technologies.

Comcast customers pair the web-based remote with their set-top box after which the person can gaze at a button to send a corresponding command to the television. Users might visit an accessibility menu with their eyes to summon voice guidance, video descriptions and closed captioning.

Customers can also "type out" voice commands with their eyes to request, for example, "action movies" or a specific TV channel.

A promotional video features 30-year-old Philadelphian Jimmy Curran, a [research analyst](#) and author who has Spinal Muscular Atrophy, which is a condition that affects the part of the nervous system that controls muscle movement. He says eye-tracking means, "I don't need to depend on others to use the remote, and that is a liberating feeling. Technology is enabling me to be more independent."

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