

# The ADA's Influence on the Field of Telecommunications

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One of the things the Americans with Disabilities Act has done, is to allow for improvements to technologies that better the lives of people with hearing and other communication disabilities by making them more accessible.

Since the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, it has brought to the surface the changes necessary to make technology more accessible to people who have impaired speech or hearing.

Mitch Moyers, Outreach Specialist for the Utah Sanderson Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, has years of experience helping people with hearing disabilities find resources.

“The ADA has helped people receive support when they otherwise wouldn’t,” Moyers said. “It has also brought the needs of people with impaired hearing to the public eye more and more.”

To further promote the recognition of people with hearing loss, the Utah Sanderson Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing helps people with impaired hearing to receive the assistive technology they need. From apps to hearing aids, they provide the resources necessary to give people opportunities for better technology.

“We are an open resource.” Moyers said. “We provide lists of agencies to help people find what they need, as well as training on how to use their assistive technology properly.”

Recently, technology has improved in many ways that have benefited people with disabilities, especially with smartphones, internet, etc.

“In the last 10-15 years, smartphones have made information much more accessible for people with hearing loss.” Moyer said. “With this has come even more of an incentive to help improve current software and technology.”

There are many hearing applications and technologies that have come from the expanding field of assistive technology development. The Americans with Disabilities Act has influenced the expansion of accommodations for people with communication disabilities by bringing recognition to the necessary improvements needed to make technology more accessible.