Overview of iOS AAC Apps

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Introduction and Caveats - This document is an overview of the different types of AAC apps available in the iTunes App Store as of 9/30/11. It is by no means an exhaustive listing. An app's inclusion or omission from this list should not be taken as an endorsement or lack of endorsement of the app's quality or usefulness. Please note that the author works closely with AssistiveWare, makers of Proloquo2Go.

Full-Featured Symbol-based AAC Apps - A full-featured AAC app generally has the following characteristics:
- One or more vocabulary organizations designed to promote syntax and vocabulary development.
- A symbol system that includes words from all parts of speech (nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, question words, adverbs, etc.)
- Ability to link between pages
- Ability to create new pages and page hierarchies, and customize existing pages and page hierarchies
- High quality text-to-speech voices
- Access to spelling for communication with text-to-speech and a keyboard page. May have word prediction as well.

Examples:
- Proloquo2Go, www.proloquo2go.com
- Sono Flex, www.tobii.com/en/assistive-technology/global/products/software/sono-flex
- TouchChat, TouchChat HD, www.silver-kite.com/touchChat

Mid-Featured AAC - A mid-featured AAC app is defined as having the following characteristics:
- Symbol set with verbs and adjectives in addition to nouns
- Some pre-programmed pages for basic communication (wants/needs)
- If text-to-speech voices are available, they are of high quality

Examples:
- Expressive, smartyearsapps.com/2010/10/25/expressive
- OneVoice, thinklegend.com/onevoice
- TapSpeak Choice, conleysolutions.com/wordpress/products/tapspeak-choice

Basic Communication with Web-Based Editing - This is a group of apps which has an internet focus for editing. Most editing takes place on a web site which has a monthly subscription fee. Pages are downloaded to the device for use. Symbols are usually, but not always, clipart or emoticon style images or other images found on the internet. Runs on non-iOS devices as well as iPhones/iPods and iPads.

Basic Communication - A basic communication AAC app is defined as allowing basic requests and other simple communication acts. Most of the symbol set is nouns, with carrier phrases like "I want". Recorded voice is usually the only speech output available. Price varies, but is usually low.

Examples:
- Grace, www.graceapp.com
- My Choice Board, www.goodkarmaapps.com
- SoundingBoard, www.ablenetinc.com/Assistive-Technology/Communication/ SoundingBoard

Simple Communication - These apps allow one or two message buttons for simple communication similar to simple VOCAs. Voice is usually recorded, and price is low, unless extensive symbol libraries are bundled with the app.

Examples:
- AnswersHD, www.simplifiedtouch.com
- TapSpeak Button, TapSpeak Button Standard, TapSpeak ButtonPlus, TapSpeak Sequence, conleysolutions.com

Scene-Based AAC - This type of app uses photos or drawings of scenes, with "hot spots" placed on locations in the scenes to trigger speech or a scene change when tapped.

Examples:
- Scene & Heard, www.tboxapps.com/features.html
- Scene Speak, www.goodkarmaapps.com

Text-Only AAC - These apps are designed for literate users who type or select preprogrammed written words or phrases. Word prediction and saved phrases are used to speed communication rate.

Examples:
- Assistive Chat, www.assistiveapps.com
- Predictable, www.tboxapps.com/predictable.html
- Verbally, verballyapp.com