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No-hands Input Devices for the Handicapped

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TOPIC -----

This article discusses "no-hands" input devices for profoundly handicapped computer users.

DISCUSSION -----

A popular device for profoundly handicapped users is the Headmaster by Personics Corp., which mounts on the head with a headband. Depending on head position, the position of the cursor can be controlled on the screen, and the equivalent of a mouse click is generated using one of several other devices.

The package also includes a special DA that puts a soft keyboard on the screen that runs concurrently with other applications, such as Microsoft Word. By selecting letters on the keyboard and generating a mouse click, characters are entered into the application. (Selecting commands from the pull-down menus is straightforward when using the Headmaster to control the cursor and the mouse-click device.)

The Headmaster unit has also been tested with the Macintosh Portable, and it works fine.

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