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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BigShot Magnifier Targets Eye-Weary Computer Users
New screen magnifier offers relief from Computer Vision Syndrome

MANCHESTER CENTER, VT, July 14, 2000: Extended sessions of web surfing, writing email, and number crunching can lead to irritated eyes, heavy eyelids, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen. Collectively, these symptoms are called Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) by the American Optometric Association (AOA). To help alleviate the symptoms of CVS, Vermont-based Ai Squared has announced the introduction of BigShot® Magnifier, a full-screen magnification program for normal-sighted computer users. The easy-to-use, Windows-compatible software for laptops, desktops, and LCD projectors is ideal for personal or professional use.

Ai Squared is a world leader in low-vision accessibility products. According to Ben Weiss, company founder and president, "BigShot is a natural outgrowth of our revolutionary ZoomText® line of low-vision products. With BigShot, we have adapted our variable screen magnification technology to meet the viewing needs of the typical computer user. Now working on a PC doesn't have to cause serious eyestrain for the nearly 60 million people in this country who suffer from computer-related vision problems."

What Exactly is Computer Vision Syndrome?

CVS is a widespread health concern. The AOA reports that eye-related health care costs for problems associated with computer use are estimated at approximately $2 billion annually. Up to 90 percent of all people who work at a video display terminal (VDT) suffer from some type of ocular discomfort. Symptoms may include eye fatigue, dry or itchy eyes, a burning sensation, blurred or double vision, and sensitivity to light. Because of the visually intensive nature of computer work, many people experience difficulties with eye focusing and coordination that they would not encounter when performing less demanding visual tasks.

What Causes CVS?

The more you use a computer, the greater your chance of developing Computer Vision Syndrome. Eyestrain is frequently produced by unsuitable physical and environmental settings such as poor posture, computer placement, and lighting. Computer users often position themselves too close to their screens, limiting their focal distance. Sitting too close forces the

eyes to change focus more frequently, increasing fatigue. Pain or stiffness in the neck, shoulders, and back often accompany CVS. This byproduct results from the awkward body positions people assume to improve their view.

"The causes of CVS symptoms are a combination of individual vision problems and poor office ergonomics," says James E. Sheedy, O.D., Ph.D. "The symptoms occur whenever the visual demands of the task exceed the visual abilities of the individual." Dr. Sheedy is a Clinical Professor and Chief of the Computer Eye Clinic at the University of California's School of Optometry in Berkeley. His web site, www.doctorergo.com, is dedicated to the topic.

A Tool for CVS Prevention

The use of BigShot permits greater viewing distance to the computer screen. A magnification program, BigShot enlarges all elements on the screen, allowing users to focus on their work, not on straining to see it. The full-screen magnification system provides 20 adjustable levels of enlargement, from 105% to 200% (1.05x to 2x). Since part of the desktop is no longer visible once the screen elements have been enlarged, BigShot allows users to pan smoothly beyond the limits of the viewing area, simply by moving the mouse.

BigShot will begin shipping on July 27th.

About Ai Squared

Founded in 1985 and located in the charming Vermont village of Manchester Center, Ai Squared has grown from a one-man operation into a team dedicated to providing accessibility solutions for low-vision computer users. Free lifetime technical support is offered for all products, including ZoomText®, an industry standard for screen access software. To learn more about BigShot Magnifier, visit the product web site at www.bigshotmagnifier.com. For additional information about Ai Squared's other offerings, consult the corporate web site at www.aisquared.com.

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