

Message Banking

Frequently Asked Questions

What is message banking?

Message banking is the process where an individual digitally records words, phrases, messages, meaningful sounds and stories. The goal is to preserve the voice of a person who is at risk for losing the ability to speak. Message banking allows a person to retrieve recorded messages and “speak” these messages in their own voice, natural inflection and intonation using a variety of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems (e.g., Communicator 5 software).

Is message banking the same as voice banking?

No. Voice banking is the process of recording an inventory/sample of your speech for the purposes of creating a synthetic voice that approximates your natural voice. This personalized synthetic voice could then be downloaded and installed into a Tobii Dynavox Windows device. Our TTS partner, Acapela Group, also provides a voice banking service, my-own-voice. For more information, please visit <https://www.acapela-group.com/voices/voice-banking/> and <https://mov.acapela-group.com/>

Who might benefit from message banking?

Anyone with a degenerative disease such as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and Parkinson’s Disease, individuals requiring total glossectomy and total laryngectomy because of head and neck cancer, or those with planned hospital procedures requiring intubation or vent dependency may be good candidates for Message Banking in their own voice.

What is the Tobii Dynavox Message Bank?

The Tobii Dynavox Message Bank is a joint project between [Boston Children’s Hospital Augmentative Communication Program](#) and [Tobii Dynavox](#) with a goal of providing a **free and open** message bank for people at risk of losing their voice. The Message bank system will guide people through the message banking process, help organize the messages, store the messages until they are needed, and provide ways to download the messages for use on any systems that can play back those messages. Use of the system is free to the user. Storage of the messages is free. Downloading stored messages for personal use is free.

When should I begin the message banking process?

In the past, individuals with degenerative devices were required to message bank directly on their prescribed AAC device. Unfortunately, by the time ...it was often too late. The benefit of using the Tobii Dynavox Message Bank is that you can begin to capture your voice as soon as possible. Your messages are uploaded, stored and ready to use when you need them.

What special equipment and software do I need?

It is recommended that you use the Zoom H1 Handy Recorder .wav recorder. This will allow you to create high-quality voice recordings. You will also need to go to www.mytobiidynavox.com and create an account. This is a free service. In addition, if you plan to download and import your banked messages into a Tobii Dynavox Windows device, you must be running version 5.3 or higher.

How will I manage and organize all my recordings?

The Tobii Dynamox Message Bank provides a way for you to upload, edit, tag/categorize your messages. You can also download your message files by creating a zip file that can then be imported into your AAC device. Use of the system is free to the user. Storage of the messages is free. Downloading stored messages for personal use is free.

What are important considerations?

- Give some thought to collecting important phrases, messages, and stories. For more ideas on types of message, please see [Message Banking, Voice Banking, and Legacy Messages](#) by John M. Costello, Boston Children's Hospital.
- Capture high quality recordings. Spend some time with your recorder to practice timing and distance away from your mouth.