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## Colorado Assessment Tests for Cognitive and Neuropsychological Assessment

### Background

A substantial amount of software has been developed for cognitive and neuropsychological assessment, but these programs are frequently specific to the research agendas of the user, rather than having applicability to the kinds of assessment needed in either a circumscribed or comprehensive psychological evaluation. Programs developed for research are often difficult to use, and require either extensive computer expertise, the learning of a specialized scripting language, or skilled support.

The rather limited commercial neuropsychological assessment software that has been developed is typically a single program specific to a single problem, relatively expensive, and licensed to a single user. The relatively rare commercial programs available with ease of use and flexibility are typically very costly and out of the range of unfunded researchers.

### Technology

Dr. Hasker P. Davis of the University of Colorado has created a number of user-friendly, flexible, inexpensive software programs for assessing a variety of cognitive abilities. The software package, called "Colorado Assessment Tests" or "CATs," will allow researchers and clinicians to easily integrate or disseminate testing forms and data, and will facilitate assessments by individuals with less sophisticated computer skills.

**"What is unique about... CATs is that it is so natural and intuitive that even those who have no ability or desire to deal with the technical aspect of programming can easily create unique and highly personalized program operations and content."**

-An early CATs reviewer

### Software Details

The current version of the software package is written in Microsoft Visual Basic 5, and is fully compatible with Microsoft Windows 98/2000. It is not yet fully functional with the newer Windows XP. The end user will need a licensed copy of Microsoft Access on their computer. An online Users Manual is provided with the software.

#### Advantages over current software, as reported by CAT reviewers:

- ◆ Standardized and often automated administration
- ◆ Objectivity of scoring
- ◆ Variety of tasks
- ◆ Ease of task switching
- ◆ Ease and regularity of data capturing, analysis, storage, and exportation for research
- ◆ Facilitation of norms gathering and dissemination