Hello all,

HIMS is excited to announce our next upgrade for the BrailleSense Polaris. This upgrade adds direct access to Google Drive via the Word Processor, Notepad, Media player, Excel Viewer and launch access from File Manager. We’ve also added an Exchange e-mail program, the Macro Manager from our U2 models, and many more improvements and enhancements.

Please find the complete list of fixes and improvements in the attached release note.

\*Note: if you are upgrading from any version older than 30141, please contact Tech Support for the correct files and instructions as you are not able to update directly from your current version to this firmware.

\*Note: depending on the number of Android applications you have installed, you may note a very long wait time for the “initialization” process. It generally takes around 8 minutes with the default apps, but may take much longer if you have many Android apps installed.

\*Also note: after the upgrade is completed, please press Backspace-Space-Enter-F to recover default apps, so that the Polaris is using the most current versions of the applications.

* Be aware: the upgrade process for Polaris is very different from that of the former BrailleSense models, and has also slightly changed with this upgrade. Please read the below instructions in their entirety before proceeding.

\*Note: it is recommended that you do not upgrade the unit if your battery level is below 40%, even if you are connected to AC power. Once you have installed V3.4, you will not be allowed to upgrade the unit if the battery is not charged to 40% or above when you initiate the upgrade process.

You can update the Polaris either via an Internet connection or from external media containing the upgrade files. If you choose the "Online" method, be sure you have an active Internet connection before attempting the upgrade. When you update the Polaris, settings are usually maintained. However, if there are changes to setting values in the firmware, all settings will be initialized. Therefore, it is recommended that you back up your settings using the backup/restore utility in the “Polaris Settings” menu. Data in the flashdisk is protected. However, we recommend you backup your files before updating the Polaris Firmware as unexpected problems can occur.

* Note: You cannot cancel the update once it has started. You must not reset the unit during an upgrade. You must keep the unit connected to AC power throughout the upgrade process. We recommend you do not touch the Polaris while it is updating. It may take up to 60 minutes to update the Polaris, possibly even longer depending on the speed of your Internet connection.
* Also note: the upgrade files are temporarily stored on the flashdisk for installation. If you do not have enough memory available on the flashdisk, the Polaris is unable to update until you make room for the upgrade files.

You can access the "Upgrade Firmware" option via the "Utilities" menu, or launch it from anywhere on the unit using "F3-U".

When you have chosen your upgrade method, and the upgrade files are downloaded or detected, Polaris will extract all of the necessary program files. Progress is announced every few seconds.

Once done, the Polaris will reboot, and the system files will be upgraded. During this process, there is no speech, but the progress will be shown in Braille as a percentage.

When the system files have been upgraded, the software will load and boot. During this process, the Polaris displays “Initialization” in Braille, but no sound or speech is heard. You can follow the initialization count on the Braille display to see progress. Note that this count includes all programs and packages installed on the unit, including polaris programming, Android packages, and any additional Android apps you have installed. Even if you have no Android apps installed, this count will likely exceed 180. This process can take many minutes; do not be surprised if nothing happens for 30 minutes or more.

When the firmware boots, the unit will then proceed to upgrade any applications with updated programming. Progress is spoken and displayed during this process.

Finally, the system reboots again. If there are no new or changed setting values in the firmware, the Main Menu loads, and your settings are restored. If setting values have been changed, all Polaris settings are initialized, and the system boots and runs the Quick Guide.

Upgrading the Polaris Firmware Using the Internet

To upgrade the Polaris Firmware via the Internet, follow these steps:

1) Make sure you are connected to the Internet and plugged into AC power. Press "Enter" on "Upgrade Polaris Firmware" in the "Utilities" menu.

2) Press "Enter" on "Upgrade: Online". The Polaris connects to the HIMS server, and your current software version is compared to the HIMS server version. You are prompted to continue with the upgrade.

3) The Polaris begins downloading the upgrade files. The upgrade is around 1.3 GB. Thus, depending on the speed of your Internet connection, it may take a long time to download.

4) After downloading the upgrade files, Polaris automatically starts the upgrade process. Please remember you must not touch the Polaris until the upgrade is complete, as pressing keys, resetting, or unplugging the unit can interrupt the upgrade process, thus resulting in an incomplete installation. When the upgrade is complete, you are returned to the "program" menu, and the unit announces, "File manager".

5) After the upgrade is complete, check the software version by pressing "Space-V" while in the "program" menu.

Upgrading the Polaris Firmware from USB or SD

To upgrade the Polaris Firmware from a disk, follow these steps:

Download the upgrade file here:

H532B:
H520B:

1. Note: the file is a .bin file, however, some versions of Windows may rename it as a .zip file. Do not extract this file. Simply rename the extension back to .bin. Copy the file to the root of an external storage device such as an SD card or USB thumb drive.
2. Connect the SD card or USB drive to the Polaris, and be sure the Polaris is connected to AC power. Then, press "Enter" on "Upgrade Polaris Firmware" from the "Utilities" menu.
3. "Upgrade: Online" is displayed. Press "Space-4" to go to the "Upgrade: Offline" option. Press "Enter".
4. The Polaris starts the upgrade process. Please remember you must not touch the Polaris until the upgrade is complete. When the upgrade is complete, you are returned to the "program" menu, and "File manager" is displayed.
5. When the upgrade is complete, check the software version by pressing "Space-V" while in the "program" menu.

If you have questions or problems, please contact HIMS, Inc technical support at support@hims-inc.com or by calling 888-520-4467.

International customers should contact their dealer or e-mail support@himsintl.com.