

Not All Text-to-Speech Solutions Are Created Equal

Considerations when Selecting
a **Text-to-Speech** Provider for
Your Publishing Needs



Speech-Enablement for Publishers

Text Books

Meet the needs of all students by making ebooks more accessible and convenient for all users by speech enabling academic content.

Scholarly and Professional Content

Extend the reach of published content (including math and science reading) with text to speech with the ability to customize pronunciations across multiple platforms. Learners can listen to content from multiple devices and while on the go, thereby increasing the amount of engagement with your content.

eBook & Journal Platform Providers

Give publishing platforms an important competitive edge by offering text to speech as an integrated feature.

Assessments

Integrate text to speech into assessment platforms to provide for various student accommodations with accurate pronunciations, including allowing the complete assessment to be read or only selected vocabulary.

Academic and Research Databases

Increase usability and make academic and research content more accessible on all platforms by allowing users to listen to content on any device.

Text-To-Speech (TTS) technology represents a tremendous growth opportunity for text-intensive industries like publishing. Using TTS, publishers can offer learners more convenient and accessible options for consuming content. This expansion of product offerings can potentially expand a publisher's existing reach and assist in entering new markets.

With a TTS solution, publishers can:

- Increase usability and make content more accessible
- Add a unique selling factor to content and platform features to distinguish it from other resources and platforms
- Meet the needs of and reach a larger percentage of learners, such as those with reading difficulties, visual impairments, language learners, or non-native language speakers
- Make it easier for learners to access materials on mobile devices
- Present content in a way that increases comprehension and information recall with improved learning gains
- Make text-based content interactive and increase platform usage

Whether creating content, managing library reference materials, or producing online textbooks, publishers using TTS technology can offer material that is easier to access and accommodates different learning preferences.

Because of these gains and the resulting improvements in word recognition, vocabulary, and comprehension, TTS is rapidly becoming a requirement for academic content.



Considerations When Selecting a Text-to-Speech Provider for Your Publishing Needs

1. TTS Technology: Speaking Voice Quality, Pronunciation Customization, and Language Options
2. Offline and Online Solutions
3. Competitive and Flexible Business Models
4. Data Ownership and Technical Considerations
5. Technical Support & Professional Services

How to Evaluate and Choose?

There are a variety of options when considering a TTS solution provider. The biggest risk for publishers moving towards speech-enabling their content is being overwhelmed by the number of solutions available. Given the many options, it can be a challenge to choose the optimal one.

The ideal way to select the optimal TTS solution is to evaluate each package on five factors.

ReadSpeaker offers **50+ languages** and **200+ voices** to choose from with the ability to translate a selected text to a number of languages and have the text read in the target language.

1. TTS Technology: Speaking Voice Quality, Pronunciation Customization, and Language Options

One of the biggest upsides to TTS software is the technology frees publishers from costly studio recordings using voice actors. For that reason, it is important when evaluating TTS solutions to ask “What is the voice quality like?”. Consumers have no patience for artificial-sounding, garbled voices. TTS solutions that offer a low-quality voice that sounds robotic are doing a disservice to the text and can alienate consumers.

The TTS provider solution should invest in the latest voice technology to enable natural-sounding voices with changes of intonation and offer custom pronunciations. It is key that the voice speak as human-like as possible while retaining the highest levels of accuracy, optimized for learning.

Further, publishers should evaluate if the TTS solution offers a broad choice of languages, translation options, and voices. Different voices work for different pieces of content and various languages and translations may be required to meet the needs of learners. TTS solutions should be able to accommodate a wide range of diverse content and language requirements.

ReadSpeaker uses advanced text-to-speech technology based on deep neural networks to create voices that are among the most accurate and human-sounding on the market.

We support the conversion of all text into speech, including math and science content with the ability to read Math Markup Languages like MathML, Mathjax or Mathquill. ReadSpeaker ensures that our clients’ content is read to a near faultless experience by utilizing default and customer-specific pronunciation dictionaries as well as providing publishers with control of the reading area and reading order.

In some cases, such as in the pharmaceutical sector where it is even more important that each term is perfectly read, ReadSpeaker provides fine-tuning that helps with pronunciation issues when they exist, drastically saving clients time and resources. ReadSpeaker also retains a knowledgeable network of linguists that can help clients in many parts of the world when they encounter pronunciation difficulties.

Business Model Considerations:

- What are the setup costs?
- Is it possible scale up the more the service is used?
- Are the business terms flexible (i.e. usage-based, licensed users, consumption, etc.)?
- Are the TTS fees fixed on a yearly basis to allow for proper budgeting?
- Is there a limit to the number of products or platforms that can be integrated?

2. Does the TTS Technology Offer Both Offline and Online Solutions?

It's important for publishers to select a TTS solution that is flexible enough to support your UI/UX experience both online and offline. And that includes whether or not you intend to create static audio files from your desktop, if you want to embed speech into an application, speech-enable online content on the fly through a cloud solution, and everything in between.

It's equally important that a TTS solution provider supports every major operating system, browser, and enables the same text-to-speech experience across multiple platforms.

No matter what delivery mechanism you are looking for, ReadSpeaker offers the same TTS voice across multiple platforms and OS installations, whether it be a cloud solution, an embedded solution, or server-based implementation. We provide offline (on-device or on-server) and online, SaaS-based solutions.

Our SaaS solutions are easy to integrate, allowing content to be automatically updated and accessed anytime, anywhere, or on any device. Our offline solutions help you easily deploy high-quality text-to-voice solutions in your services, applications, and devices – on any platform and major operating systems.

3. Competitive and Flexible Business Models

Every publisher is different, and the optimal TTS solutions should offer a range of flexible business models that suit their particular needs and situation.

ReadSpeaker business models are flexible depending on the needs of clients and can include fixed yearly fees, active user pricing, pricing based on consumption, and other options.

Our solutions can be custom fit to requirements, scale accordingly to business needs, and are available for multiple product or platform integrations.

Technical Considerations:

- Does the solution provider respect your privacy policy and privacy legislation
- Is it device-, browser- and software- agnostic? Can it be used anywhere, any time, on any device?
- What are the available input and output formats?
- Are there limitations to the service that will negatively impact the user experience?
- Are there limits on customer lexicon, the number of concurrent API activations, text size, or continuous listening? Is there excellent availability of the service and latency times?
- Does the TTS provider offer existing pre-built CMS integrations?

4. Data Ownership and Technical Considerations

When text-based content is transferred to audio, an important question to ask is “Are you allowing a third party to analyze your content and use that data for the development of competing solutions?” It’s a non-intuitive question, but asking it protects publishers from the danger of intellectual property theft. Needless to say, any reputable TTS solution provider will assure clients that any data analytics collected on content interaction will not be used for competing products and that all content information ownership stays with the publisher.

While other solutions may run analytics on the data that flows through their solutions, any intelligence on content run through the ReadSpeaker platform stays with our publisher clients.

ReadSpeaker allows various input formats including **Text, ePub, PDF, SSML, URL, HTML, XML** as well as provides various output formats including **Syncdata(xml), mp3, ogg, pcm, u-law, a-law, text (after lexicon), Wav, afs, Dialogic ADPCM, etc.**

We offer unlimited customer lexicon and unlimited concurrent API activations, as well as up to 100,000 characters and 1 hour of continuous listening per activation.

In order to make deployment and administration as seamless as possible, we also provide several technical value-adds:

- **Built integrations into the major learning platforms in the education market, including Tizra, Silverchair, etc.**
- **Multiple authentication methods**
- **Various tags/classes to customize page reading**
- **Feature-rich, customizable player**
- **Statistics interface**

A modular approach to custom voice development, providing flexibility to co-develop custom voices with clients quickly and efficiently.

The market’s lowest latency and highest availability (99.995% in 2018).

Support and Services Considerations:

- Does the solution provider have the experience necessary to help you with your particular needs?
- Do the solution provider offer expert customer service?
- Are you given the tools and assistance you need to implement?
- Is customer service available at all times and in multiple geo markets?
- How are pronunciation corrections handled in their platform?
- Is the solution provider focused on R&D?

5. Technical Support & Professional Services

An often overlooked but important factor to consider in selecting a TTS solution provider is the amount and quality of support available.

ReadSpeaker offers an expert technical team, providing support via email and telephone to our customers in over 70 countries ranging from **Oman to Singapore, Tunisia to Sweden, Brazil to Canada, Mexico to Switzerland, US to France, and more**. Our Support team provides implementation tools and is available to answer any questions that might arise during the implementation phase. We also assist our clients with maintenance needs, such as upgrades or additional implementations, on a constant basis.

Our knowledgeable on-staff linguists are available to assist with industry-specific pronunciations, providing as close to perfect as possible reading of content. By providing our clients with their own dictionary, we are able to create client-specific rules for their content, reducing the need for speech synthesis markup language (SSML). Likewise, when clients require something that differs from our out-of-the-box solutions, our development team is able to customize implementations to deliver text to speech according to their needs.

ReadSpeaker takes an active part in the research and development of DNN and machine learning technology to create increasingly higher-quality voices. We are continuously improving our voice quality to be more human-like in order to better serve our clients' needs and business goals.

Selecting the right TTS solution provider offers several benefits to publishers as well as their content consumers:

- Increase the accessibility of your online content, courses, and textbooks – especially for those with visual impairments or reading difficulties as well as foreign students as well as language learners
- Reach a larger percentage of the online population, including those whose native language is different from the language of your text content
- Present your educational content in a way that increases student comprehension
- Make it easier for students to access course materials while on the go and on mobile devices
- Let your users listen to math courses and online math content
- Automatically redistribute your online text content in audio format thereby providing another distribution channel for your content
- Make your platform more feature-rich with enhanced text to speech

ReadSpeaker serves and supports businesses in the publishing segment by providing a range of solutions and services to integrate text to speech to digital content and platforms. In 1999, ReadSpeaker pioneered the first-ever speech-enabling application for websites and the first server-based DAISY Production system “DAISY Generator” in 2003.

A fully integrated TTS provider with a wide variety of applications for varying channels and devices in multiple industries, ReadSpeaker can give a voice to your organization for online, embedded, server or desktop needs, applications, speech production, custom voices, and more.



ReadSpeaker Customer Spotlight

Many developers of educational content that work with Publishers and provide text to speech. Rishiraj Gera, Head of Content Solutions for Magic EdTech, uses ReadSpeaker for his client content development needs. Magic EdTech develops digital products for publishers and edTech companies, including interactive eBooks, simulations, etc. for K12 and Higher Education. Content created for these segments requires text to speech to aid learners in many ways.

“ReadSpeaker brings realistic read-aloud capability that its competition does not,”


he says. ReadSpeaker is used for eBook and interactive content read aloud.


Want to speak with us?


Contact us at www.readspeaker.com/contact-us





ReadSpeaker is a global voice specialist providing dozens of languages and lifelike voices. Using its own industry-leading technology, the company delivers some of the most natural-sounding synthesized voices on the market. ReadSpeaker uses next-generation Deep Neural Network (DNN) technology to structurally improve voice quality at all levels. ReadSpeaker is a subsidiary of the Memory Disk Division (MD) of the HOYA Corporation, with offices in 15 countries, and over 10,000 customers in 65 countries, providing a complete text-to-speech (TTS) offering, both as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) and as licensed solutions. A fully integrated TTS provider, ReadSpeaker encompasses all of HOYA's state-of-the-art technologies (NeoSpeech, Voiceware, VoiceText and rSpeak), providing a wide variety of applications for varying channels and devices in multiple industries. ReadSpeaker gives a voice to businesses and organizations for online, embedded, server or desktop needs, apps, speech production, custom voices and more. With more than 20 years' experience, the ReadSpeaker team of experts is leading the way in text to speech. ReadSpeaker is "Pioneering Voice Technology".

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