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ReadSpeaker® speakUp

ReadSpeaker speakUp is a Windows application developed by ReadSpeaker that can speech enable text content on the screen so that the user can listen to the text.

Contents

Product Description

ReadSpeaker speakUp is a Windows application that enables you to listen to written text using natural-sounding synthetic voices.

How speakUp can be used to read text out loud depends on which application, tab, page, or window the tool is used from. It was developed primarily for Microsoft Store applications and modern Windows applications, but some of its features can be used at all times.

Microsoft account holders who have purchased ReadSpeaker speakUp can launch the app from the Windows start menu. After launch, speakUp will show a toolbar, including a player and several feature buttons.

ReadSpeaker speakUp has three reading modes:

- Read selected text: select text and click play to read
- Point and read: move the mouse pointer to a text and it reads automatically, this mode is for reading short texts like button and menu names
- Read text in clipboard: add text to the clipboard by copying (or cutting) it and it will be read automatically in a separate window and highlighted

You will find more info about these features and in which environments they are available below.

Using the buttons on the player, the user can stop the audio version of the content, pause and resume it, and close the toolbar (which also stops the reading).

The toolbar can be dragged to any position on screen by clicking and dragging in the top part of the toolbar (title section).

The buttons in the toolbar are used as follows:

- Read selected text - when the user selects text in a supported environment, this button will become available and clicking it will start the reading of the selected text
- Stop - will stop the reading in any of the three reading modes
- Pause - will pause the reading in (not available when reading in Point and read mode)
- Continue - will resume the reading if it has been paused
- Point and read - enable/disable this reading mode
- Read text in clipboard - enable/disable this reading mode
- Settings - Allows the user to
    - choose a reading voice
    - adjust the reading speed
- Help - Shows a brief explanation for each of the toolbar buttons

The audio is generated using ReadSpeaker text-to-speech technology.

TextAid speakUp is an offline application that can be purchased from the Microsoft Store and is installed on your pc.

Features

Access through Windows Start Menu

After installation, ReadSpeaker speakUp can be launched from the Windows Start Menu where it can be recognized by the speakUp icon:

The user can of course pin the app to Start or the taskbar for even quicker access.

When ReadSpeaker speakUp is active, the toolbar will be shown until it is deactivated by clicking the Close button in the toolbar.

ReadSpeaker speakUp institution wide deployment

It is possible to deploy ReadSpeaker speakUp for a whole Microsoft 365 domain using special a deployment method.

Movable toolbar

The ReadSpeaker speakUp toolbar is visible on screen when the app is active but can be dragged to anywhere on the screen at any time by clicking and dragging in the top part of the toolbar (title section).

Text to speech

ReadSpeaker speakUp can read text out loud using an embedded state-of-the-art text-to-speech (TTS) engine.

High-quality synthetic speech

ReadSpeaker speakUp can read text using the US English rSpeak voice Sophie or any Microsoft voice installed in the device. The available voices are shown in a drop-down list that can be accessed through the Settings button.

Synchronized highlighting

Words are simultaneously highlighted when they are read in Read text from clipboard mode and also in Read selected text mode in most cases. There is no highlighting in Point and read mode.

Highlighted words are shown as white letters on a blue background.

Reading Speed

The default reading speed (or speaking rate) is "normal". The user can personalize the reading speed from very slow to very fast on a sliding scale.

Reading selected text

If text is selected in a supported environment, such as in Microsoft Word documents, in the formula bar of Microsoft Excel documents, on web pages in a Microsoft browser, in Microsoft apps, etc. the selected text will be read out loud when the Read selected text button is clicked.

Point and read

When this feature is enabled a green dot is shown on the button. Clicking the button will enable or disable the feature. When it is enabled and the mouse pointer is moved in a supported environment to a menu name, button name, tab name, an item on the taskbar, the address bar in a Microsoft browser, etc., the text pointed to is read aloud. Ideally, Point and read only reads little bits of text that cannot be selected, such as the text on a button.

Read text in clipboard

When this feature is enabled a green dot is shown on the button. Clicking the button will enable or disable the feature. When it is enabled and the user adds text to the clipboard by copying or cutting it, the text is shown in a separate window above or below the toolbar and read aloud. The words are highlighted as they are read. Two major advantages of reading in this mode is that it is available in any environment and that the text is highlighted to make reading along easier.

Help

The Help button gives access to an explanation of the toolbar buttons on a web page.

User friendly user interface

The user friendly user interface (UI) for ReadSpeaker speakUp is available in English only.

ReadSpeaker speakUp institution wide deployment

To follow.

Technical Specifications

Supported devices

ReadSpeaker speakUp is a text-to-speech solution for pcs and laptops. It should work with all commonly used online pcs and laptops provided they run Windows 10 operating system.

ReadSpeaker speakUp has full functionality in Microsoft Store applications and most modern Windows applications.

Supported applications

Refer to the table to see in which applications the user can expect to be able to use which ReadSpeaker speakUp reading modes.

Due to accessibility limitations of APIs such as UI Automation, which are used in ReadSpeaker SpeakUp, there is sometimes overlap between Point and read and Read selected text modes.

The user has to find out on a per-application basis what does and does not work.

	Read selected text	Point and read	Read text in clipboard
Microsoft Word	Yes	Yes for menus and buttons No for content	Yes
Microsoft Excel	Only in formula bar	Yes for buttons and names	Yes
Microsoft Edge*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Microsoft Internet Explorer 11*	No	Yes	Yes
Native/"built in" apps like: News, Calendar, Settings, Xbox, Get Help, etc.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Firefox*	No	Yes	Yes
Chrome*	No	No	Yes

* it also depends on how a web page is coded

Simple to add Microsoft app

Users can purchase ReadSpeaker speakUp from the Microsoft Store provided they are logged into their Microsoft account after which they can download the executable file which installs the app on the pc. They can then use the app whenever they wish, also when not logged into their Microsoft account.

Text‑to‑Speech (TTS) software with embedded TTS engine

ReadSpeaker speakUp calls on the embedded TTS engine which generates the audio for reading text out loud.

Reads web pages over HTTPS

ReadSpeaker speakUp can read content of web pages that are encrypted using SSL encryption.

Reads static and dynamic text content

ReadSpeaker speakUp can read most text content presented by modern applications in the operating system or by the operating system itself.

User settings

The settings the user selects through the Settings features in the toolbar are saved, so that ReadSpeaker speakUp will have the same settings when using the app again on the same device.

Requirements and Limitations

Supported web pages

ReadSpeaker speakUp will function correctly only on web pages where the content is presented using standard HTML technology.

ReadSpeaker speakUp and mobile devices

ReadSpeaker speakUp does not support mobile devices (smartphones and tablets).

Intended Use

Customers may only use ReadSpeaker speakUp in accordance with this product specification. It may be used only to listen to the content of supported pages. Any other use of ReadSpeaker speakUp is not considered intended use.

Disclaimer

Features listed in this document are guaranteed only if ReadSpeaker speakUp has been implemented according to the instructions provided by ReadSpeaker. Specifications and features as described in this product specification can be changed by the manufacturer without prior notice.