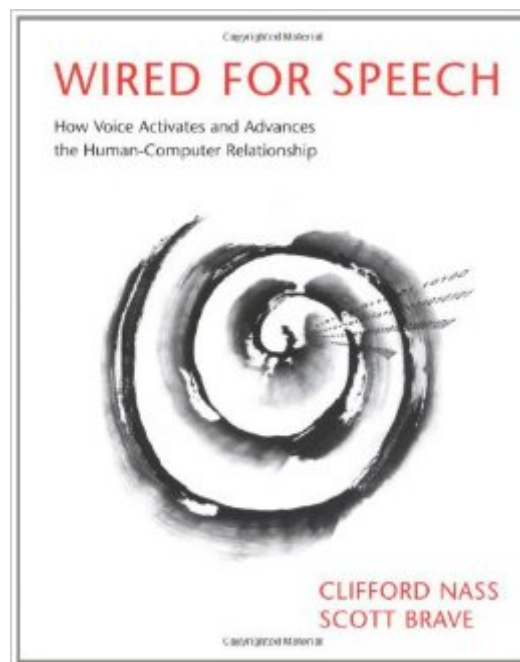# Wired For Speech: How Voice Activates And Advances The Human-Computer Relationship (MIT Press)

# Synopsis

Interfaces that talk and listen are populating computers, cars, call centers, and even home appliances and toys, but voice interfaces invariably frustrate rather than help. In Wired for Speech, Clifford Nass and Scott Brave reveal how interactive voice technologies can readily and effectively tap into the automatic responses all speech -- whether from human or machine -- evokes. Wired for Speech demonstrates that people are "voice-activated": we respond to voice technologies as we respond to actual people and behave as we would in any social situation. By leveraging this powerful finding, voice interfaces can truly emerge as the next frontier for efficient, user-friendly technology. Wired for Speech presents new theories and experiments and applies them to critical issues concerning how people interact with technology-based voices. It considers how people respond to a female voice in e-commerce (does stereotyping matter?), how a car's voice can promote safer driving (are "happy" cars better cars?), whether synthetic voices have personality and emotion (is sounding like a person always good?), whether an automated call center should apologize when it cannot understand a spoken request ("To Err is Interface; To Blame, Complex"), and much more. Nass and Brave's deep understanding of both social science and design, drawn from ten years of research at Nass's Stanford laboratory, produces results that often challenge conventional wisdom and common design practices. These insights will help designers and marketers build better interfaces, scientists construct better theories, and everyone gain better understandings of the future of the machines that speak with us.

# Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #888,563 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)  #21 in Books > Computers & Technology > Software > Voice Recognition  #354 in Books > Computers & Technology > Computer Science > Human-Computer Interaction

# Customer Reviews

If you're designing voice user interfaces, you should buy this book.The basic premise of the book is that when a computer has a voice--and it doesn't matter whether the voice is a recorded human or synthesized--people are going to subconsciously interact with the computer as if it is human (bringing their biases about gender, ethnicity, and personality).I bought this book thinking I would skim it for ideas before writing a proposal. The proposal was focused on improving human-computer interaction for a communications device that uses voice (speech recognition) as the input and the output.Well, I skimmed the first couple of chapters and realized that I really should read them more closely. I learned a couple of great nuggets on voice gender that influenced what I would include in the proposal.Then I skimmed the next couple of chapters on personality of voices, realized I should read those more closely, learned a few more nuggets that I knew were going into the proposal.At that point, I realized I needed to read the whole book closely and fast. Luckily, that was not a problem. The book is an easy read. Every chapter talks about an important design issue for voice user interfaces, describes the decisions that a designer could make, then outlines the research that was done, explains what was learned from the research, and discusses the implications of that research for how you should design your interface.In short, this book completely changed the proposal, and I think we have a much better chance of winning the business. Furthermore, I have already identified about 5 major things we can do to improve our exsisting products that I did not know about before reading this book.

This is must reading for anyone in e-commerce marketing. The insight that can be gained from this book is amazing.

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