

Yamaha 「Omotenashi Guide」 and NICT 「VoiceTra」

Cooperation to create a new inbound solution

- “Voice announcements” and “Travel phrases” translated on the spot. Experimental collaboration of two applications to commence from today -

From today, Yamaha Corporation (Headquarters: Shizuoka Prefecture, Hamamatsu City; President: Takuya Nakata; hereafter “Yamaha”) will start experimental cooperation with the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (Headquarters: Tokyo Municipality, Koganei City; President: Masao Sakauchi; hereafter “NICT”).

In order to create a new inbound solution, we will start a collaboration between our Sound Universal Design Support System “Omotenashi Guide” and “VoiceTra”, the multilingual speech translation application for travel developed by NICT.



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Application joint-functionality example

In 2014, we developed the Omotenashi Guide system, which delivers the contents of Japanese language announcements to users’ smartphones in various languages, through text and audio.

Yamaha is currently developing the “Sound UD Project” to cooperate with many commercial establishments, facilities, government bodies, makers and others to spread this technology.

As part of this project, a survey was conducted among 387 foreign visitors to Japan in March 2016 in cooperation with airports, railways, buses, commercial establishments, shopping streets and amusement parks throughout the country. It was found that approximately 81.6% of foreign visitors have faced difficulties from not understanding the language.

The top three most difficult situations were ‘shows and attractions (sightseeing spots and amusement parks)’, ‘conversations’ and ‘announcements’. (Please see the figure below for details.)

As a response to this problem, this application collaboration is being conducted experimentally, providing access to VoiceTra through Omotenashi Guide. “Omotenashi Guide” can be used for announcements and situations that do not require interpersonal communication, and “VoiceTra” can be accessed with just one tap for situations involving conversation.

In addition to this collaboration, we will also add convenient features for foreign visitors to Japan, including a finger-pointing conversation support function.

Since July 2015, Yamaha has been promoting joint research with NICT on an announcement system utilizing NICT’s speech recognition technology ^[*1], and we believe this collaboration has made it possible to provide a more comprehensive inbound solution.

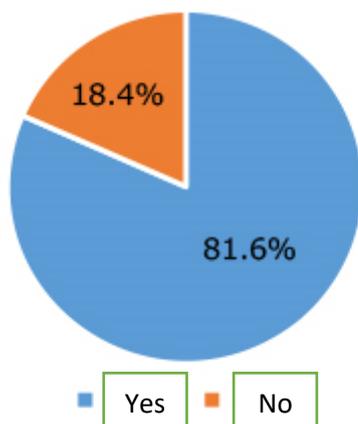
· [*1] <https://www.nict.go.jp/press/2015/07/13-1.html>
https://archive.yamaha.com/ja/news_release/2015/15071301.html

In addition, examples of our past efforts, including this collaboration, will be on exhibit for four days from October 27th (Thursday) to Sunday 30th (Sunday), at the Yamaha booth at the Digital Content EXPO 2016, held at the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation. For details, please visit the following website: <https://www.dcxpo.jp/14724>

In the future, Omotenashi Guide will continue to be built into a more convenient system by collaborating with diverse services and applications, and we will work on the realization of a “Sound Universal Design” concept helpful for everyone.

Survey results (extract)

Q. Have you had any trouble understanding Japanese while in Japan?



Q. What kind of situations did you have trouble in?



Survey method: Surveyors were dispatched to places where the system was trialed, such as airports, train and bus stations, commercial establishments, shopping streets and amusement parks throughout the country, and a survey was conducted after having foreign visitors try the application.

Omotenashi Guide application overview



[Download image](#)

[Application image](#)

Overview : Application which provides the contents of Japanese language announcements in various languages

Price : Free

Compatibility : Requires iOS 8.0 or later
Requires Android 4.4 or later

- ※ Available to download for free from the App Store and Google Play
- ※ User is responsible for any mobile service provider communications fees incurred when downloading the application.
- ※ Please be careful not to disturb anyone near you when using the application.