Wired for Speech: How Voice Activates and Advances the Human-Computer Relationship (MIT Press)

By Clifford Nass, Scott Brave

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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.

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Editorial Review

Review

With *Wired for Speech*, Clifford Nass and Scott Brave have done a brilliant job of tracing the implications of the intensely social nature of speech for the burgeoning arena of voice interface systems. Anyone interested in these systems would do well to read this book.

(Robert B. Cialdini, Arizona State University, author of *Influence: Science and Practice*)

I found *Wired for Speech* absolutely fascinating, full of amazing insights. It tells us that the more we are forced to learn how to interact with computers, the more we learn about the most human part of ourselves: that we are not only the masters but the slaves of speech.

(Robert MacNeil, coauthor of *Do You Speak American?*)

This is a deeply insightful and immensely useful tour of what is sure to become the most important human-machine interface. As someone who thought he knew all about speech interaction, I was nonetheless surprised again and again as I read through it. Remember *2001*? Well, if Hal's fictional designers had read *Wired for Speech*, Hal not only would have brought his ship's crew back alive, he would have delivered a flawless Academy Award speech as well!

(Paul Saffo, Director, Institute for the Future)

Should a computer refer to itself as 'I'? Questions such as these are philosophical, with implications that range from the social to the psychodynamic. In this dense and fascinating work, they are treated empirically: in a series of systematic investigations, the voice of the machine emerges as a new evocative object for thinking about how people actively draw the line between human and artificial. A compelling contribution to our understanding of computer-human relationships -- now and in the years to come.

(Sherry Turkle, author of *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit* and *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*)

About the Author

Clifford Nass is Professor, Department of Communication, and Codirector, Kozmetsky Global Collaboratory, at Stanford University. He is the author of The Media Equation: How People Treat Computers, Television, and New Media Like Real People and Places.

Scott Brave is Chief Technology Officer at Baynote, Inc.

Users Review

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Allison Price:

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Bertie Lewis:

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Christine Flint:

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, and then why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition of information. Even you love Wired for Speech: How Voice Activates and Advances the Human-Computer Relationship (MIT Press), you could enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still want to miss it? What kind of hang type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout folks. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Jordan Moore:

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