



Audiobooks: human voice or text to speech, many solutions for a better access to reading

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The AVH library in France

- Services for print impaired persons

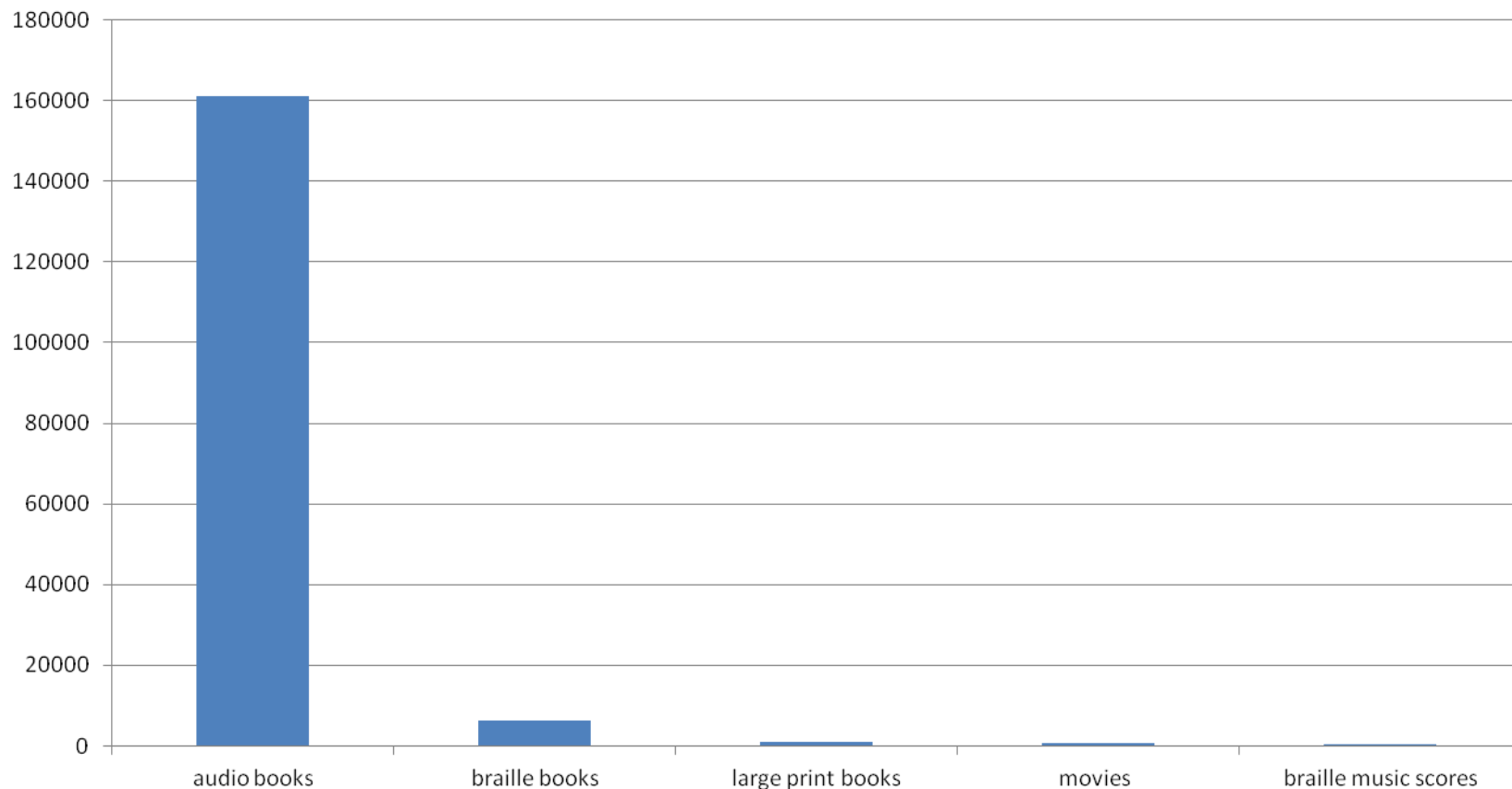


- Accessible documents
 - Braille
 - Audio
 - Large print
 - Digital

A large range of different services

- 4800 active users in 2014
- 170 000 loans (braille / audio / large print / digital files...)
- Services accessible nationwide (download or postal services)

Audiobooks : the large majority of the loans



2014

Commercial audiobooks availability in France : not enough

- +/- 4500 different audiobooks are commercially available
- Compared to 70 000 new books published each year
- Audiobooks = «shortened » version

AVH produces audiobooks for its own needs

- 1400 new audiobooks produced in 2014
- A collection of 18 000 titles
- The titles to be produced are chosen by librarians

AVH production of human narrated audiobooks

- The human narrator : a volunteer
- The technical staff : AVH employees
- All books : produced in Daisy format



But... we need more audiobooks !

- Our goal : give access to all the books printed in France
- 70 000 new books published each year in France (vs 18 000 audiobooks in our collections)
- Difficulties to increase our human-narrated audiobook production

Text to speech : a solution

- Access to the publisher's files guaranteed by law (in France)
- Ability to produce a large number of audiobooks in a short period of time
- The most recent French synthetic voices from Acapela are of very good quality



But... negative perception of the synthetic voices among our users

- In 2013 : 91 % of AVH library users declare preferring human voice to synthetic voice
- Synthetic voice : considered as useful only for very practical use (and **NOT** for fiction)

Our strategy: invite AVH users to test synthetic speech

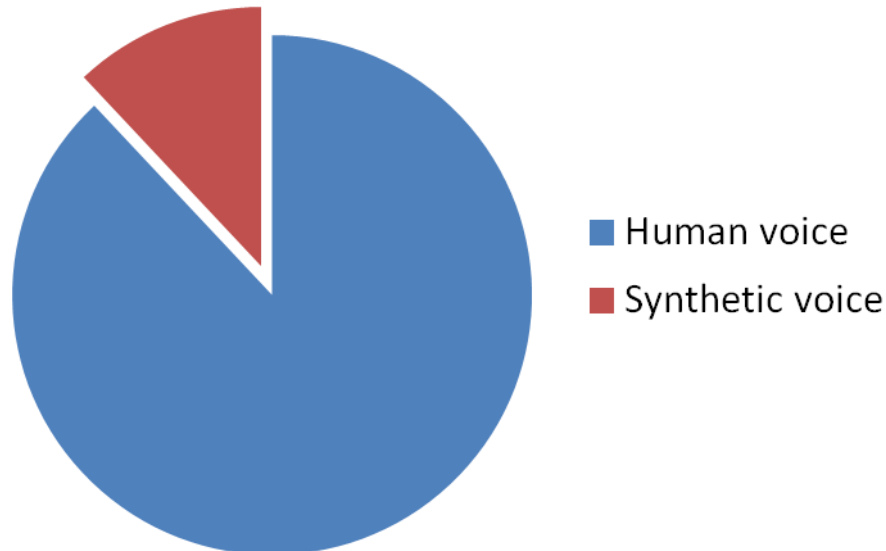
- Working despite the preferences of the users toward human voice
- The goal : give a chance to the human-narrated-audiobooks users to try synthetic speech
- Offer a significant collection from the very beginning
- Offer audiobooks as fast as possible (if possible at the same time they are available in print in the bookstores)

First steps

- In 2013- AVH starts full production of audiobooks in DAISY format read by Acapela synthetic voice Alice
- All kind of books: a large majority of novels
- Large publicity given to the new titles and the most recent publications

2014 : first full year with synthetic-voice-audiobooks loans

- On the 10 books most borrowed 4 were audiobooks made with synthetic voice (4 novels)
- On a total of 160 945 audiobooks loaned:19313 were in synthetic voice (12 %)



2015: Results of the survey among AVH library users

- 72 % of surveyed people will borrow books read by speech synthesis again.
- 57 % said quality was satisfactory and 11% very satisfactory

The work between AVH and Acapela

- Bugs report from AVH
- Constant corrections and support from Acapela
- Ability for AVH to duplicate freely



Two ways of getting access

- Download through our online library « Éole »



- Or receive CDs burnt on demand directly in your mailbox : simplicity for the end-user

Very fast production and publicity

- For the 1st time, the new book season is available for print impaired at the same time as printed books using Acapela voice
- Use of facebook, twitter, newsletters to communicate as fast as possible
- Reading « at the same time » as the rest of the population seems to overcome the disagreements of the synthetics speech

Testimony of a blind user

- ‘I am 75 years old and I never thought I would be able to read the latest best sellers at the same time as people who can see. What a revolution!’

Next steps : international exchanges

- The agreement with Acapela allows us to do international exchanges
- We are waiting for the Marrakech treaty

Thank for your attention

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