

Categorie Premio

Accessibilità

Sostenibilità

Qualità della vita

**Product Name**

Voice Stick

**Designer**

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**Description of innovation social values**

- product category
- formal and functional features
- problems solved by innovation
  - user
  - field of application

**-Concept-**

Many tools and services are available to blind and visually impaired people that give them access to the written word, such as Braille, audio books and online voice services. However, none of these methods can help them acquire information from things that haven't been rendered into an accessible form, such as calling cards, contracts, brochures, newspapers, magazines and documents. To solve this problem, I developed Voice Stick, a portable scanner that instantly translates written information into audio form, helping people live more independent lives.

**-Starting off-**

A tool developed to help blind people read and write is Braille. Braille is a method of writing that uses characters made up of raised dots. It is the most common form of text that blind people can read and write on their own. However, there are some downsides to Braille. The speed of reading Braille is considerably slower than silent reading or reading by listening. The production costs for Braille books are high, making them expensive and difficult to get for many people. And because Braille books are larger than standard print books—Braille characters can't be reduced or enlarged as fonts can—it is difficult to carry and store them. For instance, one book of the Bible rendered in Braille is 20 times the size of the printed text. In addition, it is difficult to learn Braille as the same Braille characters can be interpreted differently according to the context, such as symbols and abbreviations.

**Description of technical features**

- operations
- technology

To improve blind and visually impaired people's access to written information, I wanted to incorporate scanning technology with voice output technology. Optical character recognition (OCR) technology takes typewritten text that is scanned and translates it into machine-editable text. Voice Stick uses text-to-speech (TTS) technology to take the OCR scanned text and translate it into voice form.

To use Voice Stick, turn on the power, plug the earphones into the device, place Voice Stick on the document to be scanned, press the scan button and then press the play button to hear a voice read the printed text.

The buttons on Voice Stick have Braille labels and other tactile cues so users can understand their function through touch.

I designed the power-dot function. When you push the power button at the upper left portion of the device, the power dot raises up letting the user know that it is on.

**Dimensions**

210x14x15.5(mm)

**Materials**

This product will be made out of plastic in the case it is to be mass-produced.

**Certifications**

**Benefits for environment**

**Benefits for human being**

The main purpose of this project was to design a product that, beyond enabling the blind to conveniently acquire textual information, would impart a familiar sense, like a trusted friend. Voice Stick is a familiar reading mate that reads people the information they want to know.