

CODESPEAR®

HELP CENTRAL

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Knowledge Base Article

Unclear Text-to-Speech Voice

SYMPTOMS

A SmartMsg alert sent to voice-capable devices, Text-to-Speech (TTS) is hard to understand:

- The content of the message seems difficult to comprehend
- The voice is too slow or too fast, or
- The voice speaking is not the voice selected.

CAUSES and RESOLUTIONS

Possible Cause: The format of the alert doesn't follow proper English grammar and punctuation.

Resolutions:

- a) Ensure that spelling is correct. The TTS system will not know how to read a misspelled word, for example, "sytsem". You can run a spell checker before delivering the message (circled below).
- b) Ensure that the grammar is correct. The voice will speak what is typed out. The text to speech engine will speak what was typed and will not automatically correct bad grammar. If you type, "a apple are better", it will not know to correct it to, "an apple is better".
- c) Ensure that the punctuation is correct. One of the most difficult things to understand from a text-to-speech voice is when sentences run together. If you type, "that is good Joe I will be back to the office later"; the two independent thoughts will be jumbled together without a break between them. Use periods (.) and commas (,) where you want pauses in the speech. The sentence below could be punctuated better like this – "That is good, Joe. I will be back to the office later."
- d) Common combinations of characters or numbers that need to be read individually should be typed out with spaces. For example, "911" should be typed out "9 <space> 1 <space> 1", so that it is pronounced "Nine one one" instead of "Nine hundred and eleven".

Possible Cause: Text To Speech custom dictionaries are needed.

Resolutions:

- a) Inside the module setup for TTS, you can add custom pronunciations. If a user in your system has a name, which is pronounced differently than the TTS dictionary currently pronounces it, add a custom pronunciation. Simply spell it out phonetically. Also inside your module setup for TTS, add frequent acronyms that your organization users. For example, dispatch operators can type CBRNE as a shortcut and they system can be programmed to say out the entire acronym, "Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or Explosive". Without adding this, the system will attempt to pronounce CBRNE as a word. The custom dictionary can also be used to add abbreviations. For example, the title Dr. would be entered in the dictionary as "Doctor".
 - i. In the Admin Tool, select **Properties** from the **Global** menu.
 - ii. Go to the **Modules** tab.
 - iii. Select the **Text to Speech** module.
 - iv. Click **Setup**.
 - v. Go to the **Settings** tab.
 - vi. This is where the user can add items to the Pronunciation Dictionary and change the Voice and Rate of the Text-to-Speech. See the following steps for more options or see the *SmartMsg Text-to-Speech Guide* for more information.
- b) Combinations of characters or Numbers that need to be read individually should be entered with spaces.
 - i. If you want a collection of letters to be read as individual letters instead of as a word, space the letters out. For example, if you want to say PCI you should type it into SmartMsg as "P <space> C <space> I" to prevent it from trying to pronounce the word.
 - ii. If you want a collection of numbers to be read as individual numbers, separate them with a space. If you type: 1024, it will read: one thousand twenty four. If you type: 1 <space> 0 <space> 2 <space> 4, it will read: one zero two four.

Possible Cause: The rate of diction is either too fast or too slow.

Resolutions:

- a) You can adjust the rate by opening the module setup for TTS and adjusting the rate. The lower the number the slower the voice will speak, the higher, the faster the voice will speak. The range is from -10 to +10
- b) In the Admin Tool, select **Properties** from the **Global** menu.
- c) Go to the **Modules** tab.
- d) Select the **Text to Speech** module.
- e) Click **Setup**.
- f) Go to the **Settings** tab.
- g) Adjust the **Rate**.

Possible Cause: The incorrect voice is selected.

Resolutions:

- a) In the module setup for TTS, make sure the correct voice module is selected and installed on the system. If you have chosen a voice that is not installed on the current server you are connected to, in the module you will see a warning below the voice selection. If your server does not have the selected voice module, it will default to the first available voice that the system has. This often means the voice is sent out with an 8KHz Microsoft voice instead of a higher quality voice, 16KHz that was intended.
- b) In the Admin Tool, select **Properties** from the **Global** menu.
- c) Go to the **Modules** tab.
- d) Select the **Text to Speech** module.
- e) Click **Setup**.
- f) Go to the **Settings** tab.
- g) Select the **Voice**.


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