



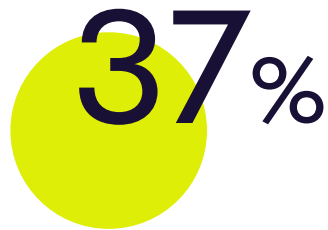
Find your voice

Sounding out the future of voice technology for brands

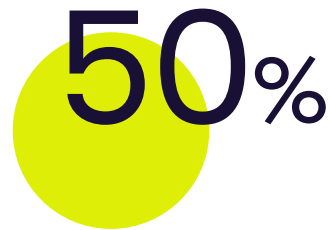


The age of voice technology is here...

Voice tech
is being
adopted:



of UK smartphone owners are using voice tech at least once a month¹



of all searches will be conducted by voice by 2020²



of UK households own at least one smart speaker device³

The industry
is also
excited
- media
agency
execs and
advertisers:



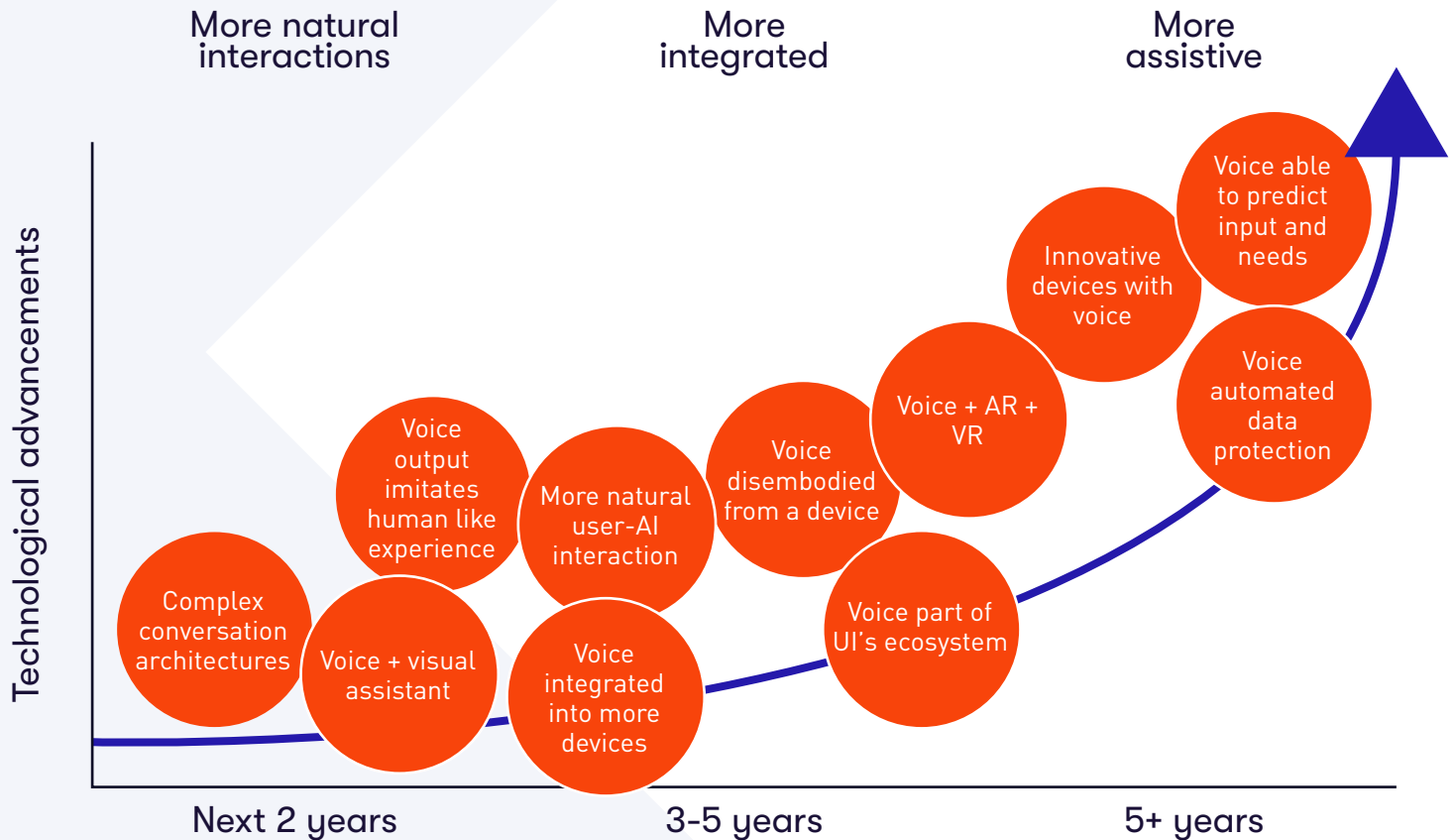
agree it will be important to reach audiences through voice activated devices in the next year (2018)⁴



cite voice interfaces as a priority for 2018⁵



Voice technology will become smarter, faster, integrated with more devices and more assistive



Voice has the potential to disrupt the way people interact with brands



Voice input will be different

People will not say things as they would type them. Conversational questions change the emphasis on keywords.



Brands will rely more on audio at the expense of visual

There will be a different marketing mix, with audio and voice playing a bigger role.




There will be more pressure on winning the search race

With reduced visual displays returning fewer search options, being the number one result will be of the utmost importance.



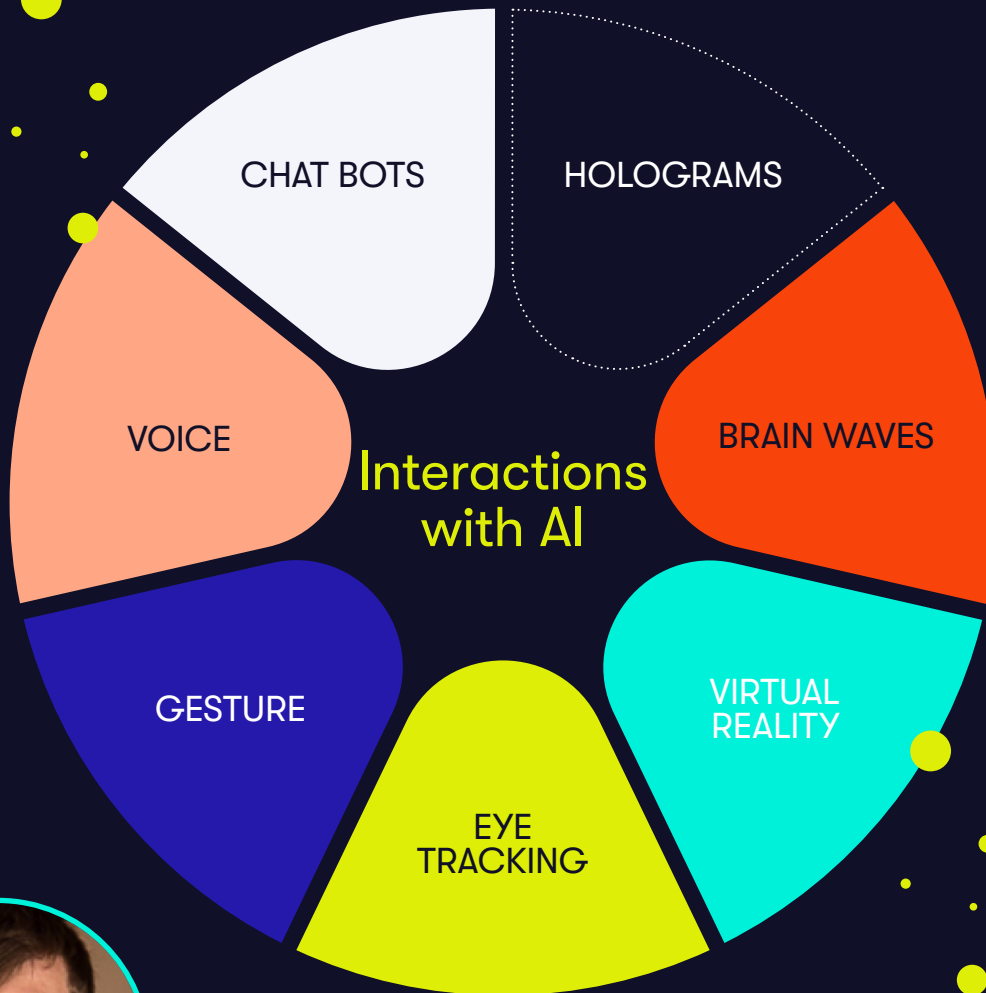
Designing conversations is tricky

Delivering an engaging voice experience is difficult because it relies on understanding conversational architecture.



It's best to think
about voice as
one input or
output, often
linked with AI

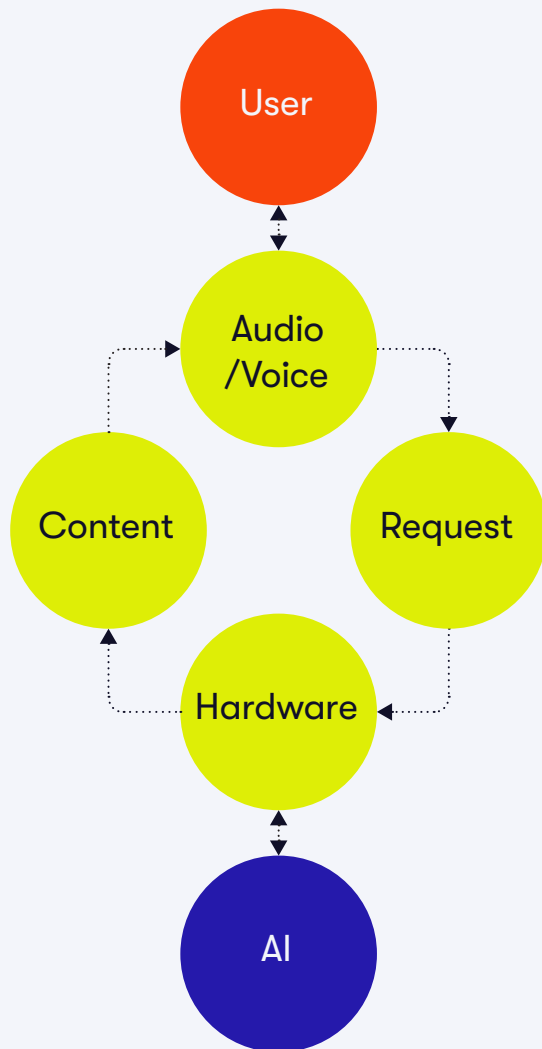
- Voice is an input or output; conversations are carried out by decision trees, and numerous and complex algorithms.
- The 'brains' of voice technology devices are based on a pre-coded conversational architecture.



Tom Hewitson
Conversation
Designer

"Voice technology is powered by AI. However, when we talk about using AI people imagine we're creating sentient beings like Samantha in the movie Her. Instead, it's really just pattern recognition and good conversation design."

Voice facilitates user-to-AI interaction



There are three main types of interaction varying in their complexity to implement.

Directive

The user makes a request transmitted by their voice in the form of audio signals. This request is heard by the hardware (e.g. the smart speaker or a smartphone) and decoded by AI. AI finds the answer and sends it to the hardware which then decodes content as an audio message sent back to the user.

Conversational

The process follows the same pattern as in directive interactions, however the flow is more natural, containing an ongoing series of requests and answers.

Assistive

In this scenario, AI recognises a user's need and starts a conversation or gives directions/information (content). The AI becomes an assistant, able to identify and anticipates users' needs, aiding them through voice.

Three important take-aways to help find your voice

One

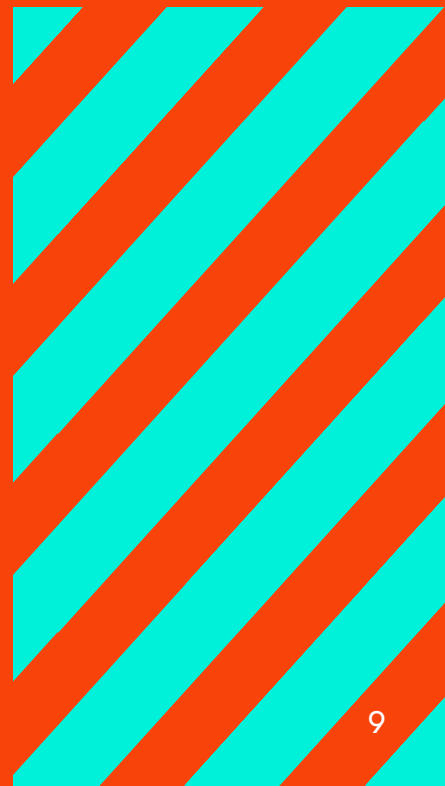
Listen to your audience first.

Two

Consider your brand, your wider strategy and your objectives.

Three

There are many options.
Choose the right route into voice technology for your brand.



Understand your audience, listen first

How, when and why are customers talking with you?

The key to making a high quality voice interaction is understanding how, when and why consumers are talking with you, as well as how they want to be communicated with.

Consider reviewing your consumer touchpoints and customer conversations.



Things to consider

Can you learn from the customer conversation data you already have? Such as from social media, search analytics, website FAQs or even your employees face to face conversations with customers.

Look at the customer journey to better understand pain points and identify usage occasions for voice technology

Building on existing data

Consider making the most of the customer data you already own. Identify pleasure and pain points throughout your customer journey and consider utilising the possibility of voice to either maximise or minimise these moments.

Availability & access

Within voice, brands should be readily available and easily accessible throughout parts of the customer journey. Also, brands can usefully think about where the greatest need for voice is – hands free situations, like when someone is driving a car, for instance.

Meaningful interaction

Consider where else within the customer journey you could establish a meaningful interaction. Is customer service an opportunity to build your voice services?

Maintain engagement

Post-purchase communication and reassurance could leverage all the emotional power of voice to establish and consolidate a relationship with consumers.

High Impact

UTOPIA

Errands

Help people: making life easier and more efficient in moments that matter, saving money or time.

Passions

Delight people: making life fun, entertaining, or amusing by connecting to people's deeper needs.

Low interest

Add real value to customers' lives

Commercial messages need to be high impact, high interest or, ideally, both to avoid appearing as noise.

High Interest

Noise

Messages are overwhelming. Consumers are bombarded with irrelevant information which creates constant front line noise which affects negatively every aspect of their life.

News

Interest people: making people aware of things that interest them whilst filtering out things that won't.

Voice assistants should act as a personal butler. What role can your brand fill?

A personal butler could work as someone's...



Family
doctor

Intimately knowing the user's physical and emotional needs and looking after them.



Parent

Knowing their tastes, needs and behaviours.



Best
friend

Having a personality and knowing the users' deepest secrets while maintaining confidentiality.



Partner/
spouse

Being on their side, teaming up with them to educate and protect their children.



PA

Enabling people to deal only with what is relevant and important to them.



Pet
dog

Being loyal and not taking control of nor protesting about its role.



Consider your
brand, your
wider strategy
and your
objectives

Consider and develop your brand's literal voice

When thinking about creating your own voice, brands should start finding inspiration from human voice interactions to create the most suitable ground for a trustworthy and emotional relationship with people.



Dr Sophie Scott
Neuroscientist

"If you approach the talking voice like a painter, the palette of voices is made of age, socio economic and geographic origins but also emotional states, musicality etc. Brands could investigate this to communicate better through Voice."

Find your voice

Consider your brand's gender, age, nationality and so on.

Be familiar

Research shows familiar accents and sounds are more likely to be engaging and trusted.

Use voice variations

The human voice changes depending on situation, adding extra meaning to speech. Variation illustrates engagement and understanding of the listeners situation.

Check your pitch

Different pitches communicate different statuses and personalities.

Use a wide vocal range

Voices using a wide vocal range sound more engaging and interesting.

Consider your sub brands

Do these share the main brand voice or are they different?

Consider your brand body too

Robots are part of popular culture and consumers find it hard to disconnect voice from the image of a physical robot or avatar.

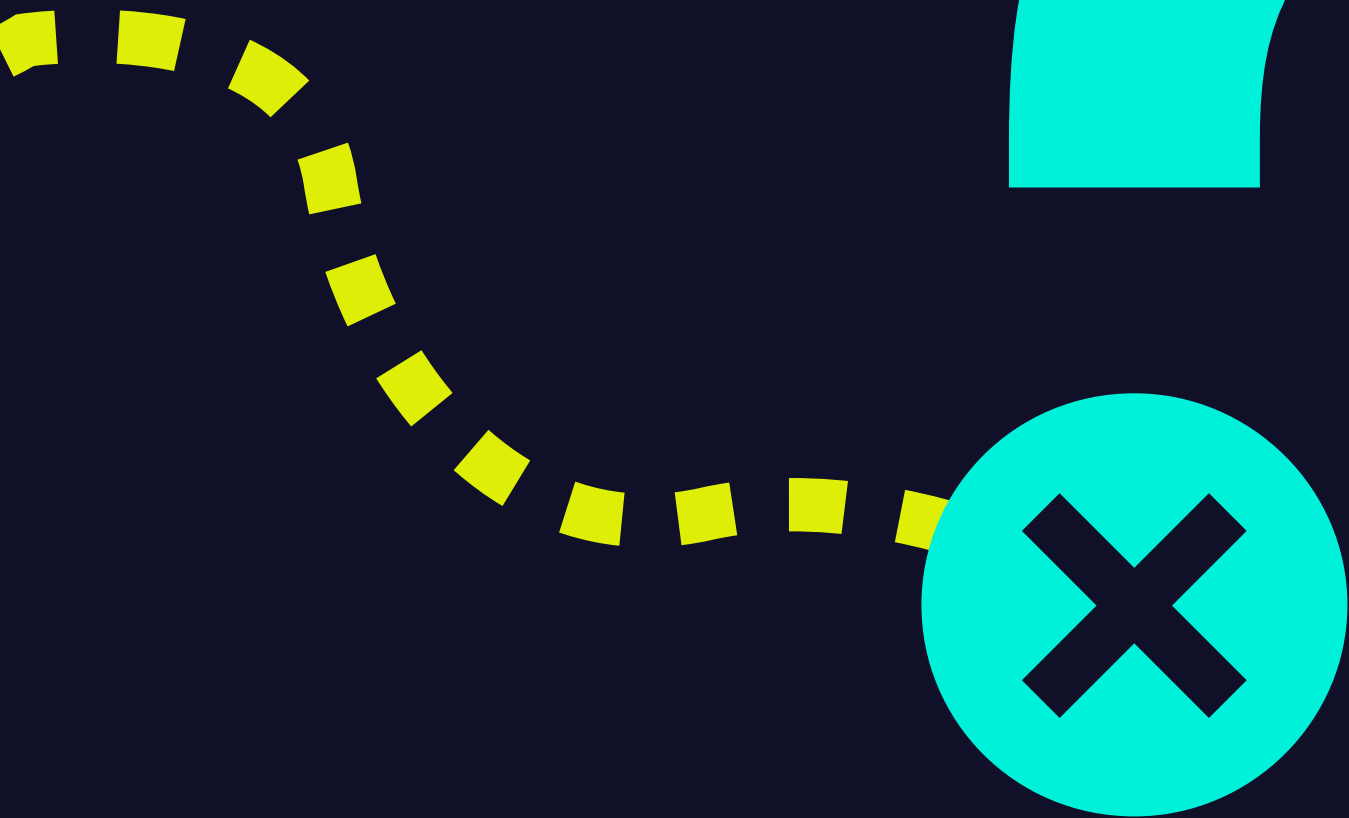
How does voice relate to your wider strategy?

Voice is one channel among many, it has pros and cons and isn't right for every brand or for every objective. Your voice strategy needs to be connected to an overall strategy to ensure effectiveness.



Avoid venturing into voice tech just because it's shiny and new!

How to implement your plans?



There are five main areas that brands can explore to get into voice



Voice apps

Specific voice assistant applications that exclusively work on one of the voice operating systems e.g. Alexa Skills.



Ads

Advertising in its traditional sense. Paid for messages and content targeted at people e.g. digital audio ads.



SEO

Optimising your digital presence for voice search e.g. voice search engine optimisation.



Products / Digital services

Creating new, or augmenting your existing, products or services with voice tech e.g. website or chatbots.



Brand partnerships

Partnering with existing voice tech providers or services e.g. sponsorships of an existing voice tech service.



Voice technology is part of a complicated landscape


To read the full study and to help your brand
find its voice visit iabuk.com/voice or email
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