



For Immediate Release

September 28, 2022

“coemo” read aloud speaker device that uses AI to create voices that sound just like moms and dads

Recipient of the Kids Design Award 2022 “Special Prize (TEPIA Special Prize)”!

Finally goes on sale tomorrow, Thursday, September 29, 2022

TOMY Company, Ltd.



TOMY Company, Ltd. (Representative Director, President & COO: Kazuhiro Kojima, headquarters: Katsushika-ku, Tokyo) announced that its new product going on sale, “coemo” read aloud speaker device that uses AI to create voices that sound just like moms and dads^(*), received the **“Special Prize (TEPIA Special Prize)”** in the “Design for Children’s Creativity and Future” category of the **“Kids Design Award 2022”** announced on Wednesday, September 21, 2022 (sponsored by the Kids Design Association, a specified non-profit corporation; supported by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Cabinet Office, and Consumer Affairs Agency). Out of 214 award-winning entries for the Kids Design Award 2022, “coemo” was selected as one of the 36 excellent products^(**). This is the first time that TOMY has received the “Kids Design Award.”

Reason for receiving the “Special Award (TEPIA Special Award)”

Through the use of AI synthesized voice technology, a voice can be registered and reproduced through a smartphone app, also enabling a variety of emotional expressions. This proposal is also useful for handicapped parents. The product was highly evaluated as a cutting-edge communication tool that combines recent advances in AI technology with approaches to supporting child-rearing and fostering children’s sensitivity and creativity, and as such, it is worthy of this award.

“coemo” was developed based on the desire to create a product that moms and dads would want to have, and by absorbing feedback from various angles such as questionnaires^(***), interviews, and user testing. Some moms and dads gave feedback that they “want to read books to their children, but it is difficult to do so on a daily basis.” This product gives children a sense of security by reading aloud to them with a synthetic voice of a familiar person, and at the same time, allows parents to spend more time on “enriching communication with their children, such as bonding,” making it an enjoyable experience for both children and moms and dads. Also, reading aloud with background music and recitation will provide children who are familiar with images and books with a “new experiences for spurring imagination through listening.”

“coemo” has been highly acclaimed even before its release, winning the grand prize in the “Educational Toys category” of the “The 2022 Japan Toy Awards” (sponsored by the Japan Toy Association) in June 2022, and goes on sale on Thursday, September 29, 2022.

(*1) The phrase “moms and dads” as appears in this news release refers collectively to all family members.

(*2) Excellent products: The Grand Prize, Excellence Awards, Encouragement Awards, and Special Awards are selected from among excellent products.

(*3) The questionnaires were administered on a total of three occasions from August through December 2021. They were conducted by means of online survey administered to a total of 3,200 women in the 25 to 49 age demographic. (Survey services provider: Macromill)

About award-winning “coemo”

○ Realistic synthesized voices fuel anticipation for daily reading aloud time! Fosters children’s imagination and creativity

“coemo” uses the cutting-edge AI voice synthesis technology “coestation”^(*4) to read many stories in a synthetic voice (*coe*) that sounds just like the voice of a real person^(*5). By reproducing the emotional expressions and inflections of a professional narrator, the system makes reading aloud sound as natural as if one’s mom or dad were speaking. In addition, by matching the sound effects and background music to each story, you can enjoy a realistic reading aloud experience.



This device conveys stories exclusively in audible format without visual elements. As such, children are able to focus on listening while developing their imaginations and creativity.

(*4) The “coestation” is an AI speech synthesis service by Coestation Inc., which produces a wide variety of synthesized speech (artificial voices) easily resembling those of everyone from loved ones to celebrities.

(*5) Some contents allow you to set up to five characters as the person’s name to be called, but there is no “function to generate sentences freely with the synthesized voice.”

○ 60 content options available at no charge

The “coestation” app for voice registration and the “coemo app” equipped with stories (children’s stories) contents are linked to register a voice (*coe*), and after you select your favorite content on your smartphone and send it to the main unit, “coemo” will read aloud a story in the designated voice (*coe*). The “coemo app” contains 60 contents that can be enjoyed for free, including 45 Japanese and international stories (children’s stories) and original stories, as well as contents such as music that leads to quality sleep in collaboration with sleep professionals “BRAIN SLEEP,” and “Nerumae Taisou,” etc.



○ Supporting moms and dads with child rearing!

The “coemo” device provides support to moms and dads with child rearing through its various uses. This includes, “enhancing parent-child time before going to bed,” “leading parents and children to quality sleep,” “using the ‘coemo’ device to ensure that children are able to sleep with peace of mind even when a their guardian has his or her hands full with household tasks or his or her job,” “relaxing with listening to stories together on those nights when they feel tired,” and “enjoying immersive experience upon registering the *coe* of grandparents, relatives and other loved ones.”

○ Developing products by absorbing the feedback of moms and dads

In questionnaires, interviews, and user testing, we heard from parents that they want to read books to their children, but it is difficult to do so on a daily basis and that it is hard to read to their older children while taking care of their younger children. In fact, the monitor survey also yielded comments that parents and children now feel more satisfied with the reading aloud time such as, “the *coe* of mom and dad provides reassurance and peace of mind,” “the background music readily draws the listeners into the world of the story being told,” they “placing focus on listening spurs the imagination,” and “having both hands free enables us to listen to the story together and have physical contact.”

○ The “coemo” device is designated as an Accessible Design Toy that people with visual disabilities can also enjoy

This product has received “Guide Dog Mark” certification as an “Accessible Design Toy” promoted by the Japan Toy Association, as a toy enjoyable together with people with visual disabilities, including “equipped with screen reading function in the linked app,” “sound effects to support operation,” and “use of relief buttons that can be touched and understood.”



<Product Outline>

Product Name: “coemo”
SRP: JPY 12,980 (tax included)
Launch Date in Japan: Thursday, September 29, 2022
Recommended Age: 3 years and up
Package Contents: coemo device ×1, startup guide ×1
*A separate smartphone is required to operate the device.
Batteries Required: 3×AA alkaline (not included)
Dimensions: W 125 × H 90 × D 120mm
Sales Channels: Toy stores, toy sections of department stores/mass retailers in Japan, online stores, and TOMY Company’s official online store “Takara Tomy Mall” (takaratomy.jp), etc.
Copyright: © TOMY
Website: www.takaratomy.co.jp/products/coemo



About “Kids Design Award”

The Kids Design Award was established in 2007 with the aim of selecting outstanding products, services, spaces, activities, and research that fulfill the objectives of “ensuring a safe life for children,” “nurturing children with sensitivity and creativity,” and “creating a society where it is easy to have and raise children,” and disseminating them widely throughout society. kidsdesignaward.jp

• Award-winning category: “Design for Children’s Creativity and the Future”

Products, services, buildings/space, activities, research, etc. that: contribute to children’s creativity and sensitivity, to the development of children’s creativity and sensitivity, and to the acquisition of diverse knowledge and improvement of their motor skills; include new ideas, clever solutions and methods.

About the “Special Award (TEPIA Special Award)”

TEPIA (Technology Utopia, the Association for Technological Excellence Promoting Innovative Advances), which endorses the philosophy of the Kids Design Association, awards the TEPIA Special Prize every year to the most outstanding entry for understanding the relationship between advanced technology and society from a child’s perspective among the Kids Design Award entries.

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