



To: Faculty & Staff
From: OIT & Accessible Technology Initiative
Date: March 27, 2017
RE: Email for Everyone: Enabling the Text-to-Speech Feature in Microsoft Outlook

Why Enable the Text-to-Speech Feature (Speak) in Outlook?

Email messages need to be readable for individuals with vision impairment/blindness, and anyone who relies on a screen reader to access the information. This requirement is a mandate from the Chancellor's Office to remove barriers caused by inaccessible technology. It is also a requirement of Section 504 and 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Use the Speak feature to text your email messages before distributing to the campus. Inaccessible email messages create significant challenges for vision impaired/blind individuals.

How to Add the Text to Speech Feature in Outlook

Outlook 2010 and Outlook 2013 have a Text to Speech feature that can be added to the toolbar. As the command is not listed in the Ribbon by default, you first need to add it to the Ribbon or Quick Access Toolbar. Once it is added to the Ribbon, you can select the message contents and click the Speak command. The message will be read to you so long as the message is formatted for accessibility.

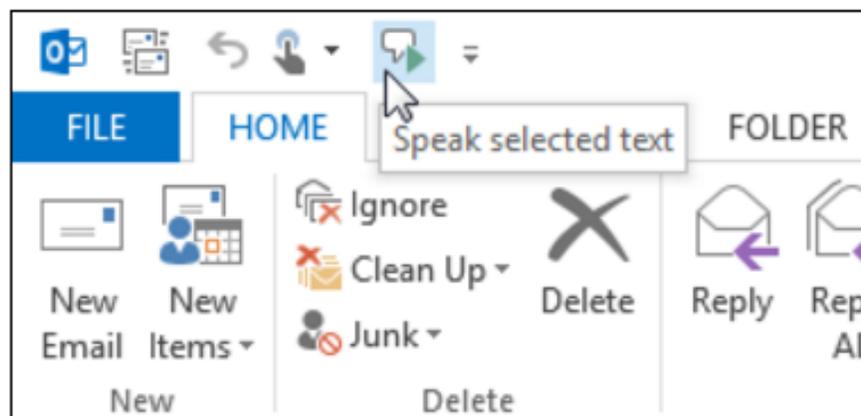


Figure 1 The Speak Icon is Shown in the Quick Access Toolbar



Steps to Add the Speak Command to the Quick Access Toolbar:

1. File-> Options-> Quick Access Toolbar
2. Set the "Choose commands from" drop down list to: Commands Not in the Ribbon
3. From the list of commands select; Speak
4. Click the button: Add > >
5. Click OK.

To Use the Speak Command:

To use the Speak command, select all the contents of the message (Control+A), then click the Speak icon.

When sending email messages for distribution to the campus, please be sure to include readable text in the body of the message.

It is important that we design our messages with our audience in mind, including those who cannot rely on vision alone to access your message.

For more information, or for assistance with creating accessible email, please contact Tawn Gillihan at (209) 667-34170 or tgillihan@csustan.edu.

- [Text to Speech Feature in Microsoft Outlook](#)
- [Stanislaus State Accessibility Site](#)
- [Infographic on Creating Accessible Emails](#)
- [Video Tutorial for Creating Accessible Email](#)