ACROSS THE TABLE

BUSINESS CONSULTING

BUSINESS JOB 10 · EPISODE 10

ElevenLabs vs Murf vs Speechify

Turning writing into speech — for narration, for training, or just so you can listen

Knowledge Article 10

AI Stack Series · acrossthetable.biz

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THE JOB THESE THREE DO

Some things are better heard than read. A phone greeting, a training module, a walkthrough of how something works.

Recording them yourself means a quiet room, several takes, and editing. So the greeting stays robotic and the training stays a PDF nobody opens.

These three turn written words into spoken ones. They are built for genuinely different jobs, and one of them is not really for publishing at all.

> **BEFORE YOU CLONE ANYONE'S VOICE**
> Copying a real person's voice — yours, a colleague's, anyone's — needs their explicit permission, in writing. These tools make it easy. That does not make it yours to do.

WHO EACH ONE IS

ElevenLabs — the realistic one

What it is: Realistic AI voice generation and cloning in many languages.

Best for: Narration, IVR, audio versions of written content.

Watch out for: Voice cloning needs explicit consent.

ElevenLabs produces the most convincing voices, in many languages, and can copy a specific voice. That last ability is why the permission rule above matters.

Murf — the narration one

What it is: Studio-style AI voiceover with timing controls.

Best for: Training and explainer narration.

Watch out for: Fewer voices than ElevenLabs.

Murf is built for business narration with timing controls, so the voice lines up with what is on screen. Fewer voices, more control over delivery.

Speechify — the listening one

What it is: Text to speech for listening and light narration.

Best for: Turning documents into audio you can consume.

Watch out for: Not built for production voiceover.

Speechify is for consuming rather than producing — turning documents into audio you listen to while driving. Not built for finished voiceover work, and the article is clear about that.

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HOW THEY COMPARE

	ElevenLabs	Murf	Speechify
Best for	Realistic AI voice	Business voiceovers	Text-to-speech
Ease of use	Beginner	Beginner	Beginner
Small-business fit	High	High	High
Larger-business fit	High	High	Medium / High
Its main job	Generate voice	Produce narration	Turn text into audio
Choose this if	Voice quality and customization matter	You produce business training or content	Accessibility and listening is the goal
Price	Free tier; paid per month by characters.	Paid per user/month.	Free tier; paid per year.

Note the last row. ElevenLabs if voice quality matters, Murf if you are narrating training, Speechify if the goal is you listening rather than customers listening.

HOW A BUSINESS ACTUALLY USES EACH ONE

A business with a phone system

A proper greeting and menu, recorded once from a script, re-recorded in two minutes when the hours change. Compare that with booking a studio or using whoever in the office sounds best.

A company producing training

Murf narrates the modules with timing matched to the slides. When a procedure changes, one line of script changes and the audio is regenerated.

An owner with no reading time

Speechify turns long documents into audio for the drive. Nothing is published. The value is entirely in getting through material you would otherwise not read.

WHAT IT COSTS

ElevenLabs and Speechify have free tiers. Murf is paid. ElevenLabs charges by how much audio you generate, which suits occasional use well.

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For a one-off job like a phone greeting, the free tier of ElevenLabs will almost certainly cover it. Do not subscribe for something you will do twice a year.

WHERE THIS SITS IN YOUR STACK

An AI voice becomes much more useful when you build production around it. Start with your script. ElevenLabs, Murf or Speechify handles the appropriate audio job. Descript can help edit recorded content. HeyGen can pair voice with an AI presenter when that's appropriate. Canva creates the supporting visuals. Then the finished material can go to YouTube for marketing or into your learning-management system for employee or customer training. One script can become multiple business assets.

The pieces around it:

- Descript — audio and video editing
- HeyGen — AI presenter
- Canva — visual production
- YouTube — distribution
- Learning management system — training distribution

THE CEO DECISION

- Is this for customers to hear, or for you to listen to? Different tools entirely.
- Do you need more than one language? That is where generated voice clearly beats recording yourself.
- If you clone a voice, do you have written permission from that person?
- How often will you actually use it? Twice a year means free tier, not subscription.

APPLY IT TO YOUR BUSINESS

Listen to your own phone greeting as a customer would. Then read one paragraph of your most important written material and ask whether anyone has ever read it.

If the greeting is poor or the material goes unread, you have a use. If both are fine, this is a tool looking for a problem and you can skip it.

YOUR QUICK REVIEW

- ☐ Is the audio for customers or for me?
- ☐ What is my phone greeting like right now?
- ☐ Do I need more than one language?
- ☐ If I clone a voice, is the permission in writing?

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- ☐ How many times a year will I use this?
- ☐ Will the free tier cover that?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Tool	Where to find it	What it is for
ElevenLabs	elevenlabs.io	Narration, IVR, audio versions of written content.
Murf	murf.ai	Training and explainer narration.
Speechify	speechify.com	Turning documents into audio you can consume.
Across the Table AI Assessment	acrossthetable.biz/#assessment	Fifteen minutes. Tells you which of the twenty jobs to start with.
The Scaling Edge	acrossthetablebiz.substack.com	Weekly newsletter for owners without a business background.

CONTINUE LEARNING

This is Business Job 10 of twenty. Episode 11 is Make the Picture — Midjourney, Firefly and DALL·E.

Episode 4, HeyGen vs Synthesia vs Descript, pairs with this one if you are producing video as well as audio.

READ AND CONNECT WITH ACROSS THE TABLE

Across the Table website: https://acrossthetable.biz

The Scaling Edge newsletter: https://acrossthetablebiz.substack.com

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@AcrossTheTableConnie

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