The Blizzard Challenge 2014
Evaluating corpus-based speech synthesis on common databases
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In order to better understand and compare research techniques in building corpus-based speech synthesizers on the same data, the annual Blizzard Challenges 2005-2013 were held. We are now pleased to call for participation in the tenth challenge: Blizzard Challenge 2014. The basic challenge is to take the released speech data, build synthetic voices, and synthesize a prescribed set of test sentences. The output from each synthesizer is then evaluated through extensive listening tests. The following is an outline description of the challenge – for full details and the rules of participation, please see the web pages.

- Indian Languages

    - About 2 hours of speech data in each of six Indian languages: Assamese, Gujarati, Hindi, Rajasthani, Tamil and Telugu, recorded by professional speakers in high quality studio environments. Text is provided in UTF-8 format. No other information, such as segment labels, is provided. These speech databases are provided by the group of institutions: IIIT Hyderabad, IIT Madras, DAIICT, SSN College of Engineering, IIT Mandi and IIT Guwahati.
    - Hub Task 2014-IH1 – Build one voice in each language from the provided data.
    - Spoke Task 2014-IH2 – Synthesize multilingual sentences (i. e., IL + English)

Blizzard Workshop: The systems will be presented by the participants at the Blizzard Challenge 2014 workshop, which will be held in Singapore.

Website: http://www.synsig.org/index.php/Blizzard_Challenge_2014

Registration: Interested parties should register as soon as possible, by mailing blizzard@festvox.org. They should identify a contact person in their team, and provide email and postal addresses. A registration fee is payable for each system submitted for evaluation – details can be found on the website.

Licenses: The license for the released data can be found via the Blizzard website. Data will be released to each participant once the appropriate license has been agreed to.

Mailing list: It is essential to join the blizzard-discuss mailing list, which is used to send important information to participants. Instructions are on the Blizzard website.

Provisional timeline:

Feb 15	2014	databases to be released
Apr 15	2014	test sentences released to participants
Apr 21	2014	participants submit synthetic speech
May	2014	evaluation systems go live
Jun 30	2014	end of evaluation period
Aug 09	2014	deadline to submit workshop papers
Aug 15	2014	notification of acceptance
Sep 14–18	2014	Interspeech 2014, Singapore
Sep 19	2014	Blizzard Challenge 2014 Workshop, Singapore

Further Information: For further information please contact blizzard@festvox.org.

A description of the challenge was published at Interspeech 2005:
http://www.festvox.org/blizzard/bc2005/IS051946.PDF