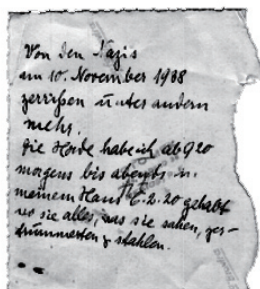


# Voyager Out to Digital Publishing

# 船は出てゆく

The time is coming to harmonize text, photograph, illustration, manga, video, sound, all on digital publishing. Voyager will assist anyone who wants to publish in its own right.



from "I Photograph to Remember" ©1991 Pedro Meyer

We have our own stories in our mind; family memories, story of life, statements after hardships, photos. Precious materials are still kept somewhere. You finally have your own ways of expressing voices from such past in publishing.

Voyager will support anybody wishing to publish own materials to the world. Voyager believes digital publishing is the way to accomplish such desire.

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## VOYAGER



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<http://www.dotbook.jp/store/>

Logo; Kouga Hirano

## Riso Bookstore: Not virtual, But being ideal - Getting on board of eBook on internet

Riso Bookstore is a webstore specializing in eBooks that Voyager is operating in Japan. In addition to the Japanese major publishers such as Kodansha, Kadokawa Shoten, Shincho-sha, there are a number of independent publishers and authors making available their works in the store. Reading experiences on PC/Mac to mobile devices including iPhone is happening at Riso. All of the products on Riso are also available for the people visually challenged through the read-out function.

How will the digitally published works be remained? Voyager has been keen on this issue since founded. Digital products are only for reading experiences in short term and can be thrown away. They have been treated as if there is no on going life for itself. The more the sales are, the better the short life of the digital products. Few publishers thought of perpetual life of the digitally published works.

Print media was established to remain for its own right. The media, printed books, was given longevity by itself. Libraries were created to store and maintain such intellectual treasures. The books can remain, thus people paid more attention to make the best of their works on the books.

We have always given our full thought to hand down digitally published materials. What we can do to create a little interesting book stores and libraries on internet. At the same time, we have not sought any large-sized and costly system is required. Voyager's Riso Bookstore has started in September of 2000 as if a little child learned to walk.

### ❖ Any LCD supported device can read eBooks

We have created the above buzzword for the Tokyo International Bookfair 2005. Versatility of the devices has expanded and mobile phones in

particular have prevailed in our daily life.

People used to think reading experiences on LCD displays including those for PCs do not work.

However, due to the unlimited data package



The poster  
for the Tokyo  
International  
Bookfair 2005

service started in 2003, people began to enjoy content on mobile phones, especially manga. Even smaller size screens than PC, younger people are engaged in reading novels and mangas on mobile, and novels written on mobile became much appreciated. Publishers are delighted to distribute such "mobile novels". Younger people do not care much about the size of the displays and the less satisfying quality. Content delivered through the mobile networks made more sense to them.

Now that many devices including iPhone 3G, iPod touch, Kindle, Android, PSP, DSi, et al are making such buzz and books can be read digitally on all these devices.

## ❖ PC can be people's reading room, book store and library

Continuous connectivity of PC to internet has become norm. People search, read and send messages to others in every day life. PCs are used like their reading rooms, book stores, libraries and plaza to sit down and read. There shall be unique mission in something only digital can do. We shall shift the value system to that of more writers and readers oriented. We already see a number of potentials in digital. It may take time. Nevertheless, we should believe in the future. Thus, we named our bookstore as "Riso", i.e. ideal.

When people read printed books, there are 2-page in front of you. Even if a very thick size book of many pages, a reader can only see the pages in view. Continuous connectivity made possible to send 2-page at a time for a reading experience, instead of sending the entire book data once. You can store the book somewhere up in the cloud and when you want to read it, you just pull down the pages you want. PCs shall be equipped with functions of desirable bookstores and libraries, such as functions of search, browse, purchase and keep the books in bookshelves.

Riso Bookstore has started to have functions for reading experiences on PC initially. T-Time Crochet proprietary developed by Voyager is one of the functions equipped at Riso. Any eBooks encoded on dotbook also developed by Voyager can be stored on Crochet's bookshelves. More than 25,000 eBooks encoded in dotbook can be enjoyed in such manner.

Crochet enables you to pick up books from the bookshelves, show the table of content and go to the very top page or where you had left the book. "Enlarged view" will give you larger view of the page, which can be used to show any details of the pages.

Corchet is a web browser plug-in, rather than an application and page description can be made like HTML. For example, placements of banners and purchase buttons, leading people to purchase page, and guiding people to mobile purchase site by using QR code, etc. can be fulfilled. People can



From Riso Bookstore:  
Gentosha Comics  
"Web Spica"  
presented by  
Crochet



Any desired page  
can be shown  
instantaneously by  
Crochet.

enjoy both books and websites flexibly. Dotbook encoded files can be read by Crochet on iPhone, iPod touch, DS, PSP, Android, Windows Mobile, and upcoming Nokia's smart phones. Since the dotbook encoded file data are transmitted in encrypted status, there is no concerns of piracy.

## ❖ Mobile is a book

Considering likely environment for our reading books, mostly we only have moments on the way to work, at a coffee shop or right before going to sleep in bed, instead of facing a book at a desk with ample time. This proves that one important component of books is mobile aspect. A paper back and such portable version of books became popular due to the mobile aspect of the books.

Books require mobile function. Thus, PCs have been limiting such capability of the books. Probably the heavily wired PCs with powerful search engine

capability was like the image of digital publishing before the dawn of its prosperity. We have been striving to go beyond such limitations.

iPhone 3G released in Japan in July of 2008 was what we have called “ideal books on mobile digital device”. We realized at glance of the device that all kinds of functions necessary for digital book experiences are quipped, such as touch panel, easy to browse by changing size of the displayed page, WiFi capability, etc.

Riso’s reader, Crochet are now well connected to mobile devices such as iPhone. This will expand the horizon of eBooks in conjunction with PCs. Now people can enjoy books like PCs are bookstores and libraries and that mobile phones are books. This new environment can entertain and expand the people’s eBook reading experiences to more free and unrestricted ones. We believe this is not virtual, it becomes real.

Google has aggressively sought its own way of digital publishing. Amazon has also made available digital book browsing, and prevailed with own eBook reader, Kindle. Japan’s National Diet Library made an announcement to propel digitization of the books in the library by utilizing the Government’s budget. These phenomena tell the fact that the conventional meaning of books are being dismantled and also the reconstruction of knowledge is happening through the digital innovations. It is completely different from the attitude presented by the Japanese publishing industry using the digital being just a way to make up decline of the revenue. The transition to the digital media has much more magnitude to change the world. Even if we are small and independent, we strive to create uniquely independent media for readers and writers with our Riso Bookstore.



From ASCII “The company developed iPhone” by Kazutoshi Ohtani, which is supposed to be browsed by iPhone but rejected by Apple to distribute through App Store. It was notified that any book relating to employee and management of Apple are excluded from App Store. We were quite disenchanted as iPhone to be ideal eBook device. This has led to think about the freedom of press through mobile devices.



illustration: Masanori Date

If you wish to catch a butterfly for sure, you may use a big net . But my interest is to catch it bare-handed, even if I had the net——

-from words of FranAgois Reischenbach (Film maker)-



T-Time  
<http://www.voyager.co.jp/T-Time/>



azur  
<http://www.voyager.co.jp/azur/>





# eBook for those visually challenged

## ❖ Mobile has expanded the way

eBook file, dotbook has become accessible to visually challenged people. Thus, the eBooks already available in public can have read-out capability to support their reading experiences.

In addition to the publishers already being supportive to read-out functions such as Kodansha, Gutenberg 21, 21st Century Play Library, et al, Shincho-sha and Kadokawa Shoten also participated. Dotbook encoded eBook files having capability of read-out function will be significantly expanded. The dotbook files are identical to those for physically unimpaired. As long as they are marketed at the same price and distributed, there is no need of applications for grant of use and approvals.

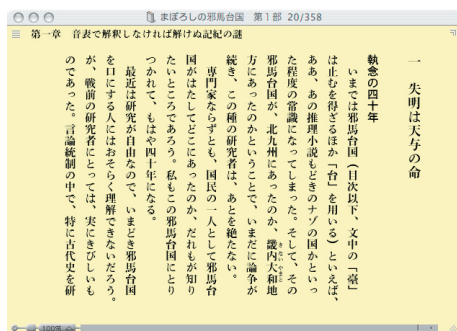
In Japan, there are more than 300,000 people visually challenged. There seems to be more than one million people if people of amblyopia and those having weak eyesight are counted as well. Currently, a read-out software for PCs called "screen reader" became popular amongst visually challenged people, which includes one entitled as "PC-Talker" developed by Kochi System

Development.

Kochi System Development and Voyager have worked together to make available a read-out function for eBooks. Kochi System Development has number one share in this kind. Recently, they have developed "MyBook" enabling people to easily enjoy eBooks with simple operations. Owing to MyBook, on top of Daisy books, Aozora, Naïve Net, Braille books and PDF documents, dotbook has become capable of read-out function.

## ❖ "For us, a book does not mean the book."

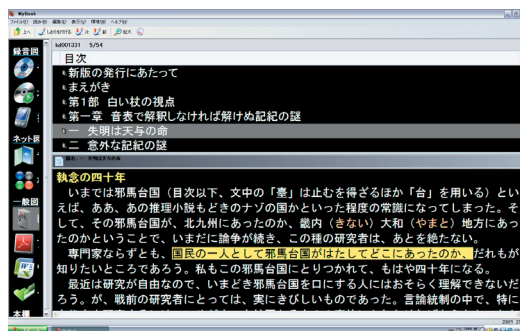
Voyager has reinforced dotbook's enlarging function to support people of weak eyesight including seniors in 2006. In October of 2006, we made available functions for the people having weak eyesight through the collaborations of Alpha System's "Digital Kataribe" player. They were not designed for the people visually impaired. Only way to support their reading experiences is to provide the function of read-out. Due to DRM embedded in dotbook, read-out function was restricted. We have spent time to re-recognize how to assist visually challenged people. We have been to assemblies and study groups for supporting



.book

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Kodansha, "Maboroshi no Yamataikoku", by Kohei Miyazaki



MyBook

visually challenge people. We came to realize the reality. How they are overcoming the handicap of gathering information. We deeply sympathized to their ever lasting efforts. We have learned that there are a number of existing technologies that we can utilize. Our attitude of aiming to develop “de fact standard” has impaired our vision.

One day we heard the following message. “For us, a book does not mean the book. They are like bound bulk papers. We cannot read them.” What this very person visually completely impaired has mentioned next really astonished us. “EBooks are books to us. They can be read and we can understand.” We have devoted ourselves to make read-out function to be equipped in dotbook from this point.

#### ❖ Exclusivity cannibalizing

If dotbooks disclosed its proprietary technology, it could enhance the collaborations of DRM and also read-out engine to accelerate the support to people visually challenged. The comment of “eBooks being a real book” makes us think of working to enforce the accessibility of eBooks to them. Sometimes exclusivity may seem to make more business. Nonetheless, it can also limit openness of itself. We realized if open technology can enlarge the ground of the same eBook for both physically unimpaired and visually challenged, then that can uplift the business after all.

#### ❖ Image envisioned by visually challenged

The fundamental cause of the sales of books is to

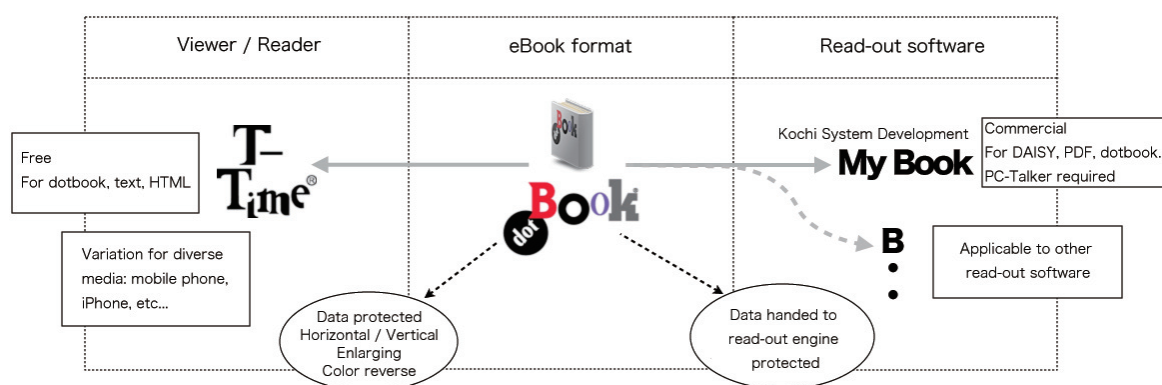
have people desired to read the books. Therefore, it is essential to make available books to whoever wishes to read, which includes anybody having physical difficulties. There are a number of publishers employed dotbooks. So, if dotbooks is equipped to have the function of read-out, it can make best selling books available for visually challenged. We have disclosed the technology of T-Time/dotbook to Kochi System Development. They have made “PC-Talker” readable by dotbook. Voyager also made efforts to make additional revisions to dotbook for the read-out. Now any publisher can easily choose an eBook based on dotbook to have the read-out function.

#### ❖ Open positions

Due to the need of visually challenged people, the collaboration between Kochi System Development and Voyager occurred. In fact, the development process was shortened because of the open and good-will collaborations. Still, MyBook is remained to be an independent software for read-out, and T-Time/dotbook can be applicable to develop other kinds of functions for new business. We are very glad to find this new open positions for the both parties.

#### ❖ Still more good news to come

Needless to say, this is not about the heartwarming story. The important thing is that we became a part of improving reading experiences of visually challenged people. Then, why not all the publishers join force? There are a number of underlying issues.



Relation between Viewer / Reader, eBook format and Read-out software

None of the publishers disagree with the efforts. Yet, due to extra process required to attain approvals from authors, etc., some publishers do not stand up. Do any authors reject the idea of read-out functions? Some authors may not authorize digitalization of their works. However, it is unlikely foreseen those works already approved to be digitally published and the very authors go against read-out. The process to obtain understanding may take time. But, efforts should be made.

The publishing business has been struggling with the economic downturn of the industry. In the meantime, mobile novels and manga have shown the uplifting elements for the future. The core of the business going to digital has been an issue of everybody for sometime. Yet, no substantial vision about what the digital publishing can bring was neither addressed nor discussed.

The digital publishing in Japan has 20-year of the history. During the time period, publishers did not perform major roll in progress of the digital publishing. Leadership is very important in all areas. And, the digital publishing for the people visually challenged needs leadership and guidance of the industry by the publishers.



A scene of presenting "Aoi-tori Bunko with enlarged letters" presented by Kodansha. Kodansha has donated the same to 66 schools for visually challenged students nation-wide. The books were made of data from Voyager's dotbook data files.