

If I asked you what gender your voice assistant is, I'd bet you'd answer female. And if you ask your voice assistant if it identifies as a particular gender, it would probably claim that it doesn't have one.

Know why those popular voice assistants sound like women? The answer is simple. Countless studies have shown that voice assistant users prefer hearing a female voice to a male voice. Product design should match preferences, right?

In this case, wrong. You see, when popular voice assistants sound female, we risk teaching children that women respond on demand. And that reinforces gender stereotypes of women as friendly subservient helpers.

We believe that voice assistants should have more than just one voice and that those voices should represent everyone: men, women, and non-binary individuals.

...except, does a non-binary voice even exist?

Accenture Labs, in collaboration with CereProc, has created a non-binary voice by combining male and female data with data from non-binary individuals. This voice doesn't just use pitch to distinguish itself as non-binary, but also speech patterns and intonation.

We've worked directly with the non-binary community and integrated their feedback to develop the final version of this voice.

Here is what it sounds like:

Hey Sam!

<Sam beeps to acknowledge listening>

What's the weather today?

(Sam) It's currently partly cloudy and fifty-five degrees.

Thanks Sam!

(Sam) You're welcome

And we thank all of you watching for helping us fight gender bias and stereotypes.

(Sam) It's way overdue.

(Sam) Join us in advancing gender representation by creating and using voice assistants that sound like me.