



KinoDen Now Offers a Read-Aloud Feature

TOKYO, JAPAN December 3, 2020 - Kinokuniya Company Ltd. (Chairman and President Masashi Takai) is pleased to announce that its Japanese eBook service for academic and public libraries, KinoDen (Kinokuniya Digital Library), now offers a read-aloud feature on its online eBook viewer. This new functionality comes in response to the growing expectations for increased accessibility of eBooks in libraries based on the "Act on Promotion of Improvement of Reading Environment for Visually Impaired Persons" (the "Barrier-Free Reading Act"), which came into force in June 2019 in Japan.

KinoDen includes about 30,000 eBooks, with an emphasis on academic and/or educational titles. The new read-aloud function works with the text data of approximately 3,000 EPUB reflowable eBooks, as permitted by publishers such as Toyo Keizai Inc, DIAMOND, Inc., Heibonsha, ALC Press, Hakusuisha, Sogensha, Shoeisha, and Nihon Hyoronsha.

EPUB reflowable eBooks enable readers to optimize the font size of eBooks for comfortable reading even on small device screens. The addition of a read-aloud feature takes the eBook advantage even further. In the first half of 2021, the function will also be implemented in KinoDen's mobile reading app, bREADER Cloud.

KinoDen offers a multitude of useful functions beyond the read-aloud function, such as an integrated full-text search feature covering all available eBooks on KinoDen, My Bookshelf on the bREADER Cloud App, and the ability for readers to use bookmarks, markers, and customizable page colors to enhance their reading experience.

Nowadays, libraries are required to expand their services not only to follow the "Barrier-Free Reading Act," but also to adapt to the "New Normal" brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Kinokuniya will strive to support all libraries by further expanding the number of eBooks on KinoDen, increasing the number of EPUB reflowable eBooks, and improving the functionality of KinoDen.

[KinoDen, Kinokuniya Digital Library]

KinoDen, Kinokuniya Digital Library is an eBook service launched in January, 2018. KinoDen has more than 280 user institutions, which are mainly university libraries, companies, and research institutes across the world. Public libraries such as Tokushima Prefectural Library, Gifu Prefectural Library, and Fukushima Prefectural Library have also introduced KinoDen.

Please visit our KinoDen website for further information:

<https://www.kinokuniya.co.jp/03f/ebook/kinoden/overseas.html>