



Inclusive typeface

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NEW TYPEFACE IS EQUALLY READABLE FOR SIGHTED AND NON-SIGHTED PEOPLE

● SPORT & FITNESS

A new typeface incorporates braille into readable Latin and Japanese characters for signage that's equally readable for all.

Braille is a typeface that enables visually-impaired people to read by touch. Museums and galleries often make it available beneath visible type but it's far from ubiquitous. Braille can also be expensive, requiring additional signage space to implement. Its use is also on the decline, partly due to increased digital autoread software and other technologies.

Japan-based designer Kosuke Takahashi's project set out to tackle these issues wondering if the braille system could be combined with the latin alphabet. The result is **Braille Neue**, a type that adjusts the kerning of a readable font that lines up with the equivalent braille dots so that both texts represent the same character. The type maintains the braille patterning on top of a highly readable typeface. The system thereby makes signage equally readable for sighted and non-sighted people, removing the need for additional space for braille. Takahashi has researched how much the system scales. He has found that braille users still find the system readable regardless of size. Braille Neue will be available in two forms. The Standard form will support the Latin alphabet, whereas the Outline will function for both the Japanese and Latin alphabet. As well as negating the need for additional braille signage, this project also aims to put the spotlight back on braille as a literacy device, arresting its decline in education systems.

There are still a few issues to overcome with the system, for example with the 'l' and 'v' characters. However, Takahashi hopes that Braille Neue will be ready for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and

Paralympic games, so that signage will be inclusive for all. We've seen several innovations that help non-sighted people to 'see', such as a camera that produces 3D photos or haptic VR gloves for use in art galleries. How else can technology increase inclusivity?

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