

TwoTone- Narration Audio

What I'd like to show you now, is the narration audio feature. This can be useful for creating a kind of custom label for a particular column in your sonification, or adding a sound effect for a particular value that you would like distinguished from the default instruments. In this case, I'll just show you the basic example of the narration audio, and you can also look in the documentation for some of the more advanced features using this and I'll show you an example as well.

So we click here. The symbol of a musical scale and we add narration audio and in this case I'm going to record from directly within the dashboard. You can see there's a number of audio files here that I've imported that I can use as background, audio samples as like a soundtrack or some of these different audio sound effects. And it also will give you information on the file formats that you can import and the size limitations.

So we'll record here and I'll just choose number of colonies to give that a label in my library, which will also come up as the kind of data audio source for my reference. And then we'll just click record. Number of colonies. We can play that back. "Number of colonies."

And we can even download that file if we wanted to. We'll just save here and you can see it brings it in directly into my library. So we'll select that. You see, I have a number of colonies selected here for my honey production example. And it defaults to the play mode on loop. You also have other options for active sections. You want to filter that. So we'll just go to the start of our piece by rewinding here and clicking play.

"Number of colonies."

"Number of colonies."

So that's on a loop. So that's going to repeat based on the size of that particular audio file that we recorded. You can also look at active sections, and click filter number of colonies, which I can do here. And that's going to play through the entire column, right? So it's going to assign that audio narration to this column here.

"Number of colonies."

Let's rewind that one.

"Number of colonies."

So that's really useful for, again, kind of keeping the sonification simple and conveying to the audience the data that you are sonifying almost in a kind of sonic legend, using that narration audio feature to do that. Now I'd like to show you an example of using the narration audio feature with some of the more advanced settings and features for kind of filtering that in your sonification.

So let's go to the TwoTone website and go in to our examples. This is one of my favorite examples that we made at Datavized for the launch of TwoTone, work based in York City. And so we were interested in sonifying some of the NYC open data. In this case, the 311

Rodent Complaints, which is a dataset of almost a quarter million calls over eight years of rodent complaints. People calling the 311 service line to complain about rodents. And in this case, the dataset includes conditions attracting rodents, mouse sightings, rat sightings, rodent bites, right? So we assign each of these data values with an instrument. The conditions attracting rodents are the double bass. The mouse sightings are kind of small, high pitched glockenspiel instrument. So it sounds cute, but not quite. Rat sightings we assigned to a piano played in unsettling triplets. And rodent bites, we used the narration audio and uploaded a recording of somebody exclaiming out, so that this is triggered ones in each of the thankfully rare occurrences that somebody in New York City was actually bitten by a rodent.

So we have the example here. Again, this was a quite a large dataset, over 250,000 rows of data. So we did do some cleaning using a pivot table, to kind of group that into months as row headers, and complaint descriptions as column headers. So you can see that in the example here. We also have for all of these samples for you to use and remix the tabular view from the NYC Open Data portal. So you can see this dataset here and the number of rows in that dataset. It's quite large. We've also provided a link to just downloading that clean dataset for you, too.

So let's open up this video which has the sonification of NYC 311 Rodent Complaints. And again, this is from 2010 to the present. So this is a seasonal dataset. So you'll listen to the sonification and really listen to both that kind of pattern in the cyclical nature of this dataset and also each instrument being defined by a particular type of complaint. And remember, the rodent complaints are using that narration audio with a custom audio clip of somebody exclaiming out every time they got bitten.

So here I'm just playing back to show you again in that narration audio, you'll see we filtered the data set, so every time there is a rodent bite with, a rodent bite in the dataset, that exclamation will be played.

And you can see within the tool that also does have again, a kind of visual component within the dashboard with color in that every time the dataset is kind of playing that value as it's moving through the individual rows of data, that's highlighted in orange color. And that is the narration audio feature.