

Toei Subway adopts a multi-lingual communication panel system for handling spoken customer questions, a Japan-first for subway users

To help international travelers and those with hearing impairments use Tokyo's subway system more easily, a new transparent display system capable of converting spoken inquiries to text and translating between 12 different languages was introduced at Tochomae Station of the Toei Subway Oedo Line on Feb. 29. This is the first use of this system at a subway station in Japan.

This new feature is part of the work being done by the Bureau of Transportation of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to improve accessibility for all, including international travelers and people with hearing impairments, through the use of digital technology.

The Bureau has adopted the display system, dubbed VoiceBiz® UCDisplay®, on a trial basis in preparation for the upcoming 2025 World Athletics Championships and the 2025 Deaflympics, both of which will be hosted in Tokyo.

By observing the new system in action, the Bureau will consider expanding its use to other Toei subway stations from the next fiscal year onward.

1 Adoption on a trial basis

- Service launch: On Feb. 29 (Thursday), 2024
- Location: Stationmaster's window at Toei Subway Tochomae Station
- Time of operation: From the first train to the last
- Content to be verified: Its effectiveness in handling inquiries from foreign travelers and from those with hearing impediments



An image of a display panel

2 About VoiceBiz® UCDisplay®

“VoiceBiz® UCDisplay®” is a universal communication system designed for customer service windows, enabling customers to confirm the translation results, while looking at the person on the other side of the window, by showing text on a transparent display in the language of his/her choice.

- Languages: Japanese, English, Chinese (simplified), Korean, Indonesian, Thai, Vietnamese, French, Spanish, Portuguese (Brazilian), Burmese, and Filipino.

- Display of subtitles

The system can display subtitles in 12 languages in response to voice or keyboard input, assisting those with difficulty in communicating, due to a language barrier or a hearing impairment.