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Report

of the representative of the FICS for sound



photo: Wolfgang Simon, Dortmund

for the FICS-convention

in

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in

Lugano / Switzerland

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Annex

„prolight + sound“-convention 2005 Frankfurt/Main

„High End“-convention 2005 Munich

2. Trends and facts

2.1 Trends

Last year (2004) I wrote, that the analogue technology wan't disappear. This concerns in the recordingsector cassette recorders and tapemachines (two or more tracks), which are still in use. In the meantime wellknown music labels discover high-quality analogue recording-equipment for records because of the more natural sound

More or less good digital solutions predominate the market in the recordingsector. Stationary DAT- and Minidisc recorders are past, even if a few equipment is still offered at hifi- and professional dealers. The successor is the flashcard-recorder, which works without moving mechanic and offers a lot of new features.

Who's working with computerized recording solutions, finds a growing choice in software. The prices for software are going down because of increasing selection.

Also in 2005, there are no revolutionary news in playback units (CD-players, loudspeakers, headphones).

Mixer are getting more and more digital. The prices of mixers return because of growing competition. Modern chips make the equipment more and more complex. Anyway it still makes sense, to invest in good analogue mixers, even if there are no worldshaking new products in the market.

Years ago, digital microphones had been presented. This technology is still not accepted, because there are hardly mincrophones in the market.

Who wants to buy professional equipment and thinks, that the prices therefore are too high, may have a look to the discjockey(dj)-sector.

From page 6 to 11, you'll find reports about the highlights of the conventions "prolight + sound" in Frankfurt/Main and "High End" in Munich. The convention in Munich would be the biggest one for audio systems in Europe. "prolight + sound" took place in april 2005, the "High End" one month later. In the reports, you'll also find fotos (taken from internet) from the presented equipment.

In the appendix, you'll find own fotos (eyecatchers?) from both conventions. Just for fun and without telling the names from producers and the prices. So have a look to the fotos and enjoy them.

Uwe Mehlhoff

2.2 Facts

In 2004 178,5 million sound carriers had been sold in Germany. Sound carriers means, singles, music cassettes, CDs, Super Audio-CDs (SACDs), Sound-DVD's (only sound), DVD's (sound and picture) and music-videos (VHS). Prerecorded DAT-tapes, minidisks or recording tapes don't play a part in sales figures.

The following table will give an overview of sales figures for different sound carriers in Germany from 1995 to 2004:

	Sale of sound carriers in million pieces in Germany									
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Single	44,1	48,5	52,0	54,0	53,7	51,1	48,6	36,3	24,4	21,3
CD	176,9	184,5	196,9	196,5	198,0	195,1	173,3	166,8	133,6	133,1
Music cassette	31,4	30,0	26,9	25,3	20,3	19,4	20,9	13,3	14,1	11,9
LP (Vinyl)	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,6	0,6	0,8	1,0	1,0	1,0	0,8
Sound-DVD/SACD	-	-	-	-	-	0,0	0,1	0,2	0,5	0,3
DVD (sound/pict.)	-	-	-	-	-	0,6	1,3	3,4	7,9	10,1
Music-video (VHS)	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,2	1,0	0,6	0,8	2,9	1,7	1,0
Total sale	253,5	264,2	277,1	277,6	273,6	267,6	246,0	223,9	183,5	178,5

Altogether in nearly 10 years (period 1995 till 2004) there's a drop from nearly 30 %. You'll see a drastic drop from 25 % in this period for the most spreaded sound carrier, the CD. One important reason for this drop is the download from music (legal or illegal) from music servers from internet.

The hit at present are music-videos on DVD. The sale for this sound carrier was seventeenfold from 2000 (year of introduction) till 2004.

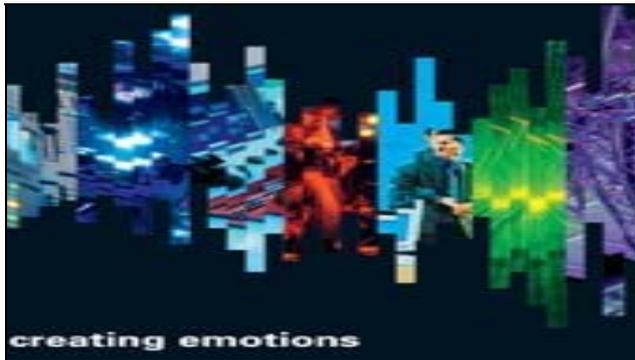
Let's have a look to the sale of video and audio systems in Germany. I took numerical data from 2003 and 2004 from GFU (German official company for video and audio systems):

sale and number of pieces (NOP) at hifi-equipment in Germany in 2003 and 2004					
	2003		2004		change in %
	sale (Mio. EUR)	NOP (in 1000)	turnover (Mio. EUR)	NOP (in 1000)	turnover
Hifi-equipment total	1.094	no information	913	no information	- 16,5
Portable Audio-equipment	511	no information	614	no information	+ 20,2
MP3-players	108	870	299	3.160	+ 176,9
Video and audio systems total	10,255	no information	10.770	no information	+ 5,1

The trend in video and audio systems relating to sound is small, handy and cheap and this applies to MP3-equipment. The quality of sound from MP3-equipment is still not the best, because it's data-reduced. At present MP3-equipment is not useful for high-grade records and music-play. The quality is getting better and the difference to CD- or minidisc is shrinking. But data-reduced is data-reduced and will be data-reduced in future. MP3 will always have a

difference in sound quality to high-defined systems as good analog equipment, sound-DVDs or Super Audio-CDs.

3. Visit of the "porlight + sound 2005"-convention in Frankurt/Main



Prolight + Sound

the international fair for the music sector, sound/video-production and entertainment

The "prolight + sound" in Frankfurt am Main took place from 06.04. to 09.04.2005. As usual the first two days had been reserved for qualified visitors. I've seen no great news for soundhunters. Let's have a look to the fair where I went for a stroll.



A dream for each „sound engineer“ is the mixer BCS 50 from Dateq, a producer from the Netherlands. In the middle of the mixer, there's place for scripts. The mixer can be individually equipped with inputs. The level-meters can be choosed between VU- and peak-programm-display with 50 lights each channel. A phase meter and a radio controlled clock (red arrow), an indicator for the remaining time (green arrow) are options.

The mixer is very flexible, the manufacture exemplary. An employee of Dateq told me a price starting with 5.000 EUR.

Marantz professional showed the handhold-flashcard-recorder/-player PMD660. Compared with DAT-recorders there are no mobile parts inside. The sound carrier is a flashcard (blue arrow), which can be worked after record with a computer, if this computer has a flashcard input. Alternative the record can be copied by USB-cable (USB 1.0) from PMD660 to the computer.

This recorder is working with the usual sampling rates 44,1 and 48 kHz. Additional you can also use MP3 or WAV. WAV means saving music sequences on IBM-compatible computers. The PMD660 has digital, analogue and additional two symmetric microphone-inputs (48 voltages).





The microphone inputs are placed at the back (red border), what can be impractical (for example working with stereo-microphones and 3,5/ 6,35 mm connectors).

The PMD660 makes a good and solid impression. The price is less than 700 EUR.

The Marantz PMD670 is also a flashcard-recorder/-player and also portable. It's bigger than the PMD660. Marantz also showed the PMD671, the successor of the PMD670.

Both recorders have the same size and are bigger than the PMD660 (nearly double size). In contrast to the PMD 660, which is working with USB 1.0-interface, PMD670 and PMD671 are working with (more quicker) USB 2.0-interfaces.

The PMD671 is working additional with 24-bit (96 kHz)-sampling rate converters and variable sampling frequencies (16 to 96 kHz). The small keys (yellow border) are used for rare adjustments and can be protected for unintentional touch by a screwed up cover.



There's a switch off for the symmetric microphone-inputs (48 voltages). PMD670 and 671 are the right equipment for perfectionists, who want to make records with top quality. The sound of PMD670 and 671 satisfies and is – compared with High End-CD-players – great! Without bag and storage battery, the price of the PMD 671 is around 1.200 EUR. The PMD670 is a phase-out model and therefore much lower.



The PMD570 is a stationary flashcard-recorder/-player in 19 inch-de-sign. So it's usable in racks for professional equipment.

The sampling frequencies are variable (16 to 48 kHz), but not as variable as at PMD671 (16 bis 96 kHz). The PMD570 is not build for loca-

tion recording. Therefore there are no microphone inputs. But the PMD570 has symmetric line-inputs. The price of the PMD 570 ist around 1.000 EUR.

Fostex showed again the Field Memory Recorder FR-2, also a flashcard-recorder/-player. Outfit and technical dates are comparable to Marantz PMD670/671. The weight of this recorder ist nearly 1,5 kg, the price is around 1.750 EUR. Looking at internet, I found this recorder with a price around 1.500 EUR. The FR-2 is compared with the Marantz recorders more bulky and unwieldy.



Fostex also showed a DVD-multitrack-recorder, the DV824, with 8 channels. The price for this recorder is around 4.000 EUR and therefore less interesting for soundhunters.

Let's have a look to loudspeakers:

(Professional) Studios normally use active speakers for monitoring. Focal (also wellknown with the trade name JM Lab) from France showed a complete series of studio monitors. At the time of the fair, Focal hadn't any representative in Germany. I had no chance to get any informations about prices or to hear the speakers.



At home I'm listening to passive two-way loudspeakers from JM Lab in my study since 2 years. I'm happy with my JM Lab, because they are manufactured very well and sound very good and had been really cheap. So I think, that the prices of the active speakers are not too high.

On the left side, you'll see the "SM 8" from Focal with a weight about 15 kg and a size from 380 x 268 x 320 mm (H x W x D). Type Solo 6 Be (Be stands for Beryllium-Tweeter) with the same outfit is a little bit smaller and with 11 kg more light.

Another producer from active studio monitors is Genelec from Finland. „Genelec goes home-fidelity“. This producer is offering his monitors now also in wooden veneer. In the past all monitors from Genelec had a black outfit, not just suitable for a living room. Now you can get Genelec-speakers in cherry- or birch-veneer.

Monacor showed the MPA-202 (picture on the right side), a small preamplifier for microphones with two symmetric inputs and asymmetric outputs. The MPA-202 has a variable amplification with 11 steps. The weight is about 1,2 kg, the price around 150 EUR.



Monacor offers also the MPA-102, a mono microphone-preamplifier.



Monacors VU-800 is a tricolored LED-display with 40 lights each channel. The price is less than 100 EUR. This display is better than much of the

displays, you'll find in cheap mixers. But good and professional/studio meters from RTW or db Audio are more expensive and much better than the VU-800.

The holding device, the HPH-10 from Monacor, shown on the right picture ist very handy. The holding device is swiveling and produced in metal. The price is around 10 EUR.



Tascam offers the High Definition Audio/DSD Master-recorder DV-RA1000 (price around 1.400 EUR). The recorder is a professional solution for high-resolution audio (up to 192 kHz/24-bit). The DV-RA1000 also features normal CD-Recording (44 kHz/16-bit) as well as Sony's DSD format, the basis for Super Audio-CDs (SACD). Symmetric in- and outputs



and a USB-interface (2.0) are additional features of this recorder. To enter names, a keyboard can be locked. Further features: illuminated display with a high-resoluted meter, wired remote control (as usual in professional studios), varibale speed (± 6 %). Here's not enough place, to specify all the features of the DV-RA1000.

4. Visit of the „High End 2005“-convention in Munich



The High End in Munich is the biggest convention in Europe for audio-systems. All the notables of the hifi-scene came to Munich – me too!!! Representatives of big hifi-companies from Asia, Australia and of course America. They all have the biggest, heaviest, best and most expensive equipment in their luggage.

The exhibition had – compared with 2004 – more ground and more space. So it was possible, to hear good sound in small cabins.

High End is the high art of music reproduction and I'd been three day at the fair. The equipment may be very good. But if the rooms, where music is played, are acoustically lousy, it makes no sense to hear the good equipment. I had the chance to hear good loudspeakers and amplifiers (tube and transistor) in low price ranges - but equipment, which is not suitable in recording-studios (for soundhunters). I also heard good record-players with prices lower than 1.000 EUR. They are also not suitable in recording-studios (for soundhunters).

Surround-shows, the hit in Munich in 2004 (I wrote about it), had been presented hardly. There's a change in trend from surround to 2-channel-hifi (stereo). Who's interested in surround-equipmet, can get it for low money at big food shops/supermarkets (Aldi, Lidl and so on) or as phase-out models in hifi-shops.

Nevertheless I found good equipment for soundhunters:

Ultrasone, a German producer of headphones and microphones, presented a new generation of headphones. The cable of the headphones (of this new generation) is detachable. So if your headphone is defect while the cable is broken, buy a new cable and the problem is solved. No repair of the headphone and less costs. In former times Sennheiser had headphones with a comparable technique. Beyerdynamic (DT 100) or AKG (K171, K271) actual also use headphones with a connectable cable. But the plugs are different, so that the cables can't be used with headphones from other producers.

Ultrasone on the other hand uses an adapter with 3,5 mm for the detachable cable. The sound of the headphones from Ultrasone is compared to other competitors quite good.



Lack of space in the studio, to line up good loudspeakers? This problem knows everybody. I've seen loudspeakers in studios from soundhunters, standing on cupboards or on the ground because of missing place. How to hear the own productions in a good quality if the loudspeakers are standing at the wrong place? The answer to this problem has Creakustik, a german producer from Bad Honnef at the river Rhine.



Creakustik is producing loudspeakers to put up at the wall. Loudspeakers looking like pictures and not recognizable as loudspeakers. You can have the loudspeakers with different covers, for example as shown on the right or left side.



Who wants to have loudspeakers with a little bit individuality can take own photos – perhaps from the mother in law – and can give it to Creakustik. Creakustik will make a cover from “the mother of

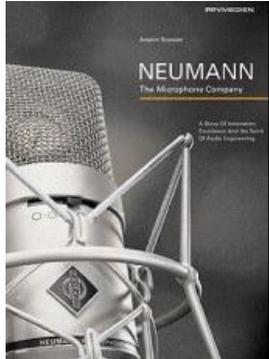
law” for the loudspeaker. So it’s possible to make the mother of law to an opera singer, because being on the cover of the loudspeaker. Why not?

Creaktiv offers two sizes and names a frequency range from 50 bis 22.000 Hz for the bigger and 55 bis 22.000 Hz for the smaller type.

In Munich, I hade a chance to listen to the loudspeakers from Creakustik and was surprised about the good sound and the good manufacturing.

5. Summary of journals and specialized literature for sound, hifi and sound engineering

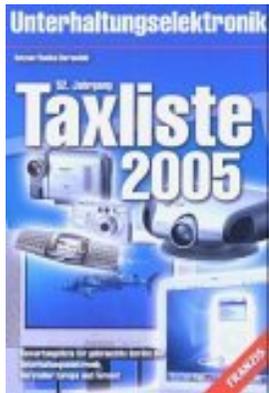
Following in parts an overview of new journals and books:



Roessler, Anselm:

Neumann - The Microphone Company, including Audio-CD: A Story of Innovation, Excellence and the Spirit of Audio Engineering.

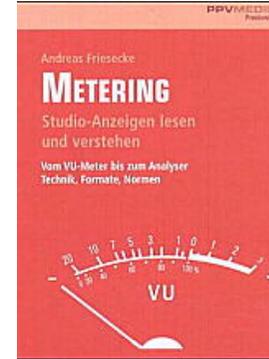
language:   price/Germany: 58,00 EUR



Tetzner, Radke, Dervedde:

Taxliste 2005, 52. Jahrgang, Bewertungsliste für gebrauchte Geräte der Unterhaltungselektronik (Hersteller Europa und Fernost) - Tax

language:  price/Germany: 24,95 EUR



Friesecke, Andreas:

Metering (Studio-Anzeigen lesen und verstehen. Vom VU-Meter bis zum Analyser. Technik, Formate, Normen)

language:  price/Germany: 18,00 EUR



Steffen Bergweiler, Thomas Görne:

Monitoring (Lautsprecher in Studio- und HiFi-Technik. Von der Aktivbox bis zur Surround-Abhöre. Technik, Akustik, Aufstellung)

language:  price/Germany: 18,00 EUR



Dickreiter, Michael:
Mikrofon-Aufnahmetechnik (Aufnahmeräume, Schallquellen, Mikrofone, räumliches Hören, Aufnahmeverfahren, Aufnahme einzelner Instrumente und Stimmen)

language:  price/Germany: 48,00 EUR



Henle, Hubert:
Das Tonstudio Handbuch (Praktische Einführung in die professionelle Aufnahmetechnik)

language:  price/Germany: 25,50 EUR



LP - Magazin für analoges HiFi & Vinyl-Kultur:
Im zweimonatigen Rhythmus erscheinende Zeitschrift rein um analoge Themen aus dem Michael E. Brieden-Verlag

language:  price/Germany: 4,80 EUR
(9,50 CHF each edition, countries with currency EUR: 5,00 EUR)



Enders, Roland:
Das Homerecording Handbuch (Der Weg zu optimalen Aufnahmen) mit Audio-CD

language:  price/Germany: 26,50 EUR

6. Diary 2005/2006

The following diary with dates from 2005 (november/december) and 2006 gives a worldwide overview with meetings of video and audio systems. All the listed dates are from internet and without guarantee.)

date	country	city	Place of the exhibition	More informations
04. – 06.11.2005		London (GB)	What Hifi Sound and Vision (Novotel London)	www.highendsociety.de
05./06.11.2005		Hamburg (D)	World of Hifi (Hotel Dorint Sofitel)	www.highendsociety.de
12./13.11.2005		Bruxelles (B)	High Fidelity Belgium (Crown Plaza & Courtyard)	www.highendsociety.de
05. – 08.01.2006		Las Vegas (USA)	Consumer Electronic Show (convention center)	www.highendsociety.de
01. – 03.02.2006		Brüssel (B)	Integrated Systems Europe (Expo-site)	www.highendsociety.de
11./12.02.2006		Dortmund (D)	World of Hifi (convention center Westfalenhalle Dortmund)	www.highendsociety.de
24. – 26.02.2006		Bristol (GB)	sound & vision (Marriott City Centre hotel)	www.highendsociety.de

date	country	city	Place of the exhibition	More informations
02. – 05.03.2006		Moscow (RUS)	HDI Show 2006 (Iris hotel, Moscow)	www.highendsociety.de
04./05.03.2006		Eschborn near Frankfurt/Main (D)	Analog-Forum (Novotel hotel, Frankfurt-Eschborn)	www.AAAnalog.de
09. – 15.03.2006		Hannover (D)	CEBIT (Fair Hannover)	www.cebit.de
10. – 12.03.2006		Erlangen (D)	Hifi at Atzelsberg palace near Erlangen – the fair for high-quality hifi, homecinema, Multi-room	www.heimkinomarkt.de
25./26.03.2006		Stuttgart (D)	World of Hifi (Hotel Le Meridien)	www.highendsociety.de
29. – 01.04.2006		Frankfurt/Main (D)	prolight + sound 2006 (fair Frankfurt)	www.pls.messefrankfurt.com
25. – 28.05.2006		Munich-Freimann (D)	High End 2006 (M,O,C,)	www.highendsociety.de
10.06.2006		Worms-Herrnsheim	Workshop for soundhunters organized by Analog Audio Association (Gasthof/restaurant zur Krone, Worms-Herrnsheim)	www.AAAnalog.de
23./24.09.2006		Bremen (D)	World of Hifi (Congresscentrum Bremen)	www.highendsociety.de

date	country	city	Place of the exhibition	More informations
october 2006		Düsseldorf (D)	Analog-Forum (Novotel hotel, Düsseldorf)	www.AAAnalog.de

7. Useful addresses from Internet

The following list contains usefull addresses from internet which handle with „analogue recording“. Useful adresses to „digital recording“ are still not existing in internet.

web-adress	country	description	Do you like vintage-hifi?
<p>www.aes.org</p>		<p>The Audio Engineering Society (AES) is the only professional society in the world , which is busy with sound engineering. Members of the AES are sound engineers, scientists and producers. Every year the AES organizes meetings in different countries and cities. In 2005 there had been meetings in Kopenhagen (Denmark) from 02. to 04.09. and in New York (USA) from 07. to 10.10.</p> <p>The language on the homepage is english.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid magenta; padding: 2px;">NAGRA</p>
<p>www.aaanalog.de & www.aaanalog.ch</p>		<p>The Analogue Audio Association (AAA) is a registered club to keep and support the analogue music reproduction. Since 1990, the year of the foundation, this club tries to save the analogue record. Additional this club is busy with analogue recording and reproduction. Two times a year the AAA in Germany organizes hifi-shows (you'll find details under heading 6 (“Diary 2005/2006”).</p> <p>There's a swiss section with an own web-adress and homepage..</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid magenta; padding: 2px;">EMT</p>

web-adress	country	description	Do you like vintage-hifi?
www.dtsf.de		<p>This club, consisting of tape- and stereofriends from Darmstadt near Frankfurt, is existing swince 21 years. Every week members of this club produce a sound magazin called “Darmstädter Echo”.</p> <p>The homepage is interesting. The varying advertisement in the homepage is trouble-some.</p>	 <div style="border: 1px solid magenta; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">SHURE</div>
www.hifi-forum.de		<p>This is a platform of discussion about audio, home cinema, hifi, high end, surround, car-hifi and music.</p>	 <div style="border: 1px solid magenta; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">SABA</div>
www.reeltoreel.de		<p>Interest in the story of Revox or Studer? You'll find it here written in details and with a lot of pictures.</p>	 <div style="border: 1px solid magenta; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">STUDER</div>

web-adress	country	description	Do you like vintage-hifi?
www.revoxforum.de	 language partially in  	<p>This platform should be named as „Revox-Fan-Forum“ and not „Revoxforum“. Who is looking for manuals, wiring diagramms and other scripts to Revox will find it at this homepage.</p>	 <div style="border: 2px solid magenta; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">STUDER</div>
www.sabinebendlin.de/tonbandwelt		<p>You've to enter the whole name of the web-adress (including "tonbandwelt") to find informations to tape-machines and tapes. Otherwise you'll get informations ababout magic spirits and so on.</p> <p>Take (much?) time and you'll find several hints to tape machines, tapes and accessories.</p>	 <div style="border: 2px solid magenta; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">PHILIPS</div>

web-adress	country	description	Do you like vintage-hifi?
<p>www.tonbandwelt.de & www.bandmaschine.de</p>	<p>  language partially in   </p>	<p>Tips round tape machines and tapes you'll find at these websides. But you've to search a little bit to find the link "Bandmaschinen-Forum".</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; border: 2px solid magenta; padding: 2px;">MARANTZ</p>