

Comfort Audio Opens Doors in US

LOS ANGELES — Comfort Audio, recognized since 1994 as an innovative international leader in assistive listening devices and systems, has opened a sales and marketing office in the US.

According to the company, the great majority of those who are suffering from hearing loss in the United States are currently not using any devices to satisfactorily resolve their impairment. The reasons for this are multiple. Hearing Aids are often expensive. Some find that they are uncomfortable or do not solve their problems. Too many consider wearing hearing aids as cosmetically unacceptable, as the stigma for the wearer is often worse than the cure.

Comfort Audio takes aim at all those issues and designs. “Our success so far in Europe and other international markets,” says Comfort Audio CEO Ragnar Ahgren, “is based on three fundamental design philosophies: Uncompromised technology and sound quality. Sophisticated style and attractive designs. Affordability and products priced at different buyers.”

ALD manufacturing only. Comfort Audio only develops assistive listening devices and systems. “By not competing with hearing aid makers, but rather developing products that either are a complement to hearing aids, or a substitute for patients not yet ready for them, we see our products as an easy to sell, easy to service, complement to the products offered by dispensers today,” continues Ahgren.

Contego and Duett now available. An example where Comfort Audio’s design vision of technology is evident is Comfort Contego™, a High Definition digital wireless FM system. The HD sound is designed to be crisp and clear, and the distinctive look and feel of the small units, with easy-to-read digital screens, make the device something to show off, not something to hide. The Contego units have built-in microphones that are adjustable for maximum customization of sound with omni-directional or directional sound based on conditions. The volume setting for the transmitter can be remotely adjusted from the receiver. The device sends its signals encrypted to prevent electronic eavesdropping, an industry first. It has quickly become popular with lawyers and business professionals, as courts have found the Comfort Contego an indispensable tool.

Comfort Duett™, a small affordable personal amplifier, resembles more a stylish MP3 player than a medical device. In addition to the strong —up to 60 dB amplification—and high sound quality, the Duett is able to be integrated into home audio equipment, such as TV, music, and a standard telephone.

More to come. Comfort Audio is currently hard at work with additional products. “We cannot tell the market yet, but when we are ready, we know we will set the marketplace abuzz!” says Ahgren. “We didn’t come to the US to be an also-ran,” he continues, “we want to do some shakin’ and rock & roll.”

Comfort Audio's success, according to the company, is tied to its "lifestyle and consumer orientation." In Europe, Comfort Audio initially found audiologists and the industry servicing mostly those with the most acute hearing needs. That meant typically the very old—people who are thought of and catered to as patients. This, in turn, may have contributed to the stigma often associated hearing loss and wearing devices.

Comfort Audio's *customers—not patients*—are young people, as well as those young at heart. The products can easily be mistaken for the now ubiquitous MP3 players or cool cell phones. Like Apple, whose designs the company says it greatly admires, Comfort Audio reports that it makes every effort to create desirable visual and tactile designs; something to show off, not hide. Dispensing professionals who recognize the value of offering an affordable and attractive solution for those people not yet ready for hearing aids will have established a bond with a future hearing aid customer, reports the company.

About Comfort Audio. Comfort Audio is headquartered in southern Sweden in a medical device rich region, "Medicon Valley", which also is the home of many Danish audiological firms. The company has for some 15 years built its reputation on technology leadership, attractive designs, and by focusing solely on assistive devices and systems. Outside of North America, Comfort Audio also offers products and systems for use at work, schools, and at public places.

Comfort Audio Inc, located in Culver City, Calif, is a wholly owned US subsidiary, and was incorporated in 2006. The company will provide sales, service, and marketing needs for North America. Comfort Audio's products are distributed in the US and Canada by quality distributors reaching different segments, retailers, and dispensers that serve hard of hearing people.

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