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AUDIO BRANDING ACADEMY

**Yearbook**

2012/2013

Eds. Kai Bronner, Rainer Hirt, Cornelius Flege

Extract



**Listen to  
consumers**



**Nomos**

# Prelude

When you read this, you probably aren't holding a book about audio branding for the first time. Over the past few years numerous publications on sound and music in brand communications came out. However, much more important for this unique industry is the growing number of sophisticated audio branding cases with very strategic approaches and holistic interpretation of brand and multisensory design. You can find some of the most inspiring cases in the yearbooks and on the congress-websites of the Audio Branding Academy.

All brands have acoustic emissions. The question is: do they make just any noise or do they have their own appropriate sound? And how long will we have to evangelize the marketing world, education and public in order to establish a natural consciousness for listening?

It is time to present more solutions and real results in the market instead of imposing theoretical capabilities. Too often we see great audio branding strategies with a comprehensive brand sound concept and well designed guidelines, but with no consequent implementation. So something that too many cases still have to prove is relevance. Only when people can hear the difference in everyday life will audio branding get the status it deserves: a complimentary standard tool of brand management.

By establishing the Audio Branding Award, we want to support the industry to meet this challenge by promoting transparent competition of best practice. To be eligible for the award one must disclose the audio branding strategy and architecture of the brand sound concept. But to win it the results must convince the audience without explanations. Why? Because this is reality!

One of the central aims of the Audio Branding Academy is to foster exchange between scientists, scholars, students, practitioners and ex-

## Prelude

perts in the field of audio branding and to establish a general consciousness for sound and music in brand communications. This mission has been confirmed by the results of the Audio Branding Barometer 2011, as it showed a strong desire for more exchange between scientist and practitioners. Already 83.3 % of audio branding suppliers regularly read scientific texts for continuous improvement of their services. No wonder that there is an overwhelming consensus on the benefits of scientific approaches for audio branding. But also science and education discover more and more the field of audio branding and value the insights they gain from the growing exchange with practitioners.

In order to take these circumstances into account, the Audio Branding Academy developed a concept for its hybrid congresses as the combination of academic symposiums and business conventions with best practice cases and its own award. Therefore we were more than happy when Professor Charles Spence invited us to cooperate with the University of Oxford and to run the Audio Branding Congress 2012 in the prestigious Oxford Examination Schools. Against the background of our host and witnessing the fact that audio branding suppliers are highly interested in scientific matters and approaches, the event was focused with the motto "Listen To Consumers."

In this Yearbook you will find the proceedings of the Audio Branding Congress 2012 with a comprehensive summary article, impressive jury-selected award case studies of brands like Nokia, Dell, Harrods, and The Linde Group, an article of keynote speaker Professor Charles Spence about the future of synaesthetic marketing, contributions from the scientific Call for Papers 2012, and a documentation of the market survey Audio Branding Barometer 2012 among others.

We want to express our deepest gratitude to all the speakers, the scientific advisory board, many helping hands, our supporters and partners who have made this Congress possible. The Audio Branding Academy had the pleasure to trust in the decision of an internationally experienced award jury: Carl-Frank Westermann, Alex Moulton, Patrick Langeslag, Daniel M. Jackson, Professor Florian K ppler and Martyn Ware.

Cornelius Ringe, Kai Bronner, Rainer Hirt

Special thanks go to Professor Charles Spence and Dr. Klemens Knöferle for hosting the Congress at the University of Oxford and to Julian Treasure for being an eloquent moderator. Last but not least we thank our sponsors Pro Sound Effects, Man Made Music and The Sound Agency.

Cornelius Ringe, Kai Bronner, Rainer Hirt  
Hamburg, March 2013

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# **Audio Branding Congress 2012 Summary**

**Alex Moulton**

eyeball

## **Introduction**

The fourth annual Audio Branding Congress was held on December 11, 2012 at Oxford University. Attendees gathered on a crisp wintery day at the beautiful Oxford Examination Schools building in anticipation of an engaging day of presentations, discussions and socializing. With dozens of return attendees and a large number of new faces, this year boasted the largest attendance and greatest international representation in the four years of the Audio Branding Congress.

Witnessing demand within the audio branding industry for increased emphasis on market research, testing and validation, the Audio Branding Academy focused the event with the motto “Listen To Consumers.” Audio Branding Academy founders Dr. Cornelius Ringe, Kai Bronner and Rainer Hirt welcomed the audience and thanked the supporters, partners and Oxford University hosts. With only a hint of irony, Ringe explained that they had listened to their own consumers in choosing the event theme after receiving excellent feedback from past years.

The Academy’s mission to foster exchange between scientists, scholars, students, practitioners and experts has grown substantially year upon year. After the 2011 Congress held at Columbia University, New York City, where 15 countries were represented, Ringe announced that this Congress included attendees from a record 21 countries.

Next to be introduced was Julian Treasure, moderator for the day’s proceedings. An eminent sound expert, author and chairman of The Sound Agency, Treasure welcomed the audience warmly and delivered

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an engaging introductory talk on the importance of listening. Even with noise pollution becoming an increasingly significant issue, Treasure noted that brands are often tempted to “shout over their competition” in attempts to stand out. Referencing several related studies and empirical evidence about cluttered sound environments, Treasure challenged the room of audio branding industry experts to be “champions of listening.”



Julian Treasure

## **Enhancing Multisensory Experiences and Brands Through Sound**

Co-host and returning speaker Professor Charles Spence took the stage, ready to update the eager audience with his latest research. Representing the Oxford University Department of Experimental Psychology, Professor Spence has established his Crossmodal Research Lab as a leading source of research on the confluence of cognitive neuroscience and marketing.



Diving quickly into a survey of practical, real-world examples of using sound to enhance product experience, Professor Spence began with recent developments within the food industry. Citing examples such as New York chef Zakary Pelaccio’s playful pairings of recipes with songs, or Spence’s own “Sound of the Sea” experiments at The Fat Duck restaurant in conjunction with audio branding company Condiment Junkie. Spence also shared a collection of sonic and crossmodal cues found in current print advertising campaigns.



Charles Spence

The Crossmodal Research Lab has produced fascinating research linking specific tastes in the human palate to notes, chords and musical arrangements. Professor Spence has also found commonalities across species, noting similar hedonic and aversive reactions in human babies, chimpanzees and even mice.

With growing demand in the marketplace for enhanced gastronomic experiences, Professor Spence reported more intriguing trends; expert bartender “mixologists” pairing music with drinks, a “gin & sonic” cre-

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ated by a chef specializing in molecular gastronomy, a mobile app produced in conjunction with his department that enhances the flavour of potato crisps and even a chef who is experimenting with serving dishes on a mobile tablet device to create a synesthetic dining experience. Spence predicts more multisensory products and experiential advertising for the near future as marketers and producers seek to create new and exciting experiences for their consumers.

### **The Role of Consumer Research in Audio Branding**

The second presentation of the day was given by Professor Nancy Puccinelli of Oxford University's Saïd Business School. Turning the conversation from the experimental use of sound to the more pragmatic approach of the advertising industry, Professor Puccinelli presented a wide body of research in the field of social psychology.



Nancy Puccinelli

Citing her studies on the persuasive power of music along with consulting work for major international brands, Professor Puccinelli impressed upon the audience that carefully considered music choices based on mood, instrumentation and arrangement can successfully enhance audi-

ence perception of a product. Equally important was her finding that incongruous music used in TV advertising has a range of effects on the audience, from no effect at all to a detrimental, disengaging emotional response.

Professor Puccinelli next summarized her continuing research on the congruity of sound in marketing. With recent studies based around the use of music to induce consumer mood and choice, along with current research on the critical importance of sound during retail promotional periods, she gave insightful examples of how brands should pay particular attention to sound in point of purchase environments. Recounting specifics on the use of holiday-themed music in shopping areas, her research has led her to believe that holiday music can overwhelm consumers and hurt sales. Her hope is that this important finding should encourage brands to pay more attention to the mood and psychological perceptions of their purchase environments.

## **Audio Branding Barometer 2012**

Returning to the Congress as a representative of the Audio Branding Academy, Dr. Klaus Frieler shared the results of the 2012 Audio Branding Barometer. Conducted online in September/October 2012, the study gathered market data from 33 agencies in 12 countries, a similar sample size to previous years.

The results showed continued growth from a nascent industry. Most agencies offering audio branding services are still under 10 years old, half starting within the past six years, while employing under 20 people. 95% of budgets remain under USD \$100,000 but revenues were up by a third and agencies are optimistic about continued growth.

Along with other compelling data collected on evolving business models and service offerings, the basic definition of the term “audio branding” is also in flux. Participants in the survey placed more emphasis this year on process, strategy and identity without relying on comparisons to the world of visual branding. Dr. Frieler’s interpretation of this new direction was that as the practice of audio branding continues to

## Audio Branding Congress 2012 Summary

grow in perceived significance around the world, audio branding companies are becoming more confident about their field and the relevance of their offerings to clients.



Klaus Frieler

### **Product-Related Sounds Speed up Visual Search**

Dr. Klemens Knöferle, co-host and colleague of Professor Charles Spence, presented the Oxford University Crossmodal Research Lab's current findings on consumers' experiences in visually cluttered environments. Recent studies show that shoppers are only able to process a very small fraction of the visual stimuli presented to them. This fact, combined with increasing numbers of product choices, sums up the types of new challenges that marketers are faced with to make their products stand out. Knöferle's team was curious to discover how the effects of sensory modalities other than vision – primarily audio cues – could facilitate in the visual search for objects in a retail setting.

By creating a number of tests to measure the effects of sound and scent, Knöferle has collected data that supports his theory that logical

and intentional multisensory cues can decrease visual search time. Revealing the power of intentional sound, Knöferle shared a 2010 study that found decreased reaction times when a logical sound was paired with a visual stimulus, while response time with no sound at all is relatively close to that of a distracting or illogical sound pairing.



Klemens Knöferle

Knöferle's tests are designed around playing congruent, incongruent, unrelated sounds, or no sound at all and measuring visual search times and accuracy. As the previously cited study found, he was able to decrease participants' reaction times significantly by pairing congruent sounds with images of standard supermarket items. He also reinforced the finding that unrelated or incongruent sounds resulted in equal performance as no sound, showing that sound has little distracting effect.

Giving a glimpse of the future, Knöferle promised that the Crossmodal Research Lab's future studies will continue to question these findings, potentially looking at the effects of audio logos in retail environments, verbal and semantic auditory cues and applications of new eye tracking technology.

## Implicit and Explicit Effects of Music on Brand Perception in TV Ads

Wrapping up the morning's presentations was Dr. Daniel Müllensiefen of Goldsmiths, University Of London, sharing his team's research produced in tandem with London advertising agency adam&eveDDB. Müllensiefen opened with a powerful summary of research describing the power of music in advertising to convey brand image, increase recall, heighten effectiveness and create emotional bonds between brands and consumers. Previous work in the fields of social and occupational psychology, along with more recent neuropsychology advances, have led his group to explore the subject matter from a different angle using cognitive and perceptual psychology, specifically examining music priming.



Daniel Müllensiefen

After poking fun at the typical advertising agency music creative brief, replete with contradictions and phrases that have lost meaning with repetition, Müllensiefen described his process for arriving at a more scientific and quantitative method of selecting or creating music that would have the intended emotional effect. The first experiment polled 185 par-

ticipants, mapping mood characteristics of 16 potential music selections. The data was used to chart the semantic differential and measure the closeness between each song and the brand goals. The second experiment evaluated the effects of congruent and incongruent music with qualitative focus testing and recall testing.

The results of both experiments create a convincing body of evidence to show the measurable results of intentional music choices, not the least of which was that “congruent music makes an ad 16% more effective.” Müllensiefen enthusiastically pointed to this statistic alone being powerful enough to shift brands’ perception of the importance of sound in a marketplace where every effectiveness gain translates to larger ROI.

### **Award Case Study: Nokia**

Henry Daw, Principal Sound Designer at Nokia presented the first award case study of the afternoon. After the massive success of Nokia’s crowd-sourced ringtone initiative – presented at the 2011 Congress by Nokia colleague Tapio Hakanen – Daw explained the challenges faced by his team to further increase international product and brand relevance. The key, as Daw explained, was to focus on local markets and encourage more consumer engagement.

Nokia has continued to emphasize the importance of large quantitative user studies, allowing Daw’s group to gather data about ringtone popularity, preferences and usage habits to validate ringtone selections. Through analysing this feedback, Nokia was able to balance focus between global content and region-specific content. This also precipitated the need for a survey of many local music cultures and listening habits in different regions of the world.

As the result of this research, Nokia launched a new crowd-sourced initiative called “Regional Ringtones, Designed By You” with a substantial cash grand prize and five smaller prizes for each of the 5 focus regions: China, India, Middle East & Africa, South East Asia & Pacific and Latin America. The program was deemed a success, with 1,500 total entries from 474 local musicians and sound designers.

## **Award Case Study: Globosat**

Representing Rio de Janeiro-based music branding company GOMUS, Natalia Lannes and Guilherme Flarys described the enormous challenge presented by their client Globosat. To revolutionize the process of music discovery and licensing for the largest pay TV broadcast group in Latin America, GOMUS had to create a new audio style guide for each channel along with a universally accessible and easy-to-use music database.

After an overview of the enormous range of music already available to network producers, Flarys explained the nuances and unique challenges of creating a unified searchable music catalogue. GOMUS also gathered and pre-cleared new music from major publishers, creating relationships for Globosat that would allow easier synch licensing of newly released music. Flarys also gave an overview of their new music management interface and intuitive search tools for non-musicians.

Lannes took the audience through several examples of how the new brand guide would create unity and consistency across the Globosat brands while clearly defining the sound of each channel. GOMUS identified the musical DNA of each sub-brand and created straightforward language for network producers to meet these criteria. This process also involved curating playlists to help guide music searches and train employees for making intentional choices. The result was a more objective approach to music selection, clearly defined identity guidelines and an entirely new, efficient synch licensing process.

## **Award Case Study: DKSH**

On behalf of Berlin-based agency kleiner und bold Alexander Wodrich, founder of Wodrich Audio Branding in Berlin, was hired to rebrand DKSH, a leading Swiss company that helps their clients expand business and distribution across Asian markets. His initial challenge was to gain insight on the musical listening habits and cultural touchpoints within each market that DKSH services in order to more clearly define a sonic palette that would resonate with the client's wide audience. Wodrich's research presented a survey of traditional musical instrumentation for



each region of Asia, along with genre-specific breakdowns for popular music styles. He concluded that while traditional Asian music is highly important and coexists with contemporary styles, most Asian cultures have embraced popular Western music genres and production techniques. Although languages may change, he found that Western-sounding pop music is now a unifying musical connector among Asian subcultures.

After identifying the tonality and emotional differentiators unique to DKSH, Wodrich's goal was to blend the brand's Swiss heritage with its Asian affinity. He settled on a palette of sounds and instruments that could balance both sides of the equation and resonate as both Western and Asian. In addition to composing musical elements that included an audio logo and thematic mood score, Wodrich also cast new talent as the voice of DKSH in order to complete the audio brand.

### **Award Case Study: Renfe**

To define the audio brand for Renfe, a major Spanish train operator with a recently launched new visual identity, Juan Corrales of Madrid-based Flyabit was faced with several intriguing challenges. In order to give shape to a mother brand whose image had been "cannibalized" by its more well-known sub-brands, as well as deploying new branded sound assets across an array of touchpoints, Corrales first defined a new sonic DNA based on the values and goals of the parent organization.

Corrales arrived at the finding that a central theme first needed to be established from which all other brand elements could be derived, most notably the sound logo. Based on a musical motif from the brand anthem, the sound logo could "speak with different voices" by changing the musical arrangements and instrumentation. Beyond melodic instruments, Corrales was inspired by his background as a percussionist to inject a rhythmic element that would also resonate with the transportation brand. The new assets were implemented across a range of media such as advertising, web, corporate communications, point of sale and call centers, as well as the trains themselves. Faced with making audio sound

excellent and carry the intended emotional resonance while coming from small, low-fidelity PA speakers of the trains proved to be particularly difficult. The solution Corrales settled on was to reduce the audio information to its simplest form and carefully select the musical arrangement to keep in mind the transmitted frequencies and acoustic properties of train cabins.

### **Award Case Study: Harrods**

The Brand Sense Agency and The Sound Agency, both based in London, U.K., were hired in tandem to strategize and implement a new approach to environmental sound at London's famed department store Harrods. Presenting on behalf of the agencies were Lydia Watson and Tim Hirst. With one million square feet of retail space, an enormous demographic of international clients and a historic brand legacy, the group set a goal to be the most innovative retail-focused sound branding initiative in the world.

After an audit of the entire Harrods store, where sound levels, existing music practices, technical capabilities and shopping habits were meticulously recorded, the branding team understood their challenge to be even greater than previously anticipated. They created a plan to completely overhaul the store's sound capabilities, from installing new speakers capable of focused sound projection to software controls allowing generative and potentially interactive sound fields, along with new aesthetic guidelines for the creation of the sound itself.

Beginning with the toy department, which encompasses several uniquely themed spaces, a test run of strategic implementation was undertaken. By clearly defining each spatial experience, which ranged from an enchanted forest to an alien spacecraft, and overseeing installation, testing and support, a unique experience was created for consumers that reinforced the brand image. After the success of the initial launch, The Brand Sense Agency and The Sound Agency are currently planning and implementing a continued rollout of experiential sound design for additional Harrods departments.

## **Award Case Study: Dell**

Susan Aminoff represented Elias Arts to introduce the agency's multi-year engagement with Dell to create a new global audio identity system. In order to refocus the brand from a product-based computer company to a service-based technology company, Aminoff and her team began with in-depth research to create the foundation from which to rebuild the brand. While many fascinating outcomes of this research and the resulting executions were shared with the attending audience, Dell has requested that details be limited to the presentation itself since the initiative has yet to be launched to the public.

Suffice to say, Elias Arts was able to take their client through an impressive level of engagement on all levels of the organization in order to discover, audit, plan, implement, educate and train Dell employees. Aminoff described the great extent to which she and her team were able to leverage their research and create hundreds of assets, from a central brand thematic and sound logo to an extensive original music library to functional device sounds and more. All elements were audience tested in three global markets, an undertaking that was a very important validation phase for Dell, a company that is well-known for placing significant value on research and consumer feedback.

Most exciting for the attendees, and for the industry itself, was Aminoff's announcement that a training course in audio branding is now a required part of the certification program for all Dell employees and representatives.

## **Award Case Study: The Linde Group**

Richella Odebrecht, Head of Internal Communications and Corporate Branding at Munich-based industrial gas company The Linde Group, was joined by amp co-founders Michele Arnese and Rudi Mauser to present the final case study of the day. Odebrecht explained that for a company that is reshaping itself after numerous successful acquisitions, music was a key driver for building an emotional relationship with the brand across many new employees and diverse local markets. Music was greatly val-

ued by the company's founder Dr. Carl Von Linde and has been an important part of the company's 130 year brand heritage so it was fitting that it form the basis of the company's new internal communications strategy.

Mauser introduced the Linde Theme at its most elementary, a simple four-tone motif composed of notes in the pentatonic scale. Explaining that their goal was to create a short, singable and flexible melody that could work across music styles and transcend cultural boundaries, his experience has led him to believe that singable melodies are the most memorable.

Mauser and Arnese next took the audience on a journey through the arrangements of the theme, from the Linde Masterpiece to the Linde Suite to the resulting brand audio signature. Drawing many parallels between Linde brand values and the finer points of arranging for symphonic orchestra, Mauser described how they were able to express the rich history of the brand. The Linde Suite, an undeniably impressive and inspiring epic, was composed in four movements, each a different style: Romantic, Impressionist, 1960s-inspired and World to take its audience on an auditory journey through history across five continents.

According to Odebrecht, the new Linde audio brand elements have successfully brought employees together and engaged management, resulting in a continued exploration and evolution of brand assets. While the initial project focus was on the Linde Masterpiece, the initiative has continued three years and resulted in the development of an audio logo and signature for the brand

### **Panel Discussion: Audio Branding: Art, Science or the Art of Science?**

The penultimate event of the day was the panel discussion led by moderator Julian Treasure. He was joined by a diverse group of experts: Professor Charles Spence (Oxford University), Alexander Wodrich (Wodrich Audio Branding), Rayan Parikh (Elias Arts), Henry Daw (Nokia), and audio branding consultant Adrion Porter (FusionFlow Media).

Treasure directed the conversation across a range of topics, questioning the panellists about the measurability of sound and how they interpret the results. Spence noted that while the old model of marketing would simply survey opinions and the new model of neuroscience postulates that one should never trust what people say, only what their brain scans communicate, his opinion is that the proper methodology probably lies somewhere in between.



Panel Discussion

Wodrich described how difficult it is to distinguish reactions to audio when so many other sensory factors can come into play. He duly noted that even the mere volume of sound playback can greatly affect the perception and reaction from a test participant or client. Parikh described a recent method that he had used to advance the conversation about sound during a focus group; by asking participants to talk about their favourite music, followed by a discussion on how specific device sounds affect their everyday lives, he was able to open a more nuanced conversation about reactions to sound to get better feedback from his participants.

As the conversation turned to measuring ROI for clients, Porter described the way that he establishes the importance of audio branding for his clients by correlating different factors within an overall brand strategy. Parikh noted that many audio branding initiatives can provide ROI simply by offsetting other marketing costs, not the least of which is ex-

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pensive music licensing. Wodrich agreed, noting that true measurement of the value of an audio brand can take years and is largely a factor of media budget over time to establish brand recognition.

Arriving at the panel's central theme, Treasure asked his panellists, and then the audience, if they consider themselves artists or scientists or a mix of both. All seemed to be in agreement that a balanced mix of the two approaches is important to arriving at a well-executed audio brand.

### Award Ceremony

Award submissions for 2012 came from nine countries on four continents. In advance of the Congress, the expert international judging panel of Daniel M. Jackson, Prof. Florian K ppler, Patrick Langeslag, Alex Moulton, Martyn Ware and Carl-Frank Westermann were involved in two rounds of deadlocked judging, eventually requiring the addition of an extra presentation slot, bringing the total to seven honorees.



Award Ceremony

The new award – a polished metal globe with an auditory “tinkle” when shaken – was unveiled by the ABA founders, along with the news that there would now be 3 awards for Gold, Silver and Bronze. Based on feedback from the first Audio Branding Award presented in 2011, the voting process for 2012 was revised to allow each Congress attendee to cast four individual votes across their favourite case studies.

When the results were announced, the Bronze award went to amp and The Linde Group and the Silver to Wodrich Audio Branding and DKSH. The Gold Award went to The Sound Agency and Brand Sense Agency for Harrods, much to the surprise and delight of moderator Julian Treasure, who led the project for The Sound Agency.

## In Conclusion

2012 was a landmark year for our industry. All Congress participants with whom I spoke agreed that the practice of audio branding is only just beginning to take shape. The case studies presented this year were not only inspiring and engaging, but showed a commitment to innovation and the positive transformation of the world we live in.



Hosts and Audio Branding Academy Team

It has been my great honour to participate in growth of the Audio Branding Congress; speaking in Hamburg in 2010, hosting the event in NYC in 2011, judging this year's Award submissions and writing this summary for the past two years have given me a deep appreciation for the passion and dedication of the Audio Branding Academy founders and staff. Moreover, the warm spirit of camaraderie among organizers, the gener-

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osity of the speakers and the overwhelming enthusiasm of the attendees who readily share their experience and knowledge are truly unique to this event. While reading the essays and case studies presented in this volume, I would urge you to actively engage in this community via the Audio Branding Academy's website. Reach out to the authors directly to continue the conversation and please consider attending the next Audio Branding Congress. I hope to meet you there.

Alex Moulton

March 2013



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The fourth annual Audio Branding Congress was held on December 11, 2012, in the UK for the first time after previous events in Germany and the US. The host was Oxford University, and the venue was the prestigious Oxford Examination Schools. Witnessing demand within the audio branding industry for increased emphasis on market research, testing and validation, the event was focused with the motto “Listen to Consumers.”

This Yearbook contains articles about the Audio Branding Congress 2012 and its presentations. Included is a comprehensive summary article, impressive jury-selected award case studies of brands like Nokia, Dell, Harrods, and The Linde Group, an article of keynote speaker Professor Charles Spence about the future of synaesthetic marketing, contributions from the scientific Call for Papers 2012, and a documentation of the branch study Audio Branding Barometer 2012 among others. Additionally, an International Directory of Audio Branding suppliers is included.

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