
Audio Branding Yearbook

2013/2014

(((ABA)))

AUDIO BRANDING ACADEMY

Eds. Kai Bronner, Rainer Hirt, Cornelius Ringe



Nomos

Prelude

The ancient Greek word *stereós* (στερεός) basically has two meanings: firm and spatial. The term STEREOPHONIC sound (or just stereo) was coined with its meaning of a spatial sound impression in the beginning of the 20th century. So it was round about 100 years ago that innovative people like *Clément Ader* (1881) or *Alan Blumlein* (1931) were thinking about media technologies for sound in space. Today audio-visual media are getting 3D in visual and auditory dimensions – and just the same are the expectations of users and clients in all applications. So we are curious to see how future audio branding concepts will meet these expectations.

Today we already can state a growing consciousness for auditory brand experience in space – especially at the point of sale. The Audio Branding Awards from 2012 and 2013 with three POS-cases and one case for public space are manifesting this observation.

Also the other meaning of stereo – firm – greatly affects our industry in a special way. While engineers were thinking about stereo sound, *Walter Lippman* coined the expression STEREOTYPE in his 1922 published book “Public Opinion.” So what is the stereo TYPE in the audio branding industry? Maybe it’s somewhere between annoying jingles and embarrassing elevator music?

Who comes to our Congresses, follows our feeds or simply reads this Yearbook knows that audio branding – as far as we define it – actually stands for the opposite of this kind of sound pollution. Following a sound design thinking approach, the Audio Branding Academy believes in the urgent necessity of thinking about the way brands handle sound and silence in all their products, activities and communications. Our profession still suffers from the stereotype of a jingle-industry. So we have to clarify that audio branding does not equate the production of only an audio logo – it stands for a sophistic and holistic way to create and maintain audible brands.

Prelude

Referring to this, the Audio Branding Academy was very pleased having the opportunity to present six best practice cases in Moscow, showing a comprehensive spectrum of audio branding possibilities. The audience of our award events witnessed the increasing quality of the cases year after year. By offering an open and international platform for fair and transparent competition, the Audio Branding Academy contributes to qualitative and economic growth.

Unfortunately we did not have the chance to reveal the stereotype of cold and frosty Moscow, as the event took place on November 28 and indeed it was a little bit cold out there (please note that in July 2010 temperature in this city reached +39 °C). All the more we could experience the warm hospitality of Russians and their curiosity for sound innovations. Certainly this helped us liquidate old stereotypes remaining from an overcome world view separated in east and west.

In the context of the current Crimea Crisis, which began in the time between the Congress and the publication of this Yearbook, this gains unsuspected topicality. It is a trivial finding that we all live on the same planet and only the exchange of ideas at all levels can help us to create a better (sound) world. Our intention for a Congress in Russia was on one hand to bring our audio branding message to this vast country and on the other hand to introduce the audio branding industry to business opportunities in new markets.

The combination of the new promising markets with our ambition to foster innovative audio branding concepts lead us to the motto of the 2013 Congress: "Sound Opportunities". This topic can be interpreted either as "prospects for new sound applications", or "good chances" for business in Russia and Eastern Europe. In November 2013 colleagues from Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Estonia, France, Germany, India, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands and UK followed this motto.

In this Yearbook you will find the proceedings of the Audio Branding Congress 2013 with a comprehensive summary article, impressive best practice case studies, contributions from the scientific Call for Papers 2013, a documentation of the market survey Audio Branding Barometer

Cornelius Ringe, Kai Bronner, Rainer Hirt

2013, results of a study, analysing 300 top brands in 10 countries with regards to their use of music and sound, and articles about current developments and opportunities in the audio branding industry.

The Audio Branding Academy wants to thank all the speakers and authors, the scientific advisory board, many helping hands, our supporters and partners who have made the Congress in Moscow possible. We were very happy to have Julian Treasure as returning moderator for the Audio Branding Congress. More than everybody else he is an enthusiastic ambassador for the responsible handling of sound in our environment. We also had the pleasure to trust in the decision of an internationally experienced award jury consisting of last year's award nominees: Alexander Wodrich (Berlin), Lydia Watson (London), Rayan Parikh (New York), Guilherme Flarys (Rio de Janeiro), Juan Corrales (Madrid) and Michele Arnese (Munich).

Special thanks go to Anna Kuzina from DigiSky who did an amazing job as event manager. Without her reliability and outstanding engagement the Congress would never have taken place in Moscow. We also want to express our deepest gratitude to Tatiana Tikhomirova from Media Communication Faculty of HSE – Higher School of Economics. She guided us through all security gates, opened all necessary doors and made possible that which under normal circumstances would have never been possible at all: the Audio Branding Congress at one of Russian's top elite universities. Last but not least we thank our partners and sponsors VOIS, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, biamp, SONOTON, eyeball, Pro Sound Effects, The Sound Agency, PH Media Group, Man Made Music.

Cornelius Ringe, Kai Bronner, Rainer Hirt

Hamburg, April 2014

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Audio Branding Congress 2013 Summary

Gianpaolo D'Amico

University of Florence, Italy

Introduction

The fifth Audio Branding Congress was held on November 28, 2013 at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia. Audio Branding Academy members made a huge effort to organise this edition in such an interesting area of the world, where a unique old-time culture mixes with a high level of technical knowledge, giving birth to a new but promising market in the field of modern communication.

More than 100 sound professionals came from 15 countries to share and discuss together about “Sound Opportunities”, the motto and main theme of the Congress. Which are the next big things in technology that can be successfully applied in audio branding? What kind of business could be built in markets nearly ready to open? These and many other questions the attendees of the Congress tried to answer in the cold but comfortable city of the Kremlin and the Red Square.

Prelude speech of this edition was given by Audio Branding Academy founder Dr. Cornelius Ringe, who immediately unveiled one of the most critical issues for audio branding: the need to define a credible *ROI* (Return on Investment) for clients. For this reason he invited universities and professionals working in the market of modern communication to cooperate together for collecting data with the aim to measure efficiency and benefits of audio branding activities.

Audio Branding Congress 2013 Summary

Another buzzword in Cornelius' speech was seal, a way to underline how much today we need to create a real seal of quality in order to sell agencies a robust framework and finally to show clients authentic results. ABA proposed itself as a reference point to achieve these goals, also via a new project presented by ABA member Christoph Anzenbacher: Audio Logo Database, a web platform for research on audio identities, where data are categorised and represented under diverse market perspectives and acoustic properties.



Cornelius Ringe

Again this year the host of the Congress was Julian Treasure (CEO at The Sound Agency), responsible for introducing themes and moderating all the talks and speakers. Treasure opened his welcome speech revealing some of the topics to be touched later during the proceedings presentations, the case studies award and the final panel session. Yet he provocatively proposed a new idea: to extend audio branding topics through the organisation of a summit completely dedicated to sound, where different personalities would have the chance to meet and build together a new perspective on sound communication for emerging markets worldwide.



Julian Treasure

Before Pushing 'Play': Audio Branding in Russia

The state of audio branding in Russia was the theme for the first presentation of the day, given by Vladimir Kozlov, CEO at DigiSky, and Elena Lebedeva, Head of Store Concept Development at O'STIN.

After showing two examples of audio logos (1985/analogue vs. 2000/digital) and asking which was the better one? ("Are we sure which is the 20th century digital version?"), Vladimir explained that Russia has a unique sound identity and represents a potentially growing market, but the audio branding process is for many clients to blame for slowing down a project and that is why it is not considered as a strategic asset.

Following him Elena Lebedeva shared her own experience in audio branding for retail spaces in the fashion market. Conducting a brief of audio branding with Russian customers is very complicated not only to explain, but also because the added value on the budget is often rejected. A further problem is surely about licenses: clients don't want to pay additional fees for authors and their music and, more than anything else, this is a cultural issue.



Vladimir Kozlov

Sound Opportunities

From Moscow we moved our brains hungry for sounds to Berlin, with the presentation by SoundCloud. Mark Dewings, brand manager of the most popular German social network, described the platform, the main features, the most active users and the impressive amount of data created daily by people in love with sound all around the world. The ambition of SoundCloud is to become the social network “where brands promote themselves via the use of sound. Because brands are people too”.

SoundCloud ears are obviously directed to the mobile world, as some data from Nielsen and some market information by NetFlix and YouTube users clearly show in the last months. People are going to generate more and more content via the smartphones, so the very sound opportunity is there. The new motto from Berlin will be more and more this: Sound first!



Mark Dewings

Audio Branding and Its Legal Use

"In Russia the great demand for audio branding shows that this market is growing rapidly". Vadim Vechkasov revealed this quote to the audience of the Congress just before focusing his talk on Russian legislative features in the music market.

Whether companies or musicians, all the creators/suppliers of music in Russia are right holders that have to be remunerated by people on behalf of VOIS (Russian Organization for Intellectual Property), the only one organisation which is accredited for collective management of related rights. The music licensing and remuneration process is mostly performed on an agreement made between VOIS and music operators, companies offering different musical enterprise services (clubs, shops, etc.) which sign corresponding agreements with their clients.

VOIS and operators are used to work strictly together as real partners to define rates of remuneration for about 13 categories of users, which are estimated on some parameters, such as: the area where music events are performed, the size of the location, the type (concert hall, restaurant, etc.), and so on.

Audio Branding Congress 2013 Summary

Last but not least: one important fact to consider is that if the procedure of payment of remuneration to right holders through the accredited organisation is broken, there are different sanctions to be used: from civil to criminal.



Vadim Vechkasov

Audio Branding Barometer 2013

After the coffee break it was the time for numbers: Dr. Klaus Frieler, post-doc researcher at the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt (Weimar), took the stage to present the annual Audio Branding Barometer, a research conducted by Audio Branding Academy between July and August 2013, consisting of an online survey sent to 145 agencies worldwide aiming at gaining data about trends and markets in the audio branding industry.

Following a detailed explanation of the method used to conduct the study, Frieler summarised the most relevant results, including the motivations presented by agencies to convince clients to buy their audio branding services, among which the most relevant ones are: return on investment, branding, emotional connection and recognition.

Gianpaolo D'Amico

Agencies and audio professionals believe that the most valuable opportunities in 2014 could be found both in real physical spaces (retail points) and digital ones (especially mobile and web).

Big ones do it better: Intel, Audi and Coca Cola represent the magical triad of the companies which implemented the best audio branding strategy worldwide, while retail/wholesale, transportation, banking/financial services and health care/pharmaceuticals are the most important (by type and revenues) client industries.



Klaus Frieler

The barometer pointed out a bright future for this field, forecasting a slight/strong increase on average on the evolution of the market for audio branding.

At the end of the presentation a small intervention in video format by Prof. Dr. Karsten Kilian and his students anticipated a pilot study on 10 countries and 300 top brands, which will follow the work made by the Audio Branding Barometer.

Acoustic Branding on the Internet

Audio and Internet: is this still a long-lasting and profitable relationship for brands and their communication? This problem was studied by audio consulting group which, on behalf of the voice of Managing Partner Patrick Langeslag, reported a work of research about the use of music and sound for websites.



Patrick Langeslag

The agency was contacted by the German company Dräger, which wanted to investigate how much the music on their website was really important and effective. Langeslag shared their test study performed on the official website of the hospital centre, working with different test groups of people.

Some interesting results of the work reported that users use computer with speakers switched on, but they favoured an opt-in solution for the audio part of the website (they decided to switch on the volume when they needed/wanted) and preferred a YouTube-like navigation button, obviously because they were used to the experience provided by YouTube video player.

Poster Presentations

During the whole Congress attendees had the chance to discover other research projects presented in the poster sessions, in which the following papers were represented with an infographic-like style: Sound Quality vs. Sound Identity. The Perceptibility of Audio Logos Under Everyday Conditions of Transmission and Reception, by Christoph Anzenbacher (amp GmbH), Christoph Reuter (University of Vienna), Michael Oehler (Makromedia University of Media and Communication); Audio Branding for Fashion: An Experiment of Education on Sound for a New Generation of Professionals by Gianpaolo D'Amico (University of Florence, Italy); and Music Influence on Brand Perception: Survey of the Commercials' Communicative Efficiency by Yulia Malenkaya (Sound ID Audiobranding).

Audio Branding Award Case Studies

The second segment of the Congress was mainly dedicated to case studies, commercial projects for companies presented by sound communication agencies competing each other for the best case study award edition 2013.

Award Case Study: Wooga Sound Logo

First project on the stage was Wooga Sound Logo by nhb corporate sound. Cornelius Stiegler (nhb corporate sound) and Johannes Ippen (Wooga) introduced the work of the company specialised in games for social media and mobile and summarised the main challenge for the definition of its audio identity: people know the games they are playing, but they don't know people behind them.

Teams at Wooga build regularly several games with different sonic identities, played many times in one day by players accessing them from different countries all over the world. So they need a system of sonic logos, more than a single one.



Johannes Ippen

Cornelius' and Johannes' companies worked together starting from the characters of games which resulted more friendly for players and then created a first prototype of sound, based on some basic elements: a signature melody, use of musical instrumentation and a touch of sound design. Thus they built a system of sounds based on a main audio logo, which was adapted and integrated in each single game, with different musical properties (rhythm, key, etc.) and tasks.

In addition two important steps of the work followed: the creation of detailed guidelines for future applications and touchpoints, and the conduction of tests of accessibility and recognizability with Wooga international teams.

Award Case Study: MetrôRio

Second case study of the Congress was MetrôRio by Zanna Sound, the audio branding project for the subway system of Rio de Janeiro. Creative Director and CEO Zanna described the noisy soundscape within one of the biggest and crowded subways of the world, and how it was grossly covered via the adoption of classical music, which turned out to be more disturbing and useless for people.

Gianpaolo D'Amico

The method of work of Zanna included some relevant stages: study of the brand, workshops with the client and the creation of a strong collaboration between sound and advertising agencies.

Zanna strongly underlined her background as a musician: their solution for MetrôRio started from a musical theme, choosing proper instruments (something directly coming from the traditional carioca culture), rhythm and melody. After this the extension of the audio branding identity was developed: sound logo, on air messages, sounds for the tasks of the vending machines and, obviously, soundscape for the environment.



Zanna

A special step of this project was dedicated to the training of the staff of the metro, to whom Zanna team taught how to use their voice to speak in a “non noisy” way, balancing loudness and saying proper sentences and thus contributing to the whole soundscape of the metro.

At the end of her speech Zanna mentioned the String theory, saying one of the best quotes of the Congress: “We are frequencies, we are notes. We are Sound”.

Award Case Study: Peugeot

From Brazil to France: Michaël Boumendil got on the stage to present Peugeot case study by Sixième Son agency. Introduced as a project moved by a strong and audacious attitude of the agency, the main idea for the new strategy was not to work and analyse the existent, but to go back radically to the DNA of Peugeot in order to subvert the current identity.

Unfortunately some materials of the case study were strictly confidential and the agency was not allowed to show so many things about the on-going process of work. As such, we had to satisfy ourselves watching a short commercial video playing the new audio logo at the end, where Boumendil underlined the abrupt change of the final part of the tune, cleaned up of reverberations and electronic glitches, with the sharp aim to communicate “leadership, magic, passion, innovation and premium” the new key values on which Sixième Son based its whole work of audio re-branding for Peugeot.



Michaël Boumendil

Award Case Study: Emporia

Following Russian coffee break time were case studies related to the use of sound in retail spaces, one of the hottest topics for audio branding in 2013. Anna Kind and Martin Hallberg from Radja presented the case of Emporia shopping centre in Malmö (Sweden), developed for the client Steen & Ström.

For this project they started backwards: the needs of the client, who required a solution where sound should achieve accessibility (sound as a personal guide) and provide added value (offering an experience beyond shopping).



Anna Kind

As Emporia is one of the biggest malls in Europe, the team had to face many issues related not only to sound communication, but also to physical spaces. Indeed they used some special surround speakers in order to play sounds along a vertical path, which changed in position according to the different scenarios of the sound space.

Award Case Study: Ritter Sport

How do you put music in chocolate? This was the enviable challenge that iV2 had to take on for the new audio branding of Ritter Sport. On the stage Ulrich Reese described the great work of organisation made for this client, which was composed of the following stages: analysis and design, creation, testing, implementation and results.

Starting from a preliminary discovery of the brand (on behalf of audio audits sessions and creation of audio mood boards), seven production teams for working on the audio brief were arranged. Thus a first prototype of the brand theme was created, in order to build a draft of the product sound toolkit and quickly evaluate it in workshop sessions with stake holders. A valuable partnership with Delta SenseLab allowed to conduct quantitative tests (2 days for 60 different subjects) on the performed methodology and the audio proposals.



Ulrich Reese

Final steps of this huge project were dedicated to the creation of final audio brand key elements (brand theme, audio logo, product sound toolkit, etc.) as well as the integration in the most relevant touchpoints (TV, cinema, social media, etc.).

Award Case Study: Iguatemi

The final case study of the Congress took us back to Brazil, with agency B Sound Thinking presenting a project of audio branding in retail spaces for the client Iguatemi. Paulo Dytz and Bruno Alcalde explained the methodology of the agency, starting from a listening stage, where they worked with different people from the client company to measure the sources of noise in the mall. This sonic image represented the basis for the creating stage, where the so-called sound pillars were designed according to some requested properties, such as unicity, ability to relate people together, sophistication and finally a strong connection to musical trends.

A following stage of the process was related to the implementation of the strategy, basically oriented to the training of workers at the mall, on behalf of a “noise patrol”, a team of people monitoring the soundscape during the day.



Bruno Alcalde

Results stage was the final part of the process: B Sound Thinking team used microphones to monitor noise levels via a customised software able to control volumes of musical tracks, the sonic moods played during a defined range of time during the day.

Panel Discussion: What's the Next Big Thing?

The most debated part of the Congress was surely the panel, where moderator Julian Treasure moderated a deep discussion with Michaël Boumendil (Sixième Son), Vladimir Kozlov (DigiSky), Vyacheslav Chernyakhovskii (Russian Academy of Advertising), Tom Trones (Cisco) and Carl-Frank Westermann (WESOUND).

Beginning with two old but still very open issues such as the use of responsible sound for telephone communications and websites, the panel moved to some new concepts: the application of sound in new media (social media, mobile apps space), some trending and solid technologies (natural language interfaces), the never ending issue of copyrights for music and two huge promises always struggling to go mainstream: product sound and data sonification.

Whether we have to give audio branding professionals a final direction for the next big thing in 2014 after this panel, I guess the answer is obvious: there is not only one direction, because there are many directions. Maybe too many. Communication channels are continuously evolving, as are needs of people. At the end all the words spent along the panel did nothing else but confirm that the promising markets for audio branding in the next year are more than one.

Audio Branding Award 2013 - Ceremony

The award ceremony proclaimed the best audio branding projects of 2013 among the six best case studies presented during the Congress.

This edition award jury was composed of the following international experts: Alexander Wodrich (Wodrich Audio Branding), Lydia Watson (The Sound Agency), Rayan Parikh (Elias Arts), Guilherme Flarys (Gomus), Juan Coralles (Flyabit) and Michele Arnese (amp). In addition a special audience award was given by the attendees of the Congress voting after the case studies presentations. The Gold award went to Radja for the Emporia case study, and the Silver to B Sound Thinking for Igua-temi. Double reward to Zanna Sound for MetrôRio case study, which received the Bronze and the Audience Award.



Cornelius Ringe, Julian Treasure, Award Winners, Kai Bronner

Conclusion

The value of a congress can be often evaluated on how much networking is performed by attendees in the spare time among talks sessions, at the coffee break, the lunch and even at the after party. Audio Branding Congress sharing moments were marked with a huge interest (I would call it passion) among all the people present at Moscow, either as speakers or spectators. We talked and discussed, we compared and changed our minds, sometimes we unveiled our most hidden musical tastes and even sang a song to show our ideas.

Those who work in the field of audio branding surely lived a year of transition, in which processes have assumed the status of mature frameworks, but where some markets are yet doubtful to open themselves to the opportunities offered by sound communication. Indeed, I guess one of the hardest challenges is surely the client, who requests some good reasons to invest money in a sound strategy. ROI and true KPI parameters are the tools to build quickly and urgently.

Audio Branding Congress 2013 Summary

What we need most now is to extend and engage the community. This is what Kai Bronner, Rainer Hirt, Cornelius Ringe and all the amazing people at Audio Branding Academy are trying to achieve, so then we must give our best support to accelerate this process, beginning from digital channels, especially social media. From Russia to the future: hope and innovation are the keywords for heading us to the next edition of the Audio Branding Congress, that I strongly suggest you attend next year at another magical place of the world.

Audio Branding Yearbook

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AUDIO BRANDING ACADEMY

Sound Opportunities

After previous events in Hamburg, New York and Oxford, the Audio Branding Congress 2013 took place in Moscow. The Audio Branding Academy organized the event in cooperation with the Higher School of Economics Moscow, the Humboldt University Berlin and its Russian partner DigiSky.

According to the motto „Sound Opportunities“, technological trends as well as the conditions for the development of new business in the Russian market were being discussed by experts from 15 countries. Furthermore, the Audio Branding Award 2013 was given to the best practice cases presented at the Congress.

In this Yearbook you will find the proceedings of the Audio Branding Congress 2013. Included is a comprehensive summary article, impressive best practice case studies, contributions from the scientific Call for Papers 2013 as well as a documentation of the market survey Audio Branding Barometer 2013.

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