

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASEFebruary 06, 2020 || Page 1 | 2

Fraunhofer software helps power immersive music services for Amazon Echo Studio smart speaker

Erlangen, Germany: Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS, inventor of mp3 and primary developer of AAC, MPEG-H Audio and other MPEG standard audio codecs, announced today that Amazon has become an important music-centric licensee of its MPEG-H audio decoder software, included in the new Echo Studio. MPEG-H is the novel audio scheme used for new immersive music services including those based on the Sony 360 Reality Audio format. 360 Reality Audio services from Amazon Music HD on the Echo Studio are enabled by the Fraunhofer software.

“Immersive music is the next frontier for next-generation audio, building on the use of three-dimensional sound in cinema and TV. The inclusion of our MPEG-H decoder in the Echo Studio will allow mainstream consumers to experience immersive music with the convenience they have come to expect from today’s stereo music services”, said Dr. Bernhard Grill, Director of Fraunhofer IIS.

Amazon has also joined the MPEG-H trademark program administered by Fraunhofer. The program signals to consumers that MPEG-H products have been verified to work with each other and support all necessary MPEG-H Audio features. “We are pleased to have Amazon adopting the MPEG-H trademark program as our first licensee for smart speaker class products”, said Robert Bleidt, Division General Manager of Fraunhofer USA.

About MPEG-H Audio

MPEG-H Audio, substantially developed by Fraunhofer IIS, is the industry’s most advanced audio system, supporting both immersive sound and the ability for users to adjust elements in the audio to their preferences. MPEG-H has been on the air since 2017 on all TV networks in South Korea under the new ATSC 3.0 standard, and it has been selected for new broadcast standards to be launched in China and Brazil.

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Fraunhofer offers MPEG-H software implementations for many popular CPU, SoC and DSP platforms. It is widely deployed today in TV sets, premium soundbars and high-end smart speakers.

PRESS RELEASEFebruary 06, 2020 || Page 2 | 2

About Amazon Echo Studio

Echo Studio is the first smart speaker to deliver an immersive three-dimensional (3D) audio experience using Sony's 360 Reality Audio and other immersive formats. It brings listeners closer to their favorite artists and songs, allowing them to experience music as if they were in front of their favorite artist. Sony Music Entertainment, Universal Music Group, and Warner Music Group are bringing a growing library of new music, current hits, and legendary tracks to these immersive formats. Native 3D music will be available on Echo Studio with a subscription to Amazon Music HD, a new tier of the highest quality streaming audio available.

About Fraunhofer IIS

For over 30 years, the institute's Audio and Media Technologies division has been shaping the globally deployed standards and technologies in the fields of audio and moving picture production. Starting with the creation of mp3 and continuing with the co-development of AAC and the Digital Cinema Initiative test plan, almost all consumer electronic devices, computers and mobile phones are equipped with systems and technologies from Erlangen today. Meanwhile, a new generation of best-in-class media technologies – such as MPEG-H Audio, xHE-AAC, EVS, LC3/LC3plus, Symphoria, Sonamic and upHear – is elevating the user experience to new heights. Always taking into account the demands of the market, Fraunhofer IIS develops technology that makes memorable moments.