

CASE STUDY

Sonova's Sound Demo Shelter

STÄFA, SWITZERLAND

Sonova's Innovative Demo Shelter Powered by Genelec Smart IP



GENELEC®



TECHNOLOGY FOR HEARING CARE

As a leading provider of cutting-edge hearing care technology, Switzerland's [Sonova](#) has long been dedicated to enhancing quality of life through sound. Through its family of brands — Phonak, Unitron, AudioNova, Sennheiser, and Advanced Bionics — Sonova offers a comprehensive portfolio of hearing solutions, including personal audio devices, wireless communication systems, hearing aids, cochlear implants, and audiological services. This commitment takes the company to trade shows and exhibitions across the world, where it showcases the power and importance of high-quality hearing solutions.

Live demonstrations of [Phonak](#) hearing aids are always a highlight at events such as the [EUHA](#) International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians, and now Sonova is taking these to the next level. A state-of-the-art Sound Demo Shelter powered by [Genelec](#) loudspeakers has revolutionised these demos to deliver a truly immersive sound experience.





REINVENTING AUDIO DEMOS

With their minds set on accurately replicating the experience of being hard of hearing, Sonova's Hearing Performance Engineer, Fabian Hohl and his team set out to create a demonstration that would allow unimpaired listeners to understand the impact of hearing care solutions. "We previously tried to build a sound demo to simulate the experience, but it proved overly complicated," says Hohl. "The stress of an event like EUHA is always high, so working night shifts every time to set up the live sound demo only added more pressure. We knew there had to be a better way — and that's when the idea for the Sound Demo Shelter was born."

Purchased second-hand from the German army, the communications container allowed Sonova to put everything needed for a successful demo in one mobile space. "Once we had the container, our focus turned to audio," Hohl continues. "When showcasing the features of hearing instruments, the quality of the sound is crucial. I was looking for a PoE solution that would be visually discreet and without lots of messy cables. My immediate thought was Genelec."

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Fabian Hohl
Sonova Hearing
Performance Engineer



CREATING AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES

Having already committed to a [Dante](#)-based network, Hohl was searching for an easy-to-install PoE system that they could integrate by themselves. Already familiar with Genelec as part of Sonova's in-house operations, Hohl specified the use of their loudspeakers for the container — "If you look at the loudspeaker market, the only truly professional brand who offers this solution is Genelec with their [Smart IP](#) range."

To guarantee they were choosing the right loudspeakers for such a demanding project, Sonova contacted Genelec's Swiss distributor, [Arocom](#) to provide a demo of Genelec's Smart IP models. "After testing both the compact [4410](#) and the larger [4420](#) model, we opted for sixteen 4420 loudspeakers," Hohl states. "They were arranged inside the Sound Demo Shelter in two overhead circles of eight, mounted on the ceiling above two [GRAS KEMAR](#) mannequins, with a single [7360](#) subwoofer in the centre." GRAS KEMARs are the industry standard tool for acoustic research, simulating the experience of sound waves passing through the human ear.

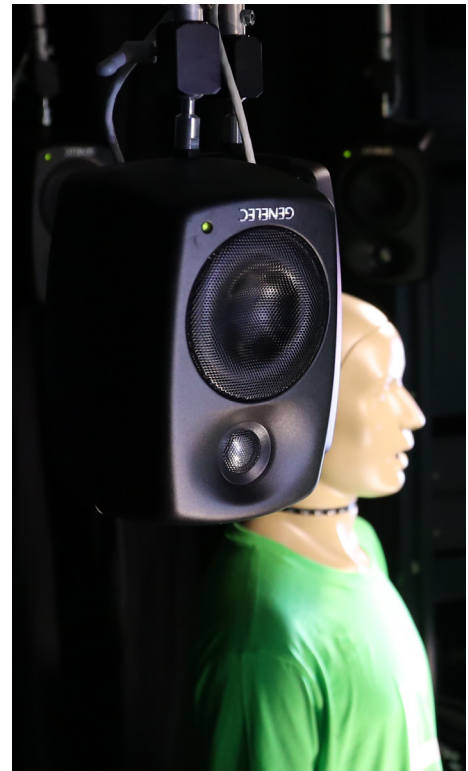
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Fabian Hohl
Sonova Hearing
Performance Engineer

The two KEMARs are set up to highlight different features of the hearing aids, with visitors outside the container able to switch their headphones between the two in order to compare the audible benefit of each feature. “The two circles of 8x 4420s enable us to create an authentic 3D sound,” Hohl explains. “It’s powerful for showcasing how cutting-edge hearing aids handle real-world, spatially complex listening situations. The setup allows us to simulate experiences such as sound coming from multiple directions or group conversations.”

“The 4420s are slim and unobtrusive in our little container,” reveals Hohl. “We went with the standard black colour to keep the focus on the demonstration rather than the sound system, but it ended up looking very smart and added to the overall professional feel of the container. The single cable setup of Smart IP was also a game-changer, simplifying the installation process and reducing the clutter of multiple cables.”



EMPOWERING THROUGH SOUND

“Visitors experience a guided sound demonstration of how Phonak’s hearing aid features tackle real-world listening situations,” says Hohl. “Depending on the innovation of the solution, the listening experience may simulate different scenarios, such as at a restaurant or a party, streaming media, or in reverberant spaces.”

“The upgraded sound demo has helped build trust through self-experience as attendees can hear the difference and judge the impact of the innovation based on their acoustic impression,” he adds. “It’s the perfect tool for Sonova’s needs. We can take it wherever we need, whether it’s internal or external events, exhibitions, visitor or investor meetings.”

For Sonova, this Sound Demo Shelter is far more than a showcase tool — it’s a dynamic, adaptable solution brought to life with Genelec loudspeakers and perfectly aligned with their mission to raise awareness and deepen



understanding of hearing care solutions. Crediting the Smart IP loudspeakers for their unparalleled clarity and precision, Hohl concludes: “Audio allows visitors to engage with hearing aid performance in an environment that feels remarkably true to life — and with superior loudspeaker quality, we can recreate a natural soundscape that reflects the power of the technology Sonova offers.”

THE DETAILS

Client

Sonova

Integrator

Sonova

Genelec Distributor

Arocom

Loudspeakers

- 16 x 4420A
- 1 x 7360A

Network & Control:

Dante Controller