



Tackling the art of interactive sound design with Teufel

Description



Of the diverse spectrum of services we provide at here Tracks & Fields, weâ??re always happy for the opportunity to show off some of our more specialised work. With that in mind we hope youâ??ll enjoy this behind-the-scenes look at our brand new interactive sound design project for Teufel!

Renowned Berlin audio brand Teufel approached us with a project proposal last summer. Some time ago, Teufel acquired Raumfeld, an innovator in wireless multi-room speaker technology. This streaming speaker line continued under its original name for several years, but with the imminent 2017 release of a new generation of wireless speakers, the decision was made to rebrand the new products under the Teufel banner for the very first time.

The project was much more than just a new product launch; the rebranding of the speaker range signalled Teufel bluetooth and WLAN wireless speaker technology entering the private domain for the very first time. This new line needed its own unique sonic stamp, and thatâ??s where Tracks & Fields stepped in.

Teufel requested an iconic â??**Sound HMI**â?? (human machine interface) to serve two specific purposes: underlining the productsâ?? state-of-the-art acoustic design, and characterising the Teufel brand through the medium of interactive sound.

We couldnâ??t be prouder of this result:

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To celebrate the release of Teufelâ??s new Audio Streaming range, we are launching a new series of blog posts dedicated to the art of acoustic interaction design. This first post is all about the detailed processes that enabled us to bring this range to life through bespoke sounds.

Future posts will look at the fascinating sciences of sound cognition and music psychology, and the stories behind the iconic sounds connected to some of our most-loved interactive devices.

Where We Began

Once we received our project brief from Teufel we set to work on mapping out the immediate parameters of the project:

- This new generation of speakers does not feature any haptic button responses on any devices, so all gestures would need to be touch based
- With the wide dynamic range offered by each of the products in the line, each with its own fields of application, form factors, and sound characteristics, the designed sounds would need to be consistently clear and rich-sounding on every model
- The speakers are composed of a mix of modern materials (plastics, aluminium), and the new sound suite needed to not only be a perfect match to each productâ??s acoustics but also to the

overall design aesthetic of the range

- The sounds need to appeal to both passionate audiophiles and leisure audio listeners, all the while reinforcing Teufel's brand identity

Hands-on Experience

Once our project roadmap was completed, our managing director Steve Bartlik visited Teufel's development lab and offices, and their neighbouring showroom at Bikini Berlin to kick off our research and development phase.

“Such meetings are essential as they provide an insider's first-hand view, direct from brand specialists,” says Steve. “Talking to the Teufel marketing team about what the brand stands for was just as important to this process as seeing, hearing, touching and testing the prototypes for the first time.” Armed with the knowledge gained from this hand-on meeting and also with some borrowed prototypes Steve headed back to our head office where our composers began working on sets of sounds to be tested against the unique features of each new speaker model.

Key Challenges & Overcoming Them

When it came to composing each sound, the simplest compositions sometimes often proved to be the most difficult. “The app's ‘click’ button response has several functions,” explains Steve. “It can be deployed for a single touch, but also on rapid repeat, for example when a sequence of clicks play as the user is decreasing or increasing the volume.”

“The sound is so short,” Steve continues, “but it's the sound that Teufel's users will hear the most frequently. The overall challenge with this project was to create a set of sounds that maintain their appeal after the hundredth or thousandth listen. And that challenge applied to this click more so than any other sound we created.”

We hope you enjoyed this first look at the macro and micro view of interactive sound design! Keep an eye on our blog and social media for more posts on this topic, coming very soon.