Microsoft Xbox gets xHE-AAC Audio Codec Update

September 9, 2022

Users of the popular gaming console receive the xHE-AAC audio decoder through a mandatory operating system update

Say goodbye to interrupted or buffering audio and video streams: the xHE-AAC audio codec offers maximum coding efficiency with a stereo bitrate range from 12 kbit/s to 500 kbit/s. Combined with seamless bitrate adjustment using DASH and HLS, as well as mandatory MPEG-D DRC volume and dynamic range adjustment, xHE-AAC offers the best user experience for any content and in any environment.

xHE-AAC, which is used by Netflix and has been licensed by Fraunhofer IIS to Facebook and Instagram parent company Meta, Inc., has been natively supported in Google's, Amazon's and Apple's operating systems for multiple OS generations. With the added support in the Xbox consoles (Xbox One, Xbox One S, Xbox One X, Xbox Series X, Xbox Series S), xHE-AAC native integration has now reached another milestone which enables service providers and app developers to make use of the built-in decoders to play their content. Fraunhofer's xHE-AAC decoder on Xbox products is also able to play all previous flavors of the AAC audio codec family including AAC-LC and HE-AAC.

About xHE-AAC

xHE-AAC is the latest member of the MPEG AAC audio codec family. Fraunhofer played a substantial role in the development of xHE-AAC and the MPEG-D DRC standard. xHE-AAC is natively supported in the latest Apple, Android, and Amazon operating systems and products, and Fraunhofer's xHE-AAC implementation has recently been licensed to Microsoft. Professional xHE-AAC encoder software is available [directly from Fraunhofer IIS](#) or its streaming equipment partners including MainConcept's xHE-AAC FFmpeg plugin. Fraunhofer is offering a web-based test service that developers and manufacturers can use to validate their implementations of the xHE-AAC® audio codec for compliance with MPEG standards. The service, which is available exclusively at https://test.xhe-aac.com, is free to use upon registration with Fraunhofer IIS and will test both encoders and decoders. Learn more about the audio quality improvements of xHE-AAC compared to legacy HE-AAC and AAC-LC on our website https://www2.iis.fraunhofer.de/AAC/xhe-aac-compare-tab.html. xHE-AAC and MPEG-D DRC patents are included in the AAC patent licensing program administered by VIA Licensing at no additional cost.

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