PRESS RELEASE

Fraunhofer IIS introduces new test service and trademark program for xHE-AAC audio codec

Erlangen – Fraunhofer IIS, an institute of Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft in Germany, has announced a new 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.

xHE-AAC introduces many additional features such as mandatory loudness normalization, dynamic range control, and immediate playout frames for seamless bit rate switching that are not fully covered in MPEG conformance tests. The test service provides an easy way to further validate implementations of xHE-AAC for these advanced features, as well as testing general coding tools.

Fraunhofer IIS will be licensing the use of its "xHE-AAC" trademark on a no-charge basis for use with products that successfully pass the test service tests.

"Fraunhofer IIS is pleased to announce this xHE-AAC program which extends its trademark programs from MPEG-H into the AAC codec family. The xHE-AAC mark will enable manufacturers and consumers to identify products that have been tested for interoperability with the advanced features available in the xHE-AAC codec," said Robert Bleidt, Division General Manager, Fraunhofer USA DMT* which promotes and supports the products of Fraunhofer IIS in the US.

xHE-AAC, the combination of Extended HE-AAC and MPEG-D DRC, is the latest generation of the AAC codec family, offering improved audio quality at low bit rates, seamless switching over a 12-500 kbit/s operation range for stereo signals, and

mandatory loudness normalization and dynamic range control. xHE-AAC decoders are able to play back content encoded in all earlier versions of AAC and are included in Android, Fire OS, and Apple operating systems. Fraunhofer IIS has also recently licensed xHE-AAC software to Microsoft. xHE-AAC patent licenses are included in the Via Licensing AAC patent licensing program at no additional cost.

A demonstration of the improved audio quality and new features of xHE-AAC compared to HE-AAC is available on Fraunhofer IIS's informal AAC playback test site at https://www2.iis.fraunhofer.de/AAC/xhe-aac-compare-tab.html.

Information on licensing the trademark can be obtained by contacting xHE-AAC-trademark-admin@iis.fraunhofer.de.

xHE-AAC is a registered trademark of Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft in Germany, the United States, and other countries.