

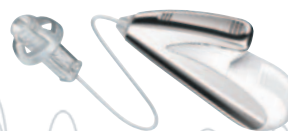
Archeologist  
Beach Volleyball Player  
Hopeless Romantic  
Audéo Wearer

## AUDÉO – ATTRACTING A NEW GENERATION

It is well-known that traditional hearing instruments reach only a small portion of people with hearing loss, especially those in the younger age group, 50-65. Audéo Personal Communication Assistant (PCA) is a breakthrough for reaching this population. Stylish, discreet and packed with leading-edge features, Audéo is a blend of state-of-the-art technology and cutting-edge design. Audéo PCA offers a new generation of clients the performance they demand in a look they will embrace, even aspire to own.



reddot design award  
winner 2007



AUDÉO  
personal communication assistant

PHONAK

## MISCONCEPTION AND STIGMA

The largest portion of the hearing impaired population is between the ages of 50-65, yet according to the most recent MarkeTrak results, the average age of a first-time hearing instrument wearer actually increased to 69 years, with the average age of all users well over 70 years [Kochkin, S: MarkeTrak VII]. Despite tremendous advances in sound processing and noise reduction technologies in recent years, this younger population has not been attracted by industry offerings. Over 20% of the 75 million American baby boomers have some degree of hearing loss [Hear-it AISBL, 2005]. According to the recent Clarity/Ear Foundation survey, "most people in the baby boomer age group who are having difficulty hearing are not taking the necessary steps to visit an audiologist, have their hearing tested and/or seek treatment." 97% of these people are aware of hearing aids, but only 26% of them have actually had their hearing loss diagnosed by a hearing care professional. And of those who have been diagnosed and informed that they do need amplification, only 23% actually wear hearing

device(s) [Plantronics, 2007]. Clearly, there is a major disconnect between this industry and a huge population that could benefit from our products.

Although many of these people acknowledge difficulties understanding, especially in challenging listening environments, there is a general tendency among this younger population to reject labels traditionally used, such as "hearing impaired", "hard of hearing", "suffering from hearing loss", etc. And because they do not readily accept that they have a "problem", they have no interest in a solution to a problem they do not have, or do not admit having. As a result, products – solutions for hearing impairment – are irrelevant to them. They view hearing devices as an obvious sign of old age and infirmity or handicap, a necessary evil only considered as a last resort. And traditional industry marketing over the years may have inadvertently perpetuated this stigma and actually pushed this audience further away from these products.

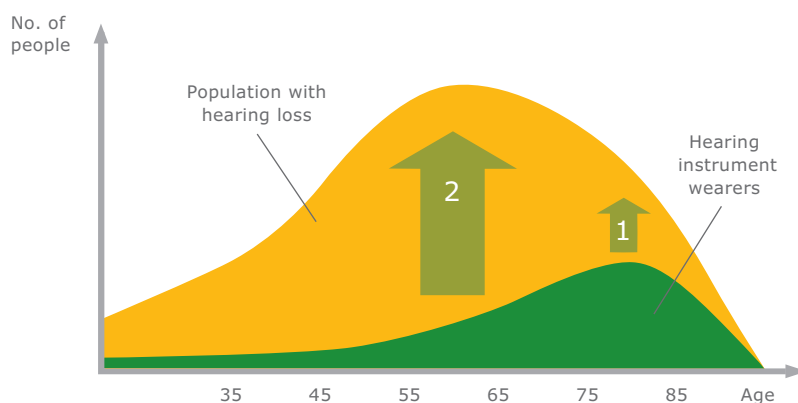
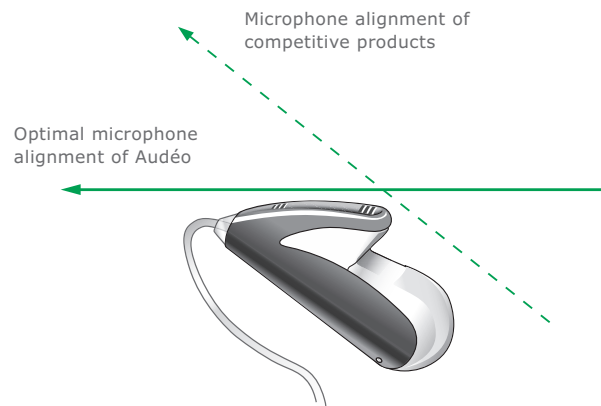


Chart indicates hearing impaired population (yellow) and hearing instrument users per age group (green). Arrow "1" indicates the limited potential growth of the current client base, whereas arrow "2" displays the tremendous growth potential of the age group 50-65 [Kochkin, S: MarkeTrak VII; Shield, B: Evaluation of the social and economic costs of hearing impairment, Hear-It AISBL, 2006].

## A NEW PRODUCT CATEGORY

Acknowledging the huge chasm between this industry and a population segment that could benefit tremendously from our products, Phonak has designed and created a product specifically with this younger group in mind. Because they reject terms such as "hearing aid", "hearing system", "hearing device", etc., an entirely new product category has been created with a name that speaks to these people – Personal Communication Assistant. Other industries that have successfully created new product categories include the automobile industry with the SUV (Sport Utility Vehicle) and the consumer electronics industry with the PDA (Personal Digital Assistant). With some attention to refinement and creature comforts, and a healthy dose of clever marketing, carmakers changed somewhat unappealing, large, fuel-inefficient people and cargo carriers into the SUVs every soccer-mom and city-dweller wants. And gone are the boring electronic organizers of the past, used only by stereotypical computer geeks with pocket protectors, replaced by the hip, must-have PDAs found everywhere. Taking a cue from these industries, Phonak now offers the cool new tech accessory for a younger generation, Audéo Personal Communication Assistant (PCA). Whereas a hearing instrument is perceived as a necessary evil, a PCA is something to actually aspire to own.



Of course, just giving a product an interesting new name is not enough. Audéo successfully attracts a new segment of the population, because its functionality specifically addresses the communication issues these people have: decreased clarity and difficulty understanding in background noise. Industry-leading features such as CrystalSound and digital SurroundZoom offer the hassle-free listening this generation requires to maintain the control of their communication. Although a major reason for the unusual shape of Audéo is that it does not look like a traditional hearing instrument, this shape is also designed for optimum placement of the dual microphones in the horizontal plane to take full advantage of the beamforming capabilities offered by dSZ.

## AWARD-WINNING DESIGN

Canal Receiver Technology takes the receiver out of the housing of the device and places it directly into the ear canal. In addition to known functional benefits such as a smoother response than can be obtained by a micro-acoustic tube and a wider frequency range, there are also cosmetic benefits. The absence of the receiver inside the housing means it can be made even smaller. But unlike some competitive products, in Audéo, functionality is not compromised to obtain small size. Despite its incredibly small size, a PCA still uses a 312 battery! And unlike most mini and micro devices, it even has a T-coil, offering full access to telephones and FM technology. This innovative fusion of form and function has earned Audéo the prestigious 2007 Red Dot Award for Product Design.

The high-tech appearance of Audéo's unique shape is further complemented by a two-tone color scheme. Audéo can be ordered in any of 15 fresh combinations with fun, consumer-friendly names like Pinot Noir, Flower Power, and Green with Envy. Available colors range from subtle skin and hair tones to bold, modern hues and metallic finishes. And because the color skins can be easily changed by the hearing care professional, a unique look can be created to suit the style sensibility of each individual.



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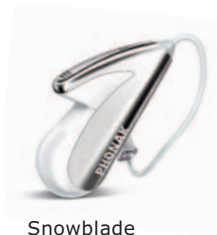
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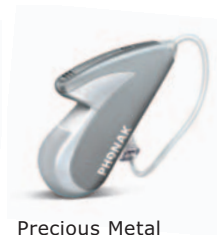
Classic Caddy



Lunar Eclipse



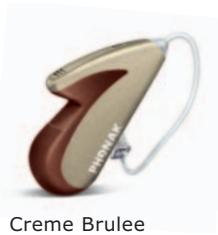
Snowblade



Precious Metal



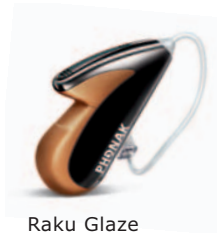
Royal Velvet



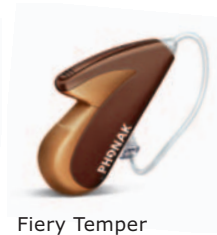
Creme Brulee



Antique Mahogany



Raku Glaze



Fiery Temper



Flower Power



Solar Flare



Pure Passion



Pinot Noir



Green with Envy

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