

Wireless partner to audio industry

Alexa products were all the rage at the Consumer Electronic (CES) show in Vegas, at the start of this year. With five products enabled by its technology at the show, Linkplay is one of the first WiFi audio platforms approved for integration with Alexa Voice Service (AVS) for hands-free voice recognition and push to talk capabilities with its Smart WiFi audio platform. Mark Zadeh, VP Sales & Marketing at Linkplay, explains how their turnkey solutions help audio brands to capitalise on the growing popularity not just of Alexa, but also other new generation wireless technologies.

Linkplay was established four years ago by a core team of entrepreneurs from Google, Broadcom and InterVideo and whose wireless technology is integrated into 40 brand products such as Jam Audio, AudioPro, Edifier, among others. Linkplay's first product, MÜZO Cobblestone, is a smart WiFi device that turns your speakers or home theatre system into a wireless streaming music system. Mr. Zadeh explains that this product mainly served to gain a better understanding of end-user requirements. "This enables us to better serve the top audio brands, in making it easy for them to integrate new generation WiFi technology and content."

He points out that while the popularity of online streaming services continues to increase, these audio brands are finding it difficult to capitalise on that trend. "Audio brands are used to long development times, of up to 18 months, as they source components from suppliers. We can help them shorten time to market to anywhere between three and six months with our turn-key WiFi audio solution, with all the components they need in a single-chip package. We can also integrate Amazon Alexa Voice Service, wireless multi-room, global music services, app and cloud development."

Linkplay is one of the first companies approved for integration with Alexa for both push to talk and hands-free voice recognition speaker technology. Alexa is an intelligent personal assistant made popular by Amazon's Echo line of speakers; Amazon licenses the technology for integration in all sorts of connected devices.

At CES in Vegas, at the start of the year, a huge number of Alexa products made their debut, including five powered by Linkplay ones. Linkplay customer Omaker's WoW portable WiFi and Bluetooth speaker notably uses Linkplay tech integrated with AVS for hands-free voice recognition to create multi-room speaker systems for homes for a variety of popular streaming services. With a compatible speaker in each room, the technology allows Alexa to become a whole-home audio control system; you could ask Alexa to turn on the lights in the living room and/or how long it will take to commute to work. Mr. Zadeh adds that

Linkplay's solution eliminates the need to connect a phone to the speakers, which means users can stream music without interference from calls or texts. "As we continue to work closely with both Amazon and our customers, we will be addressing advances in technology," says Mr. Zadeh. "We see opportunities for our technology in a great variety of applications that would benefit from two-way communication."

