

2010

newsmaker

Livio® Radio

“Livio Radio understands the transformation taking place in the way music is distributed and the company’s products are at the forefront of this shift, providing hardware and software applications that are affordable and extremely user-friendly.” - David Ruby, Beringea



CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

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CRAIN'S
**Twenty in their
20s**



Jake Sigal, 28

Founder and CEO
Myine Electronics L.L.C.
Ferndale

Why he lives in metro Detroit: “Electronic music,” Sigal says. “I moved here for a job with **Delphi’s XM Satellite Radio** division. My passion is in music and it always has been. I love electronic music, and if Detroit didn’t have electronic music, I wouldn’t be here.”

Claim to fame: Sigal’s **Myine Electronics** produces Internet radios designed for older consumers. In its first year of sales, Myine grossed \$1.1 million.

Next step: Sigal is preparing to launch Boomergadget.com, a technology review site geared toward baby boomers, and an iPhone app for the Livio Radio.

Jake Sigal started **Myine Electronics L.L.C.** because he wanted to make technology his baby boomer parents could use.

It doesn’t hurt that boomer-friendly tech is an underserved market.

While there are thousands of Internet radio stations, Sigal’s research indicated that most middle-aged Americans didn’t own an electronic device that could receive them.

So Sigal's Livio Radio plays Internet radio stations — and that's all it does.

That kind of simplicity, he felt, was necessary for the product to appeal to boomers like his parents, who sometimes feel overwhelmed by the many functions of modern electronics.

Sigal has since secured licensing deals with such entities as **Pandora Media Inc.** and **National Public Radio** — Livio's the only NPR-branded radio, and the only home-based Pandora-branded device.

In its first year of sales, Myine grossed \$1.1 million, and Sigal says the company is on track to gross \$6 million in 2010.

"We have some new licensing deals, new branded radios that are coming out; we're launching some iPhone applications, and we're launching a Web site for baby boomers to learn about technology," he said.

Sigal moved to Michigan to take a job in Troy-based **Delphi Corp.**'s **XM Satellite Radio** division, but when XM announced plans to merge with **Sirius Satellite Radio**, Sigal knew the time was ripe to launch his own business.

"Jake is a rock star," said Josh Linkner, CEO of Pleasant Ridge-based **ePrize L.L.C.** "He's a fireball of passion and creativity. He came here to start his business, and he's taking a nontraditional approach to growing his business. He's bringing dollars into the state and hiring brain-age workers."



Internet Radio Expands Its Reach

By Leslie Stimson

February 16, 2010

LAS VEGAS Companies at this winter's Consumer Electronics Show featured gadgets to help drivers get around more easily, access their music databases and give voice commands in car models that will come out this year. Some versions of these products include radio features.

Another trend: More in-dash receiver manufacturers are dropping CDs in favor of a connection for an iPod or other media device.

Radio has more competition coming from programming delivered on small screens.

Mobile DTV was demoed on devices coming to market this year, including laptops, netbooks and cell phones. Similarly, there were lots of Internet-connected TV sets — enabling direct hookup from a TV set into the growing array of online video services. And for consumers who don't want to buy a new Web-equipped HDTV set, there are services that you can hook up to your TV set to see those Internet video streams. Manufacturers showed 3D TV prototypes.

Possibly the biggest story for radio coming out of CES is the progress Internet radio is making toward parity with traditional radio's penetration not only in the home but in the car.

Pandora Internet Radio, for example, is making gains in the automobile through deals with Ford, Alpine and Pioneer, giving drivers another non-broadcast entertainment option. "We're about bringing personalization to radio. We're about being anytime and anywhere," said Chief Executive Officer Joe Kennedy during a session on connectivity in the car.

"In the future every car will have an embedded Internet connection," he predicted.

A radio programmer at CES who tracks where eyes and ears will be years from now summed up the Pandora announcements as "bad news for radio stations." Radio is not just a distribution service that happens to have an aux transmitter, he told Radio World, noting the substantial investment broadcasters have made in their transmission systems.

Here are some of the more notable devices coming on the market as seen at CES. Look for digital radio product news from CES in our next digital radio section.

Myine's Abbee Strips Out Spots, DJs

A new FM tuner promises to strip out commercials and DJ talk from FM content; the developer of the underlying technology says it could be adapted to any kind of media player that contains a radio. The user then enjoys full access to the stored songs, including playback, fast forward and rewind functions.

Might this be the first system to gain market traction that does for radio what TiVo did in TV, letting consumers record and save only those parts of a station's programming that they want to hear?

Jake Sigal, the founder and CEO behind Myine Electronics, said he designed his commercial-free FM radio with his parents in mind. They don't want to use one of his old iPods, for example, because they don't want to go through the process of

connecting the devices to a computer, downloading music and creating a playlist to hear the music.

Myine's Abbee model AB001 promises to remove the commercials and DJ talk for hours of uninterrupted music.

Sigal said when you tune to a station, Abbee's FM tuner records the audio stream, and, using the Popcatcher detection algorithm, analyzes the audio and removes the spots and DJ patter. The individual songs are saved as MP3 files and stored on the docked Music Lock portable player for playback over the built-in speakers or elsewhere. The player has a 500 song capacity or 2 GB of storage space, according to the company.

Myine also worked with the National Federation for the Blind to make the portable player accessible. Buttons for skip, pause, play, fast-forward, as well as save and delete command are raised and are different shapes.

The Abbee commercial-free music system is shipping and available from Myine and Amazon. It lists for \$249.99.

Sweden-based Popcatcher says its technology "can be integrated with almost every kind of media player that contains a radio." It's pursuing deals to integrate its technology in cell phones, portable MP3 players and car stereos. Popcatcher says it can detect repeat songs and skip those, too.

Ford, Pandora Meet in the Dash

This view of the MyFord Touch shows the display on the right side of the steering wheel, an MP3 player-originated song. Ford is integrating Pandora, the "personalized Internet music service," into its Sync platform using Bluetooth connectivity. The automaker updated its Sync communications platform, which allows for hands-free use of the cell phone, radio and music from other sources using controls on the wheel or in the center console.

"Four-point-one billion texts were sent per day in 2009. In Ford vehicles, listening to a text is no different than listening to the radio," said Doug VanDagens, director of Ford Connected Service Solutions, during a keynote speech.

The automaker wanted to incorporate entertainment features into the car, rather than use a bolt-on approach, spokesman Charles Zinkowski said in an interview.

The updated Sync — which controls the user's phone, navigation, entertainment and climate using the MyFord Touch user interface — will be available on some 2011 Fords and Lincolns using MyLincoln Touch later this year.

Sync will stream audio over Bluetooth and control the application on a cell phone using vehicle controls, application engineer Joe Ross said. Users can use voice commands or the buttons in the center stack to make or receive a call, play music from a CD or MP3 player or listen to the radio, in addition to listening to Internet radio through Pandora.

The iPhone connected to the vehicle via USB port is controlling the Pandora service and other choices; the driver uses the big screen in the center console or two somewhat smaller screens on either side of the steering wheel. To use Pandora, drivers choose "Mobile Applications" from the menu. It displays song, title and artist. The user can listen to the current song, skip to another track using voice commands or continue deeper into the menu until hearing an audio confirmation of the choice.

Asked how the driver can be sure there's enough bandwidth in a particular area to use Pandora in a moving vehicle, Ross said Pandora varies the bitrate based on connection speed, and that's controlled by the user's phone.

To listen to talk Internet radio content, the driver would need to use the Stitcher application.

AM/FM radio is still part of the entertainment choices in Fords, and RDS messages can be displayed. HD Radio is being added to Sync this calendar year for 2011 model vehicles (more coverage in our next issue).

Pioneer Adds Pandora Capability to Nav System

The Pioneer touch-screen AVIC-X920BT navigation system will detect iPhones and iPod touches that have Pandora installed and put the consumer's Pandora settings on the screen so drivers can hear their favorite channels.

Starting this spring, Pioneer will sell a navigation and entertainment device that allows Pandora users who stream the

service on their iPhones to access the Internet music service in their cars.

The touch-screen AVIC-X920BT navigation system will detect iPhones and iPod touches that have Pandora installed and put the consumer's Pandora settings on the navigation screen so drivers can hear Pandora channels.

In an interview with Radio World, Pioneer Corporate Communications Manager Jaed Arzadon said Pioneer is actually providing a Pandora link by supplying a cable with an iPhone connector on it to use with the in-dash unit. "The link enables you to get everything Pandora is doing within an iPhone device — and now you're getting that on a larger screen on the dash."

Using Pioneer's navigation system with Pandora will require an application that users will download onto their iPhones.

In addition to built-in navigation capabilities, the AVIC-X920BT features 4 GB of flash memory, a large 6.1-inch WVGA touch screen display, a 3D graphics accelerator, DVD playback, built-in Bluetooth for hands-free calling and music streaming, USB connectivity for iPod/iPhone connectivity, micro SD card slot and back-up camera input. It is compatible with Pioneer satellite and HD Radio tuners.

The AVIC-X920BT navigation system will ship to retailers in March/April and cost about \$1,200.

Alpine Too, Gets to Know Pandora

Apple iPhone users who are also Pandora fans will be able to get a taste of Internet radio during their commutes when the Alpine iDA-X305S is released this spring. Alpine Electronics has added Pandora Internet radio support, but omitted a CD drive, in the new iDA-X305S car stereo. The company says the unit is optimized for users who keep their music libraries on an iPod or iPhone.

The iDA-X305S is able to control the Pandora app on a connected iPhone 3G or 3GS, streaming user-created radio stations over a 3G data connection and out of the vehicle's speakers.

Its high-resolution 2.2-inch color TFT screen is used to display audio source information. The unit has a double-action encoder knob that is used for volume control plus iPod or iPhone music file access as well as viewing album artwork and tracking metadata, changing stations, skipping tracks, giving a song the thumbs up and down and bookmarking songs.

Optional tuners are available to add HD Radio reception with iTunes Tagging support or satellite radio services.

Alpine has a suggested price of \$400 for the iDA-X305S.

Pure Introduces 5 FM/Internet Radios

U.K. radio designer Pure is introducing five Internet radios to the North American market. They should be available later this year, according to spokeswoman Vicky Deacon.

The Sensia units feature a large color touchscreen. Users can listen to streamed content when within range of a Wi-Fi network.

For the U.K., Pure designed Internet and DAB radios; the U.S. devices will include FM analog and Internet radio.

The Sensia units feature a large high-resolution color touchscreen. Stereo sound plus an input for iPod/MP3 players and access to applications such as Facebook and Twitter offer consumers the ability to access and control their digital content from a central interface. Users can listen to streamed content anywhere within range of a Wi-Fi network.

Partnered with its elliptical shape in four color options — red, yellow, black and white — is a tilting stand and remote control. Users may also take the unit off the stand and use it in their laps, much like a laptop keyboard, Deacon noted.

The product will list for \$349. Favorites and settings can be saved using the Pure Lounge media portal.

The company describes Evoke Flow as a kitchen radio. The wireless portable unit features FM with RBDS. The company says the unit, to list for \$229, gives consumers access to digital content from almost anywhere.

The bedside Internet and FM radio Siesta Flow features touch-sensitive controls, up to 365 alarm settings and a USB PowerPort, which provides power for USB accessories. A Wi-Fi connection lets you listen to Internet radio, podcasts and Pure sounds or stream music from a computer. Siesta Flow will list for \$139. In its booth, Pure showed this radio on a nightstand beside a tiny bed display.

Pure says the aluminum surround and rubberized seal of the Oasis Flow offers the user Internet connectivity with portability. For those who want to take their radio camping or to a picnic, the aluminum surround and rubberized seal of the Oasis Flow combines Internet connectivity with portability. The rechargeable Internet and FM radio will list for \$249.

Pure describes the Sirocco as a micro-sized home hi-fi shelf unit that combines access to Internet content with the ability to play digital music from portable iPod and iPhone devices, USB memory drives, SD memory cards and CDs. The Sirocco will list for \$449.

Livio Showcases Pandora, NPR-Branded Internet Radios

Livio says it tries to make Internet audio streams accessible to more people in more places by designing audio products that work fast without complicated menus.

The company showcased its Livio Radio, designed to let users listen to Pandora Internet radio in the home “without a Ph.D. in consumer electronics,” according to CEO Jake Sigal.

The Livio Radio, which offer Pandora’s “thumbs up, thumbs down” controls on the front panel and via remote, helps users customize the music and programming they receive.

If you have a power source and a Web connection, the unit connects quickly and plays some 11,000 Internet radio stations through its own speaker, without needing access to a computer interface to operate, according to the maker. The Livio Radio lists for \$199.99 at the company’s Web site (where in late January the unit was listed as sold out).

The new NPR Radio by Livio, the first branded NPR consumer electronics device, is an Internet radio that features NPR stations, programs and content in a special NPR menu. The menu allows users to search, find and bookmark their NPR stations, podcasts and content, by topic or by program. In addition to approximately 800 NPR stations, the unit features the Reciva database of Internet stations and receives an additional 16,000 Internet streams.

While the user does not need to have a computer to use the NPR Radio by Livio, he or she must have an Internet connection with a wireless router (or an available Ethernet port for a wired connection).

Livio also plans to add a branded AARP radio to its lineup.

GSS, Silicon Labs Work to Get FM Alerts in CE Devices

GSS sells the Alert FM system, which delivers alerts using FM RBDS, SMS (text) and e-mail. GSS is working with other companies to get FM chips in cellphones and other devices for alerting purposes.

Global Security Systems and its partner Silicon Labs are speaking with consumer electronics manufacturers and wireless companies about alerting. We’ve reported that the Federal Emergency Management Agency is moving forward with implementation of public alert via broadcasters as well as devices such as cell phones.

GSS Executive Vice President Matthew Straeb heads a Consumer Electronics Association working group addressing implementation of Common Alerting Protocol-based alerts among consumer electronics devices that process CAP-encoded data, independent of delivery method — whether consumers receive the alerts from a broadcast station, over the Internet from their computer or via their cellphone or other CE device that contains an FM chip.

Wireless carriers are also a part of the CEA’s “R6 WG16” working group, though another working group is focusing on cellphone alerting as well.

The group that’s working on fixed and mobile alert warning devices comprises cell carriers, TV set manufacturers, weather radio, broadcasters, data service providers and receiver manufacturers.

“We’re providing a road map for companies that want to provide alerting capability, but don’t know what to do,” Straeb said in an interview on the show floor. Members are looking at the behavior of the alert, how it would be displayed and the interaction of that alert with other features of the device.

“We want commonality, which leads to more consumer adoption.”

Straeb and Silicon Labs Marketing Director Wade Gillham noted that FM radio chips in cellphones, for example, are capable of receiving audio EAS messages with FM-based data alert messages. The committee’s work would incorporate FM RBDS. “The reason having cell phones that incorporate an FM receiver is now you’d have a ubiquitous point-to-many multi-points for a proactive alert,” said Gillham.

SiLabs makes FM chips. GSS sells the Alert FM system, which delivers alerts using FM RBDS, SMS (text) and e-mail.

Slacker Radio Showcases Mobile Capabilities

Slacker Radio, another competitor in the online “personalized radio” game, demonstrated new mobile capabilities including station caching for a range of devices that will enable listeners to get the Slacker experience without a network connection. Slacker also showed a new Slacker app for the Palm Pre and Palm Pixi, in addition to announcing plans to integrate ABC News into the Slacker Personal Radio offering.

Slacker Personal Radio enables listeners to create personal radio stations based on any artist or mix of artists, or listen to and personalize 120 “expert-programmed” genre stations.

The company said the wireless station caching capability will enable iPhone, iPod touch, Android and BlackBerry smartphone users to save their favorite Slacker stations, storing the music on the device or SD memory Card, to listen anywhere whether they are connected to a wireless network or not.

Fraunhofer Shows Consumer Hardware Using HD-AAC

Fraunhofer introduced consumer hardware using its lossless HD-AAC codec, the Logitech Squeezebox Touch, available for \$199.99. This enables consumers to download or rip one file that will play on existing AAC devices, such as most mobile phones and all iPods, and also playback “losslessly” through their living room stereo using the Squeezebox Touch connected to their PC or the Internet.

Fraunhofer says its new MPEG HD-AAC codec offers music quality superior to the CD and compatibility with iPods and AAC-enabled mobile phones. Based on the MPEG-4 SLS and AAC-LC standards, Fraunhofer’s HD-AAC provides lossless compression of 16/24-bit and up to 192 kHz quality music content.

The company also demoed MPEG Surround, a new standard delivering iPod-compatible surround sound at stereo bitrates. Attendees experienced MPEG Surround from a legacy iPod through a Fraunhofer-designed iPod docking station prototype.

Also of Interest

— Audiovox added Pandora to its next generation of Wi-Fi-equipped tabletop Internet radios. They also feature Slacker Radio, Weatherbug and MP3 tunes services, as well as access to individual Internet stations.

— The first Internet radio from iLive is the iRP800B, a tabletop model with no AM/FM. It includes an iPod/iPhone dock on the top, embedded Wi-Fi and Ethernet port. The unit lists for \$149.

— Audiovox says the Xmp3i is the smallest portable satellite radio and MP3 player in the Sirius XM line. The device records up to 100 hours of live XM programming including 10 hours of songs, and gives users the ability to pause, rewind and replay up to 30 minutes of satellite radio. With an optional kit, users can enjoy satellite radio through a vehicle’s FM radio. Xmp3i will list for \$229.95.

— The Bluetooth Special Interest Group chose apt-X Creative Inspire S2 Wireless Speakers as the winner of its 5th Annual Best of CES 2010 Awards, an event to highlight Bluetooth-enabled products. The group said the products exemplified functionality, innovative design and a user-friendly experience.

— CEA had been estimating 110,000 attendance prior to the show, compared to 113,000 from 2009. However CEA President/CEO Gary Shapiro said total attendance was more than 120,000.

The New York Times

Expect the World®

Livio Radio

February 22, 2010



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THE GOOD:

Wi-Fi radio optimized for listening to Pandora without a PC; provides access to thousands of Internet radio stations; stylish exterior design; supports 802.11g Wi-Fi with both WEP and WPA security; hiccup-free wireless connectivity for Internet radio; headphone jack on front panel; auxiliary input for connecting an iPod.

THE BAD:

Average sound quality; doesn't support podcasts or stream music from a PC.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Despite some missing features and average sonics, the Livio Radio's beautiful design, simple controls, and affordable price make it an excellent Wi-Fi radio for Pandora fans. © 2010 CBS Interactive Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



The NPR radio

By Phil Baker

February 22, 2010

The radio was once a simple product; it received stations on two frequencies, AM and FM, and was a major source of local news and entertainment. Now, thanks to new technology we have all sorts of listening options, including radio delivered by satellite, HD radio and Internet radio.

One of the true breakthroughs, and my favorite, is the Internet radio, which lets us listen to stations from around the world without the need for a computer. It works by the radio receiver connecting wirelessly to your home WiFi network (or directly by wire to your cable modem). That enables it to connect to radio stations around the world. The one requirement is that the radio station has a Web address for listening to its broadcasts over the Internet. Today that's true with tens of thousands of commercial AM and FM stations all around the world.

Rather than the radio receiver connecting directly to the particular radio station, it connects to a company that directs your request to the station, as well as keeping your radio supplied with the latest list of stations. Reciva (reciva.com), a U.K. company, is the leader and is used on most of the Internet radios available today.

I've been trying out a new spin on the Internet radio, the NPR Radio from Livio Radio of Detroit, Mich. The radio can access 16,000 radio stations from around the world, just like other Internet radios, but it also can access all of the nearly 1,000 NPR stations from around the country. While many of the NPR programs broadcast similar national content, each also covers local news and has its own local programming, providing you with a broad swath of NPR content.

The NPR radio is designed to let you select your favorite stations among the NPR offerings and other world stations and add them to a favorites list. NPR stations have their own dedicated NPR favorites button for quick retrieval.

In addition to live broadcasts, the NPR radio serves up prerecorded broadcasts, or podcasts of previously aired NPR shows. These 800 or so programs show up under each of the NPR stations to let you play such shows as "Car Talk" or "Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me." You can also add these to your NPR favorites button and listen to them at anytime.

The attractively styled radio is about 10x10x6 inches and has a large clear sounding 3.5-inch speaker with a powerful amplifier. A three-line blue backlit display allows you to easily search and bookmark favorite stations as well as set up the radio and adjust its settings.

The radio also comes with a remote control and has a digital clock and alarm, although the display is small and its brightness needs to be reduced to avoid illuminating your room at night. Over two weeks of use, the radio worked well.

The only downside (with all Internet radios) is that once in a while there may be a momentarily disconnect for up to 10-30 seconds due to WiFi or network issues.

I liked this product a lot, and it makes a great gift for an NPR listener. The NPR radio costs \$200 from livioradio.com and there are no monthly charges.

Other choices

I previously reviewed and recommended the CCrane WiFi radio, a small no frills Internet radio. It's quite a bit smaller than the NPR radio and has a new lower price of \$140, making it a good buy (ccrane.com).

If you're a traditionalist and prefer a top sounding conventional AM/FM radio you can't beat those from Tivoli Radio. Their alarm clock Model 3 Radio is probably the finest clock radio available. It has a beautiful design, sounds great, and has an analog clock, a rarity today. To set the alarm you need not fiddle with tiny buttons. Just rotate the bezel around the clock. (\$299 at tivoliradio.com.) One point to note is that conventional radios are more likely to exhibit static due to a nearby computer than an Internet radio.

Software radio

iPhone owners can download a virtual Internet radio with clock display and alarm. The new Time Tuner Radio Alarm Clock app provides access to Internet stations that you connect over your cell or WiFi connection, meaning you can take it with you and listen in your car. It's \$1.99 from the iTunes store.

And a short word on HD radio: What is it? It's technology that allows radio stations to broadcast using a digital signal along side their conventional analog signals. (It has no relationship to HD TV.) HD signals can also transmit digital information such as song information. Fourteen stations in San Diego are now broadcasting in HD. However, it requires a new digital AM/FM receiver that's capable of picking up these signals. How good is it? It offers a modest improvement in listening quality, but not so significant that I'd replace my radios.



The NPR Radio by Livio

By Jeff Bakalar

April 15, 2010

The good: Wi-Fi radio optimized for listening to NPR content; provides access to thousands of Internet radio stations; stylish design; supports 802.11g Wi-Fi with WEP, WPA, and WPA2 security; hiccup-free wireless connectivity; headphone jack on front panel; auxiliary input for connecting an iPod.

The bad: Average sound quality (mono speaker); doesn't support non-NPR podcasts or stream music from a PC.

The bottom line: The sleek and beautifully designed NPR Radio by Livio is a talk-radio junkie's dream despite some missing extracurricular features and having average sound quality.

Review:

Last year, we looked at the Livio Radio and praised it for its easy access to thousands of Internet radio stations, Wi-Fi security compatibilities, Pandora playback, and connectivity options. One year later, Livio has released The NPR Radio, a device that remains mostly the same as last year, but replaces Pandora with an NPR-focused content-delivery system.

This is the first Wi-Fi radio we've tested that is designed around the NPR network, offering access to more than 800 NPR stations as well as specific programs, podcasts, and other content. The radio's gorgeous design is outstanding for the price; it's easy to use and you won't find anything that looks this good until you spend about twice as much. Its competitors will better serve audiophiles and feature-junkies, but the NPR Radio by Livio hits the sweet spot for those NPR junkies looking for a simple, great-looking way to add National Public Radio to a bedroom, kitchen, or living room.



Design

The overall design ethos is a mix between Apple and [Tivoli](#), and even though we're not generally fans of the Apple whitewash look, the NPR Radio pulls it off. The cabinet is made of thick, black textured plastic that gives it a quality feel and doesn't smudge. The front panel is off-white and accented by a layer of clear plastic that gives it a classy glass-like look. The single speaker is behind a black grille and a blue LCD screen with playback controls underneath it dominates the right half. The only element that doesn't quite have that high-end feel is the loose-feeling plastic menu-volume knob, but that's our only nitpick on an otherwise outstanding design.

Features

The Livio Radio's main function is to play NPR radio stations and content. Its main menu gives you access to NPR stations around the country (by region), specific NPR content, podcasts, and the capability to search through the enormous library of media. We really liked the capability to jump to specific sections in a program. For example, choosing "All Things Considered" lets you listen to the entire program, skip to a certain segment, or jump to a spot in the timeline. Better yet, these segments are labeled by chapter, so there is no guessing involved.

For most NPR programs, you have the capability to listen to about two weeks' worth of past content; anything beyond that isn't directly accessible from the radio. You can customize your own NPR menu by adding certain items from the network to your "favorites," which is then just a button click away from the radio or remote control.

Besides providing access to the seemingly infinite amount of premium NPR content, the NPR Radio also functions as a standard Wi-Fi radio, meaning it can tune in to the thousands of free Internet radio stations rather than standard AM/FM fare. If you can't stand what's available on AM or FM--we know we can't--and you don't want to pay for satellite radio (neither do we), there are plenty of great stations available online for just about everybody. The Livio uses Reciva's database of stations, so it's easy to check out the available stations online to see if there's enough content that appeals to you. Because there are so many Internet radio stations, it can be difficult to sift through them all. The main way to do this is using the LCD screen, which breaks it down by location and genre. While the interface is perfectly fine, we recommend ditching it in favor of the Reciva online portal. This is actually the service that powers the Livio and--after you associate your radio with your free account--it's a much easier interface to find and tag your favorite stations for listening. When you go back to your Livio Radio, your favorite stations will show up after you hit the "Fav" button. (You may need to cycle the power on the radio before new stations show up.)

Unlike the competing Grace GDI-IR2000, the NPR Radio can't access podcasts or stream music off a connected PC. According to a [FAQ](#) on Livio's Web site, the lack of podcast access is to "keep the device simple." However, we don't think adding a Podcasts menu option--that streams podcasts that you save on Reciva--would make the device more complicated. We have yet to find a Reciva-powered radio that offers reliable music streaming off a PC, so the lack of this function isn't a huge loss.

The Livio's connectivity package is generous. There's a headphone jack on the front panel, and an auxiliary input (so you can connect an iPod in a pinch) and an analog stereo line out on its back. The stereo line out is actually a minijack connector, but Livio includes a minijack-to-RCA adapter that makes it easier to connect to a home theater receiver. Rounding out the connectivity is an Ethernet jack, if you prefer a more stable wired connection. Even better, Livio provides a 6-foot patch cable to get you going right out of the box.



Performance

Before we talk about how the Livio sounds, it's important to get the caveats out of the way. It's a tabletop radio with only a single speaker (mono sound) and many Internet radio stations offer up low-bit-rate streams. Wi-Fi radios are really for casual listening, not an audiophile experience.

That being said, the NPR Radio's sound quality is passable. Because a lot of NPR's content is talk, you probably won't miss the lack of high fidelity. That said, dialogue sounds very rich and smooth on the radio. Our Internet radio stations played us a variety of music from rock and jazz to classical, and while the Livio never sounds bad, it never sounds great, either. There's minimal bass and the sound isn't particularly detailed, but it doesn't easily distort or sound harsh. If you compare it with higher-priced alternatives such as the Logitech Squeezebox Boom or the [Philips NP2900](#), the Livio doesn't compare. However, it's "good enough" for most people, especially for a \$150 radio. We really would have liked some EQ controls to dial in the sound quality to our tastes, but most users won't miss them anyway. The included thin remote control features all of the functionality also found on the front of the radio and works well.

Connecting to a wireless router was simple and took about 2 minutes. Like virtually all Wi-Fi radios we test these days, the NPR Radio's Wi-Fi performance was excellent, as we had absolutely no dropouts over our hours of listening. Of course, it's largely dependent on your Wi-Fi signal strength, as well as the speed and reliability of your Internet connection. Luckily, if you don't get acceptable performance in your home, Livio's FAQ states that consumers can get a full refund if they're unhappy with the purchase.

ELECTRONIC HOUSE

Livio Radio Tunes In Pandora, 11K Web Channels

The Livio Radio lets you control your personalized Pandora radio station from a remote control, and tune in 11,000 Internet radio stations for \$150.

By Arlen Schweiger

April 16, 2010

Instead of having to change stations every time a song comes on that you don't like, how about just giving it a quick "thumbs down" and moving on to the next tune, on the same station?

That's part of the attraction to the world of Pandora radio, of which you're perhaps familiar with by now. No trolling through the dial—just creating and letting your personalized radio stations evolve with your own taste in music.

Livio Radio is hoping you'll find that to be part of its appeal as well. The stand-alone Livio Radio is the first such device to let you do the whole "thumbs up/thumbs down" thing right on the front panel, and on its remote control.

You can access your personalized Pandora stations with your existing account, and being an Internet radio player, the Livio also lets you tap into 11,000-plus global web stations through the Reciva streaming service.

With just a single speaker you're probably not going to use Livio as your main stereo tuner, but the system should keep you rocking while you're at work, maybe in a home office, sitting outdoors, or preparing meals in the kitchen.

It comes with a Wi-Fi antenna and Ethernet cable so you can access the web stations wired or wirelessly to keep you constantly in tune. Right now it's available in the U.S. for \$150.

The New York Times

Expect the World®

Will the Internet Kill Traditional Car Radio?

John Quain

May 7, 2010

THE Internet's tentacles seem to have no limit, reaching out and strangling CDs, bookstores, newspapers and magazines. Now it has its sights set on the car radio.

Many people are already accustomed to plugging an iPod into the car to listen to their library of Chet Baker or Arcade Fire tracks rather than CDs. But now there is a new movement that could really threaten traditional broadcast radio: Internet music services like Pandora, Slacker and Last.fm, already popular with computer and smartphone owners, are being tailored by software developers, consumer electronics companies and even automakers to work more seamlessly with car stereo systems. So, while video didn't end up killing the radio star, this time the Internet might just succeed.

The devices responsible for this trend are smartphones like Apple's iPhone, RIM's line of BlackBerrys and phones using the Android software developed by Google. These handsets all have free applications that play customized music channels streamed over the Internet using the phone's 3G wireless data connection. The services are generally free, although smartphone owners typically pay about \$30 a month on top of regular voice service for unlimited data usage.

The attraction is that rather than being shackled to the same old hits from local radio stations, listeners can customize the music channel to suit their tastes. Pandora has about 750,000 songs and 40 million listeners. Put in the name of your favorite artist, say Chairlift, and Pandora creates a station that features Chairlift and similar groups, like Metric.

But using such a service on a phone in the car usually meant looking away from the road to switch channels or skip a song on the phone — a major distraction. So companies are marrying these services to existing in-car controls, essentially making it no different than switching between 1010 WINS and Q104.3.

Alpine, a car stereo maker, for example, offers the \$400 Alpine iDA-X305S Digital Media Receiver with Pandora Link. Using a special iPhone-compatible cable, the in-dash receiver lets listeners skip through their customized stations and even give songs a thumbs up or thumbs down by pushing in and turning the receiver's front dial. The downside is that drivers still have to look down at the stereo's display to find what can be a needle in a haystack of endless channel choices.

Pioneer recently introduced a more elegant solution that adds voice control to its Pandora option. The AVIC X920BT costs \$1,200 (not including the cost of a professional installation), but it throws a lot into one package: a 6.1-inch LCD touch screen, turn-by-turn navigation, AM/FM/CD and carbon-conscious features like an Eco Graph display that tells you how your driving habits are hurting (or helping) the planet. But connect an iPhone to the system using an optional \$50 cable and the unit really shines.

Not only will the in-dash display list your iPhone music library, but it also will control an about-to-be-released Pandora app specifically designed to work with the Pioneer system.

During a test drive when I became irritated by a Beyonce song, I simply pushed a "voice" button on the side of the Pioneer display and told the system to "play the Doors." Within a couple of seconds, the unit began to play songs from the "Soft Parade" album. The sound quality, while not equivalent to a CD, was as good as typical radio reception and better than some satellite radio stations. And when a call came in, the built-in Bluetooth hands-free system automatically muted the music.

I did discover some limitations, however. AT&T's 3G wireless service is notoriously patchy in New York City, so there were

occasional dead spots when the music dropped out as the cellphone searched for a signal. Furthermore, the software will not let you create or add new Pandora stations, a nod to concerns about distracted driving. And the Pioneer and Alpine stereos work only with Pandora on an iPhone. I did try a Bluetooth connected Motorola Droid phone with the Pioneer system, but because it lacked custom software controls, it meant that I had to go back to using the buttons on the phone, a definite distraction and potential hazard.

However, such limitations may soon disappear as automakers integrate streaming Internet services directly into their cars. Ford is one of the first to tether smartphones to its vehicles by allowing compatible apps to connect to its latest version of Sync. The 2011 Fiesta, for example, will allow some Android and BlackBerry applications to use the car's voice recognition and steering wheel controls. Not surprisingly, one of the first apps is Pandora. In an early demonstration using a Motorola Droid phone, I was able to switch among Pandora stations using my voice, and I could skip songs using the forward button on the steering column. Ford has plans to let even more software developers connect apps to its cars, including programs that play podcasts and read Twitter feeds.

Of course, traditional radio broadcasters have heard the drumbeat of mobile apps. They have responded with their own apps, streaming live broadcasts from thousands of stations to handsets and through them, to cars.

"We're not trying to dictate where people connect to us," says Evan Harrison, an executive vice president of Clear Channel Radio. "We need to be everywhere."

So the company has a popular app of its own called iheartradio. It's a virtual tuner that allows listeners to choose streams from Clear Channel's network of over 750 AM and FM stations nationwide. According to Mr. Harrison, the online streams have added 15 percent more listeners to the company's total audience.

"We are only too well aware of the technology," says Fred Jacobs, president of Jacobs Media, a 27-year-old radio consulting firm. In a little over a year and a half, Mr. Jacobs has seen a land rush in radio apps. His firm has responded by creating more than 130 iPhone apps for individual radio stations and programs across the country. The separate apps, which the company said have been downloaded by more than 2.5 million listeners, cover stations and shows including C-SPAN Radio, "Loveline With Dr. Drew" and KDRY Christian Radio. Mr. Jacobs says these free applications often include extra features, like photos, and could offer new forms of advertising on a phone or dashboard screen.

"It's a way for radio to get its portable mojo back," he says.

Software developers also sense the opportunity. Livio Radio is about to introduce a \$4.99 iPhone app that turns the handset into a digital tuner capable of pulling in music from 42,000 AM/FM and Internet-only stations. The company has designed its software to make it easier for drivers to scan stations with a swipe of a finger, although I still had trouble squinting at the iPhone screen.

So is the death of traditional radio ineluctable?

Joe Kennedy, chief executive of Pandora, says he thinks there will be a gradual migration in the car to services like Pandora, but he also says he believes it will not become a mainstream service until all new cars feature systems that can tap into apps. On the other hand, one player in this game of digital musical chairs may soon end up without a seat: Sirius XM Radio. Its satellite radio service is based on a monthly subscription model that few music fans may feel compelled to pay for, given the wider variety of genres available free on the Internet.

Ultimately, the incursion of Internet-based music services and radio station streams may be less about annihilating yet another business model than it is about breaking down barriers. For the first time, small local stations will be able to reach an entire driving nation, so some broadcasters may see their audiences swell as more listeners find them on Internet-connected car radios. In the end, it may simply be a case of radio is dead, long live radio.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Will the internet kill traditional car radio?

May 10, 2010

The Internet's tentacles seem to have no limit, reaching out and strangling CDs, bookstores, newspapers and magazines. Now the Net has its sights set on the car radio.

Many people are already accustomed to plugging an iPod into the car to listen to their library of Chet Baker or Arcade Fire tracks rather than CDs. But now there is a new movement that could really threaten traditional broadcast radio: Internet music services such as Pandora, Slacker and Last.fm, already popular with computer and smartphone owners, are being tailored by software developers, consumer electronics companies and even automakers to work more seamlessly with car stereo systems. So, while video didn't end up killing the radio star, this time the Internet just might succeed.

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Internet Radio App for Car Use Launched

May 11, 2010

Livio Radio has designed an iPhone/iPod Touch app designed to make Internet-based radio operation inside the car a bit more ergonomic.

Livio Car Internet Radio features an interface "designed for use in a vehicle," according to the announcement.

According to Livio the app has large preset buttons that should be easier to use and require less attention in the car. It also will work with horizontal or vertical orientation.

Livio Car Internet Radio also has search functions, a similar station recommendation feature, background listening mode for multitasking and a Twitter-share capability. Internet radio portal RadioTime provides the connection to the tens of thousands of Internet radio stations available. (RadioTime's Bill Moore thinks it's a big deal; he states in the announcement: "This application completely changes how users interact with their car radios, expanding the car antenna worldwide. We're able to provide users a world of choices spanning AM/FM, and Internet-only stations, and Livio has made the process just as easy as tuning the traditional car radio dial.")

The app is available at the iTunes Store for \$4.99.

CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

Detroit and Southeast Michigan's premier business news and information website

Myine Electronics develops iPhone application for its Internet radio

By Nancy Kaffer

May 11, 2010

Ferndale-based Myine Electronics L.L.C. today announced the launch of an iPhone application for its Livio Radio, a stand-alone unit that allows users to play Internet radio stations through a home stereo.

Myine Electronics' focus has been on technology that CEO Jake Sigal's baby boomer parents could use, and the Livio Car Internet Radio, though it's a smartphone app, is no different, Sigal said.

"There are a lot of people ranging from 10 to 110 who own the iPhone," he said. "What we've done is made a very easy to use application with large buttons, that's safe to use in a vehicle."

Sigal said the company is developing apps for the Android and Blackberry smartphones, and is in discussions with OEM factory car stereo manufacturers.

The app allows users to listen to more than 20,000 Internet radio stations while in the car via the iPhone's data plan, according to a statement released today.

The app sells for \$4.99, a price point Sigal said falls between free but advertising-supported radio apps like Pandora, and subscription-based satellite radio services like Sirius or XM Radio.

"We don't deliver advertising," he said.

"Even though Pandora has a free app you still have Pandora advertising. So on one end of spectrum is free, which is what Pandora doing, and on the other is XM and Sirius where you pay \$12.99 a month. Pandora provides great customized music, but doesn't provide live and local, we're doing that, with a one-time use fee. We think that's fair. We thought about doing a free version that's ad-supported, but visual ads are unsafe while driving."

Myine grossed \$1.1 million in its first year in sales, and Sigal says the company projects revenue of \$6 million in 2010.

Audio4cast

Is Your Mobile Streaming Strategy In Gear?

May 12, 2010



The Internet radio world is buzzing with news about mobile apps, based on the number of press releases I've gotten in the past week. It's for good reason – the recent Arbitron/Edison Infinite Dial Study showed that online radio listeners have a strong interest in listening over mobile and in-car devices. Mobile apps enable stations to easily connect with listeners on those devices.

Salem Communications, working with mobile streaming platform Airkast, launched 57 radio station mobile applications designed for listeners with either iPhone or BlackBerry devices.

The free Salem mobile applications let listeners hear live broadcasts on the go as well as view song lyrics, see artist and album information, read reviews, watch videos, listen to station podcasts, hear samples of recently played songs and even buy music through iTunes. Salem has an extensive online platform that includes streams of most or all of its 71 faith and family programmed stations, as well as Salem Web Network, a network that's deep in similarly programmed web properties.

At nearly the same time, JacAPPS announces that it will produce apps for iPhones and iPod Touch devices for 78 of Entercom's 110 radio stations. A project that began with WEEI has now developed into a company wide project for the mobile app division of Jacobs Media.

Jacobs Media President Fred Jacobs says "We have built apps for some great broadcasters around the world, and we ... applaud Entercom for recognizing the value of the mobile space and the importance of creating great digital strategies in this rapidly changing environment."

Meanwhile, two of the more entrepreneurial companies in Internet radio have teamed up to launch a new mobile app designed to make listening to Internet radio in cars easier. The Livio Car Internet Radio iPhone app leverages RadioTime's tuner service to give drivers easy access to more than 20,000 stations. Livio also has wifi enabled Internet radio tabletop devices. RadioTime is one of the primary portals for Internet radio and provides tuning services to many Internet radio devices.



Review: Livio Car Internet Radio app puts car radio on your iPhone

By Christian Zibreg

May 28, 2010

Don't let the traditional car radio dial fool you – this nifty little radio app lets drivers tune in to thousands of radio stations from all over the world, stream radio broadcasts in the background, and more.

As the name suggests, Livio Car Internet Radio is an Internet radio client created specifically for use while driving. Detroit-based Livio Radio, the name behind a bunch of connected radio gadgets, developed the software in co-operation with Hardin Design and Development.

The app sports a simplified interface with big preset buttons and the AM/FM car stereo look that will get you going in no time. In addition, it works in both portrait and landscape – especially handy for drivers with in-car iPhone holders. And unlike other apps that simply rotate their UI, this one rearranges interface elements to take advantage of landscape orientation, which is of utmost importance while driving.

Tons of content

What sets Livio Car Internet Radio apart from a bunch of other apps is background playback and a tight integration with the Dallas, Texas-based RadioTime radio service that streams a whopping 42,000 AM/FM and online-only radio stations from around the world. That variety of content should satisfy even the hungriest radio lovers out there. The app defaults to WiFi at first run, but you can use 3G/EDGE connection as well.

Thanks to a clever organization, finding the right station needn't be like spotting a needle in the haystack, the issue I've encountered in other music apps. You can browse the RadioTime directory by music, talk, and sport radio broadcasts, in addition to audio podcasts. You can also browse content by language and location, add a station to your favorites, list nearby broadcasts, or use built-in search to tune by station call letters or keyword.

When you find something you like, just swipe with your finger to scan for another station of a similar theme or genre. I also liked the Reliability Filter that adjusts reception settings to ensure you only receive the clearest stations available and Station History with a list of stations I've listened to.

Local radio and background playback

I've tested the local radio feature extensively over the past week, when commuting between several cities, and it always pinpointed relevant broadcasts. Location browsing is idiot-proof: first pick a continent, then zoom in on a desired region (like a US state), and finally choose your city. For instance, picking North America > United States > California > Los Angeles reveals dozens of the city's radio broadcasts categorized in genres like "Hip Hop," "Liberal," "Entertainment," "News," and many more.

As you know, current iPhone software prohibits multitasking in third-party apps. As a result, the app abruptly quits when you receive a phone call or check your email. However, a clever workaround solution lets you listen to radio while doing



something else: just hit the Share button in the main menu and choose “Play station in background.” This will yank you out of the app and into Safari that will automatically retrieve live stream and play it via the iPhone’s built-in media player.

From there, you can press the Home button (don’t tap the Done button which stops playback) to return to your home screen and run any other program while your chosen broadcast streams in the background – very cool! This also works when your device sleeps and you can even use the iPod media controls on the lock screen to pause/stop playback and set the volume. When multitasking-enabled iPhone OS 4 comes out this summer, apps like this will really benefit from the ability to offload background audio streaming to Apple’s APIs designed to conserve power and resources.

Issues: Incompatible radios, battery concerns

I’ve encountered a few issues using the app in the European region, where I live, but none of them were biggies. Obviously, the biggest concern is battery life. I ran out of juice on my iPhone 3G after two and a half hours of 3G radio playback on full charge, with WiFi and push messaging turned off, which could be partially contributed to by my 18-month old device with a diminished battery capacity. If you run Livio Car Internet Radio while driving, as the creators intended, chances are you’ll be charging your device via the car’s lighter.

Some streams in my area wouldn’t play at all, others would suffer from interrupted playback, and some stations even crashed the app so I had to disable the Replay Last Station feature in Settings to avoid constant crashing. Social sharing is limited to tweeting the station, global and local charts are nowhere to be found, and the lack of a better, crowdsourced recommendation engine is a shame. I’ve also experienced glitches when roaming from 3G to EDGE to WiFi. A bandwidth counter is also needed for users whose plans include capped data. Other than that, it’s an impressive piece of software.

Conclusion: Who needs satellite radio on their iPhone?

With this strong set of features, background listening that works like a charm, the self-explanatory interface, and an astounding choice of free, live, local, and global radio programming, Livio Car Internet Radio is a killer app for in-car listening and an affordable alternative to SIRIUS/XM satellite radio, but also a serious contender to the specialized radio apps such as Pandora. Let me put it this way – it didn’t earn a Top 20 place in this year’s Mobile App Showdown at the 2010 International Consumer Electronics Show on its good looks.

Livio Car Internet Radio is normally a \$5 download from the App Store. Discounted to \$2 just this weekend, it’s a steal. The app is a universal binary that works on the iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad with iPhone OS 3.1.2 or later, but versions for OEM factory car stereos, BlackBerry, and Android handsets are also in development, the company confirmed. If only there was a lite version so everyone could tune in before buying. More information is available at the Livio Radio website.

Audio4cast

A Good Reason For Broadcasters To Stream

June 1, 2010

Several recent articles have questioned the survival of broadcast radio in the face of Internet radio. In an article last month, the NY Times pointed to the fact that Internet radio stations like Pandora, Slacker and Last.fm allow listeners to customize their listening experience as one reason that Internet radio has grown in popularity with listeners. New devices that enable in-car listening will make listening even easier – Pioneer and Alpine are two manufacturers that have introduced new in-car devices.

Other companies have introduced apps that make it easier to use your iPhone to stream your favorite Internet radio station in your car.

Perhaps the most ironic article I have read about the growing challenge that Internet radio presents to traditional AM/FM listening is one in AutoTrader.com, owned by Cox Enterprises – the same company that owns 86 radio stations. The article asks:

“Are we witnessing the gradual death of traditional broadcast radio? Far from being shackled to, say, Clear Channel’s corporate playlist or a DJ’s whims, Internet radio stations put users in the driver’s seat and allow them to create unique channels based on criteria such as artist, genre, or song. Yet, a savvy, \$4.99 app from Livio Radio, which turns the iPhone into a digital receiver capable of receiving over 42,000 AM/FM and Internet stations, will give users access to more broadcast radio stations than ever before, right down to tiny local stations clear across the country.”

While it’s a little strange that this article appears in a Cox owned publication, the point is right on – if streaming technology is viewed as simply an additional channel to the AM/FM dial, then Internet radio presents not a threat but an opportunity to radio broadcasters. Already in the business of producing audio content, stations now have the opportunity to extend their audience base and increase both listeners and time spent listening on a new channel.

Here’s the thing. Internet radio isn’t going away.

But that doesn’t have to be a threat to broadcasters who are willing to extend their platform and offer streaming as an option to their listeners. The mistake broadcasters make is thinking that they have a choice when it comes to streaming, and proclaim streaming as too expensive. If a station’s listener wants to listen online, and that station is not offering its programming online, they will find another station online to listen to.

Isn’t that a good enough reason to stream?



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Isn’t that a good enough reason to stream?

-- Jennifer Lane, President, Audio4Cast.com, has a long career in Internet radio. Read her blog about the business of Internet radio and digital audio at www.Audio4cast.com

CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

Detroit and Southeast Michigan's premier business news and information website

Beringea invests in Myine Electronics, bets on more 'home runs'

By Tom Henderson and Nancy Kaffer

June 13, 2010

It's been a busy two years for entrepreneur Jake Sigal.

After launching Ferndale-based **Myine Electronics Inc.**, Sigal quickly brought his Livio Internet Radio to market, signing licensing agreements with the likes of broadcasting mainstay **National Public Radio** and powerful newcomer **Pandora Radio**, and most recently developing an iPhone application that brings Internet radio to automobiles.

Now he's getting the kind of validation that comes with zeros attached.

Farmington Hills-based **Beringea L.L.C.** is expected to announce today it has made the first significant equity investment in Myine from the \$185 million **InvestMichigan Growth Capital Fund** it co-manages with **Credit Suisse**.

Sigal, a member of the 2010 class of *Crain's* 20 in their 20s, declined to disclose the terms of the deal, which involved Beringea membership on the board of directors and a minority interest in the firm. He said disclosing the amount of investment could provide strategic information for competitors.

"This is a bet on Jake," said David Ruby, an associate at Beringea. "He's a proven product developer who has brought over 20 products to market. And he's developed a home-run product, a USB turntable" — a device that allows users to electronically transfer LPs to a computer, which Sigal helped to develop while working at Rhode Island-based **Numark Industries L.L.C.**

He's hoping to hit another home run with the Livio Internet Radio, a standalone unit that lets users play more than 16,000 free Internet radio stations through a home stereo.

Sigal's goal was to make easy-to-use technology that would appeal to people like his baby boomer parents. The app brings the same functionality to a portable device.

The technology, Ruby said, appealed to Beringea.

Sigal first approached Beringea "maybe nine months or a year ago and presented to our group. We decided to wait on the sidelines. He knocked on our doors numerous times. He was very persistent," Ruby said.

"What really excited us is the market opportunity. The way music is delivered has changed dramatically. You look at **Clear Channel** and **CBS**. They're the main players in terrestrial radio and they're trying to figure it all out. There's been a huge consolidation in the industry. Putting an antenna up on a hill and broadcasting to people is a dinosaur.

"The next wave in the way music was delivered was the iPod. But we see the future being cloud-based and Wi-Fi based," he said.

And **Apple Inc.** recently bought **LaLa**, an online music streaming service, in December 2009 for a reported \$30 million to \$100 million. Apple closed the company in April amid speculation that the purchase was prompted by Apple's interest in LaLa's technology and talent, a development that offered young and growing companies the prospect that economic payoff is possible.

Or so Sigal and Beringea hope.

“Internet radio is where radio is going,” Sigal said. “HD radio has definitely stumbled and Internet radio seems to be the one that’s moving. ... Internet is all about one to one ... some of the things we’re looking at is how to provide feedback to stations, how to have smarter advertising so ads are not as annoying, so we can have location-based services, so that the ads playing are based on where you’re at, where you’re going, what kind of car you’re driving and other information you’re giving us.”

Industry research provided by Sigal indicates there could be 185 million Internet radio users by 2010.

San Diego-based **Grace Digital**, which makes networked audio and other consumer electronics, has experienced a significant increase in Internet radio sales over the last year, said Greg Fadul, Grace’s chief marketing officer.

“Companies like **Logitech**, Livio and Grace Digital are leading the Internet radio revolution,” he wrote in an e-mail to *Crain’s*. “Each company is finding their niche in this fast-growing market segment.”

Myine employs eight in its Ferndale office, with two more full-time employees outside of Michigan. It uses contractors for some projects.

While no specific hiring targets were included in the deal, Sigal said he plans to add more workers in the software and marketing departments. By this time next year, he said, the business could have as many as 20 employees.

Sigal said Myine grossed \$1.1 million in 2009, and that he expects to hit \$6 million this year, thanks in part to the Livio iPhone app, deals with **Sears** and what he says is a yet-to-be-named big box retailer.

Sigal said Myine, a post-revenue company, presents less of a risk to a private investor than a business that’s strictly research and development. But Beringea, he said, was equally attractive to Myine.

“They understand the risks, and that this is the long-term play, and they’re helping us in areas that we need help with,” Sigal said.

That includes assistance in managing the financial requirements of the business,” he said.

“It is a partnership. It’s not about getting money in the bank,” Sigal said. “It’s not dumb money. You need smart money in your business these days.”



Beringea Backs Livio Radio

June 14, 2010

Livio Radio, a Ferndale, Mich.-based developer of Internet radio devices and smartphone apps, has raised an undisclosed amount of VC funding from Beringea.

PRESS RELEASE

Beringea, Michigan's largest venture capital firm has invested in Ferndale, Mich.-based Livio Radio, a leading developer of Internet radio devices and smartphone applications. The investment, made through Beringea's InvestMichigan! Growth Capital Fund, will be used to fund Livio's launch of new products, sales and marketing efforts, and other business endeavors. The terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"We are excited to partner with Beringea, a firm that truly understands the opportunities and challenges facing growing Michigan-based companies," said Jake Sigal, founder and CEO of Livio Radio. "These funds will allow us to further expand our product offerings and maintain our leadership position in the digital audio market."

Sigal, a 28-year-old entrepreneur and the inventor of the original USB turntable, founded Livio Radio in 2008, specializing in the development of digital audio products that are not overburdened by complicated menus and features. The company's product offerings include the Livio Radio which allows users to listen to NPR® and Pandora® Internet radio programming in the home, as well as 16,000 additional stations from around the world. Livio has also launched an iPhone application, the Livio Car Internet Radio, enabling users to access Internet radio stations in the vehicle.

"The Livio Radio story is inspirational to young entrepreneurs in the state, illustrating that creative and innovative businesses leveraging the 'new economy' can be founded and grown in Michigan," said David Ruby of Beringea.

According to Arbitron and Edison Research, approximately 69 million Americans listen to online radio programs every month. By 2015, the Internet radio market is expected to grow to include more than 100 million listeners.

"Livio Radio understands the transformation taking place in the way music is distributed," said Ruby. "Internet radio will emerge as the preferred medium of broadcasted audio in the United States and the company's products are at the forefront of this shift, providing hardware and software applications that are affordable and extremely user-friendly."

About Beringea

Beringea is the largest venture capital firm in Michigan, with more than 70 portfolio companies in the U.S. and U.K. Headquartered in Farmington Hills, Mich., the firm has additional offices in London and Shanghai. Beringea has more than 20 years of investing experience in a range of sectors, including health care and life sciences, clean technology, advanced manufacturing, media, Internet technologies and specialized consumer products. Among its many initiatives, Beringea is co-manager of the \$185 million InvestMichigan! Growth Capital Fund, which provides venture and expansion-stage capital to emerging businesses headquartered or with substantial operations in the state of Michigan. For more information, visit www.beringea.com or www.investmichiganfund.com

About Livio Radio

Founded in 2008, Livio Radio aims to make Internet audio streams accessible to more people, in more places. Dedicated to designing products that work fast without complicated menus, the company's line of specialty radios, including the NPR Radio by Livio and the Livio Radio featuring Pandora, let users enjoy the benefits of online programming – music, sports, news and talk from around the world – anywhere an Internet connection is available. The Livio Car Internet Radio App for iPhone uses a high-speed data connection and a streamlined interface to offer the thousands of free online programming choices, along with traditional AM/FM radio broadcasts, for users on the go. Visit www.livioradio.com for more information.



Firm invests in Ferndale radio equipment company

By Joe Szczesny

June 14, 2010

Beringea, Michigan's largest private equity firm, is putting its money into a Ferndale company that builds radio equipment that exploits the long reach of the Internet to access music of every kind.

The investment, made through Beringea's Invest Michigan Growth Capital Fund, will be used to fund Livio Radio's launch of new products, as well as its sales and marketing efforts, and other business endeavors. The terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"We are excited to partner with Beringea, a firm that truly understands the opportunities and challenges facing growing Michigan-based companies," said Jake Sigal, founder and chief executive officer of Livio Radio.

"These funds will allow us to further expand our product offerings and maintain our leadership position in the digital audio market," Sigal said.

Sigal, a 28-year-old entrepreneur and the inventor of the original USB turntable, founded Livio Radio in 2008, specializing in the development of digital audio products that are not overburdened by complicated menus and features.

Livio's products include the Livio Radio, which allows users to listen to NPR and Pandora Internet radio programming at home, as well as 16,000 additional stations from around the world without using a laptop or personal computer.

In addition, Livio also has launched an iPhone application, the Livio Car Internet Radio, enabling users to access Internet radio stations in their vehicles.

"The Livio Radio story is inspirational to young entrepreneurs in the state, illustrating that creative and innovative businesses leveraging the 'new economy' can be founded and grown in Michigan," said David Ruby of Beringea.

According to Arbitron and Edison Research, approximately 69 million Americans listen to online radio programs every month. By 2015, the Internet radio market is expected to grow to include more than 100 million listeners.

"Livio Radio understands the transformation taking place in the way music is distributed," said Ruby.

"Internet radio will emerge as the preferred medium of broadcasted audio in the United States and the company's products are at the forefront of this shift, providing hardware and software applications that are affordable and extremely user-friendly," he said.

Its headquarters in Farmington Hills, Beringea is the largest venture capital firm in Michigan, with more than 70 portfolio companies in the U.S. and U.K.

Internet Radio Developer Livio Raises Funds

By Mark Hefflinger

June 14, 2010

Ferndale, Mich. - Livio Radio, a developer of Internet radio devices and smartphone applications, said on Monday that it has received an investment from venture capital firm Beringea.

The amount of the investment was not disclosed.

Founded in 2008 by Jake Sigal -- who claims to have invented the original USB turntable -- Livio's products include a home receiver that captures Web radio streams, in addition to an iPhone application and the Livio Car Internet Radio.

Related Links:

<http://www.beringea.com/newsroom.php?id=79>

<http://www.livioradio.com>



Beringea Invests In Ferndale's Livio Radio

By Matt Roush

June 14, 2010

Farmington Hills-based Beringea, Michigan's largest venture capital firm, has invested in Ferndale-based Livio Radio, a developer of Internet radio devices and smartphone applications.

The investment, made through Beringea's InvestMichigan Growth Capital Fund, will be used to fund Livio's launch of new products, sales and marketing efforts, and other business endeavors. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"These funds will allow us to further expand our product offerings and maintain our leadership position in the digital audio market," said Jake Sigal, founder and CEO of Livio Radio.

Sigal, a 28-year-old entrepreneur and the inventor of the original USB turntable, founded Livio Radio in 2008, specializing in the development of digital audio products that are not overburdened by complicated menus and features. The company's product offerings include the Livio Radio, which allows users to listen to NPR and Pandora Internet radio programming in the home, as well as 16,000 additional stations from around the world. Livio has also launched an iPhone application, the Livio Car Internet Radio, enabling users to access Internet radio stations in the vehicle.

"The Livio Radio story is inspirational to young entrepreneurs in the state, illustrating that creative and innovative businesses leveraging the 'new economy' can be founded and grown in Michigan," said David Ruby of Beringea.

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"Livio Radio understands the transformation taking place in the way music is distributed," said Ruby. "Internet radio will emerge as the preferred medium of broadcasted audio in the United States and the company's products are at the forefront of this shift, providing hardware and software applications that are affordable and extremely user-friendly."

Beringea is the largest venture capital firm in Michigan, with more than 70 portfolio companies in the U.S. and U.K. Headquartered in Farmington Hills, Mich., the firm has additional offices in London and Shanghai. Beringea has more than 20 years of investing experience in a range of sectors, including health care and life sciences, clean technology, advanced manufacturing, media, Internet technologies and specialized consumer products. Among its many initiatives, Beringea is co-manager of the \$185 million InvestMichigan Growth Capital Fund, which provides venture and expansion-stage capital to emerging businesses headquartered or with substantial operations in the state of Michigan. For more information, visit www.beringea.com or www.investmichiganfund.com.

More about Livio at www.livioradio.com.

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Beringea Invests in Detroit Area Internet Player Startup Livio Radio

Howard Lovy

June 14, 2010

Jake Sigal unceremoniously bootstrapped his company out of his guest bedroom in my hometown of Ferndale, MI, about 2 1/2 years ago—tinkering around with the idea of a stand-alone Internet radio. Today, Sigal's company, Livio Radio, is the recipient of an investment from Beringea, one of Michigan's largest venture capital firms.

I spoke with Sigal this morning just after the news of the investment came out. Turns out, the house he launched his company in was just a few doors down from where I rented my first place in Ferndale eight years ago. I congratulated him on helping my hometown, and he congratulated me for actually being a working journalist in Ferndale—something that is, unfortunately, getting more rare these days.

Anyway, I'll write more about Sigal and his company in the future. But, for now, here's how he describes his product.

"In general, our products are aimed at making Internet Radio accessible," Sigal says. "So, in addition to Pandora and NPR, we also provide access to over 16,000 live Internet radio stations and, in fact, over 44,000 Internet radio streams." That includes podcasts and pretty much anything else you can tune in on the Internet.

Neither he nor Beringea will say how much the investment was, but he said it will be used for working capital and to add some new people. He hinted that another announcement will come in the next couple of weeks regarding a device that can play all your favorite podcasts and Internet stations in your car.

That would put Sigal more in direct competition with his old employers at Delphi, where he was project manager for XM Satellite Radio (now merged with Sirius). The future of radio is online, Sigal says, and he is convinced that this investment in his startup helps prove it.



Livio Unveils Carmen In-Car Device

June 22, 2010

Livio Radio, which recently debuted the Livio Car Internet Radio app for the iPhone, makes another move into the car with the Carmen, being unveiled at Pepcom's Digital Experience in New York this week.

The Carmen includes software to record broadcast and Internet-only streams, DVR-style, and load it onto a portable media device for playback. More than 40,000 stations can be browsed for recording by genre, language, location, or keyword, and in the car, the interface includes fast-forward, rewind, and skip functions.

The Carmen plugs into a car's 12-volt socket and plays back over an open FM channel or a head unit's auxiliary input.

"The Carmen is all about further expanding Internet radio consumption to the car," Livio Radio founder/COO Jake Sigal said. "We designed Carmen with DVR in mind. It gives users access to local stations from across America and around the world -- their music, news, and talk radio -- plus genres that you can't find anywhere on AM/FM for plug-and-play listening and enjoyment in any vehicle."

The Carmen's suggested retail price is \$59.99, and it should be in stores this summer.



Livio unveils the Carmen Internet Radio Player for cars

By Joe Szczesny

June 22, 2010

FERNDALE — Livio Radio is heading to Pepcom’s Digital Experience! in New York on Wednesday, June 23, where they’ll debut the Carmen, a portable Internet radio solution for use in the vehicle.

Compatible with the Mac or PC, the Carmen connects to the computer with a USB cable and, using the client software, records and stores content from over 42,000 AM/FM and Internet-only radio stations streamed from around the world.

Users may then connect the portable Carmen to the vehicle’s 12-volt socket and play back the stored audio library through the car stereo using an open FM channel or auxiliary (AUX) input. Shipping to retail stores nationwide this summer, the Carmen is designed to make Internet audio programming available on the road and on-demand.

Carmen is simple to use out of the box and easily records the programming users want, in the same manner that DVR revolutionized TV consumption and behavior.

The client software allows users to browse stations by genre, language, location or keyword for radio recording, in addition to other common audio files including music and podcasts. In the vehicle, Carmen’s user-friendly interface includes fast-forward, rewind, and skip functions.

“The Carmen is all about further expanding Internet radio consumption to the car,” Livio Radio founder and chief operating officer Jake Sigal said. “We designed Carmen with DVR in mind.

It gives users access to local stations from across America and around the world – their music, news and talk radio – plus genres that you can’t find anywhere on AM/FM for plug-and-play listening and enjoyment in any vehicle.”

The Carmen Internet radio player carries an MSRP of \$59.99 and will be available for distribution and retail sale this summer.

This latest release comes on the heels of Livio Radio’s most recent product, the Livio Car Internet Radio app for iPhone. Currently available on the App Store for \$4.99, the app allows users to play back more than 42,000 AM/FM and Internet-only radio stations available online through the phone’s 3G/EDGE data connection, using an intuitive interface designed from the ground up for use in a vehicle.

Based in Ferndale, Livio Radio aims to make Internet audio programming accessible to more people, in more places. Dedicated to designing products that set up easily and work fast without complicated menus, Livio offers users access to thousands of free programming options available online – music, sports, news and talk from anywhere in the world – through an array of specialty products. Visit www.livioradio.com for more information.

WIRED

Carmen: Internet Radio On Your Car Radio via Radio

By Charlie Sorrel

June 23, 2010



Wouldn't it be great if you could listen to internet radio in your car? With Livio's new Carmen, you can, provided you're happy with a rather weird, convoluted, time-consuming and almost Rube Goldberg-esque experience.

The best way to give you an idea of the whole complicated mess is to describe the process. First, plug the Carmen into your computer, fire up the companion software and then choose the from the internet radio stations available ("more than 42,000 stations"). The Carmen will then record these for you, DVR-style, in real-time. To make that clear, you won't be downloading an hour-long show in seconds like you would with a podcast: you'll be waiting an hour for it.

Once the 2GB stick is loaded up, you take it to the car and plug it into the cigarette-lighter socket. Then you turn on the car's radio. The Carmen works by sending the MP3s via FM (although you can opt for an aux cable). It even comes with a small remote control so you can search on the floor for that instead of squeezing the Carmen's tiny buttons.

To recap: You spend hours recording radio shows only to re-broadcast them to your car stereo. And for this you spend \$60. Alternatively you could just use the radio in your car, or hook up the cellphone or MP3 player you already have to your car stereo. That would cost you nothing.

For all my complaints, I admit I have a soft spot for the Carmen: the idea of recording songs and shows off the radio to listen to in the car takes me back to my childhood. Thank goodness somebody is applying today's tech to 1970s problems.

Available for pre-order now.



‘Carmen’ Car Internet Radio Player Debuts

By Leslie Stimson

June 24, 2010

Livio Radio’s latest product, which the company is calling a “portable Internet radio solution for cars,” was unveiled this week.

“Carmen” is a portable Internet radio. Using software that’s included for both Mac and PC, the company says it’s possible to record more than 42,000 AM/FM and Internet-only radio streams and then load the recorded content onto the portable media device using a USB cable. You can also load other audio files, like music and podcasts onto the unit, which features 2 GB of memory.

For playback, plug Carmen into your car’s 12-volt socket and the unit streams the audio through an open FM channel or head unit’s auxiliary input. The device features fast forward, rewind and skip functions.

Livio Radio CEO Jake Sigal says he designed Carmen with the DVR in mind, and the device “is all about further expanding Internet radio consumption to the car.”

Carmen ships to retailers this summer and will list for just under \$60.

This latest release comes on the heels of the Livio Car Internet Radio app for iPhone, available for \$4.99 on the App Store. I got a chance to talk to Sigal, the 28-year-old entrepreneur of the Detroit-based Livio Radio, at CES. Livio is also the developer of the first branded NPR consumer electronics device, an Internet radio that features NPR stations, programs and content in a special NPR menu. He’s all about making Internet radio easy to use. His other company, Myine Electronics, makes the Ab-bee, the FM tuner that strips out commercials and DJ patter.



Venture capital firm Beringea invests in Ferndale's Livio Radio

By Job Zemke

June 28, 2010

It looks like the signal between Beringea and Livio Radio is coming through crystal clear now that the Farmington Hills-based venture capital firm is investing in the high-tech radio maker from Ferndale.

The terms of the deal have not been disclosed, but the investment from Michigan's largest VC firm will allow Livio Radio to launch new products for its Internet radio line, while expanding sales and marketing efforts.

"What really attracted us to the company was its founder, Jake Sigal," says David Ruby, an associate with Beringea who helped broker the deal. "He had a lot of success with other companies before forming his own. It's really a bet on his talent and his ability to develop products for his company."

Sigal, 28, helped create the first USB turntable. He founded Livio Radio in 2008 when he created a simple radio that let users listen to popular Internet radio station Pandora. It now allows users to listen to NPR and 16,000 additional stations from around the world. That has allowed the firm to expand to 10 employees and five independent contractors. It recently added four positions and expects to add three more before the year is out.

"We're doing well," Sigal says. "We have retail distribution in the U.S. and Canada. Plus, we have a lot of stuff coming down the road."

Livio Radio recently launched an iPhone application, the Livio Car Internet Radio, that lets users access Internet radio stations during their ride. It's also working on apps for other smart phones and the iPad. More products are also cooking further down the road thanks to the recent infusion of venture capital.

That money comes at a time when venture capital, seed capital, and financing of just about any kind is hard to come by in the wake of the recent financial crisis. Sigal says he has been working for months to land Beringea's "smart money" (a combination of cash and business expertise) in his start-up, which has already raised a couple of rounds of seed capital from angel investors.

"I was successful because I was boot strapping all the way," Sigal says. "That's why I was successful -- by pitching a product and not a story."

Source: Jake Sigal, CEO of Livio Radio and David Ruby, an associate with Beringea

The Young & Entrepreneurial: Jake Sigal

By Jon Zemke

July 1, 2010

It's not an accident Jake Sigal runs his own start-up, Livio Radio. Whether it was nature or nurture (one could make a case for either), Sigal undoubtedly inherited his entrepreneurial instincts from his father and grandfather, who both owned their own businesses.

The 28-year-old Ferndale resident's grandfather established a customization shop in the textile industry and his father had his own photography studio. Innovation was also part of the mix. Sigal's dad was one of the first photographers to use a digital scanner and work with the earliest version of Adobe Photoshop in the 1990s.

"He helped the paradigm shift between 35mm and digital," Sigal says.



Sigal was involved with a similar paradigm shift when he helped invent the USB turntable, which allows DJs to digitize their vinyl record collections, in 2005 at ION Audio in Rhode Island. During the early to mid-2000s he worked for big-name audio tech companies like Numark and Delphi. The merger between Sirius and XM satellite radio stations squeezed Sigal out of his job in 2007, leaving him to contemplate an offer from a major brand in his industry.

That's when the Livio Radio light went off over his head.

"That's the point when I knew I needed to do this," Sigal says. "I knew I didn't want to work for the best brand ever. I wanted to start my own company."

Livio Radio, his company's signature product, is a small radio that allows users to listen to popular Internet radio station Pandora, along with NPR and 16,000 additional stations from around the world. It recently came out with an Internet radio player for cars called Carmen after receiving an investment from Farmington Hills-based Beringea, the largest venture capital firm in Michigan. Today Livio employs 10 people and gives work to five independent contractors.

That's just a few of the accomplishments that are making Sigal's family of entrepreneurs proud. And it's why *Metromode* decided to connect with Jake about his successes.

Radio has gone through a number of dramatic changes in the last 10-15 years, such as the addition of satellite and Internet radio platforms. Is there a future for traditional radio stations or are they a dated platform destined to go down the same road as newspapers?

There will always be a place for terrestrial radio broadcasts that are live and local. The larger issue is what is radio? It's a form of communication. Regardless of how radio is distributed, success is ultimately a function of the demand for the content, not the medium used to send it from the talk show host's mouth to the consumer's ear. Terrestrial radio is one-to-many and Internet radio allows a customized, one-to-one experience.

The future of radio in general is customization. It's about providing better content, less annoying advertising, and making

happier listeners.

You worked for corporate giants Numark and Delphi before striking out on your own. What lessons did you learn at those jobs that have helped you with Livio Radio? As an entrepreneur in his 20s was it a struggle to get investors to take you seriously? Have there been any advantages to being under 30?

The people I worked with at Numark and Delphi are top notch. They gave me the opportunity to work hard and focus on the details. I also learned how to travel, go on national television, handle PR, and manage cross-functional teams. I've taken these personal skills, with a foundation of respect and honesty, to set up Livio.

Starting a company at any age in the consumer electronics industry is like learning to ride a bike without training wheels. Fortunately, with my previous success working within the industry, I didn't end up over the handlebars. However, being 26 makes it easy to get up after I fall down.

Investors first saw me as a greenhorn with big ambitions and little or no probability of success. Winning two innovation awards at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), signing deals with NPR and Pandora, racking up over \$1.1 million in sales, and being elected as a board member on the Consumer Electronics Association's Small Business Council quickly changed the perspective of investors in Michigan.

In your blog bio, you credit jobs like umping softball games to buy your first bike and starting a DJ business to pay for college as playing a major part in developing your entrepreneurial spirit. What do you think our secondary education system could do to better prepare young people for the realities of business and entrepreneurship, or is it best to leave that focus for college?

Require internships, and allow college students to defer loan payments while in post-graduate internship or fellowship programs. You can't teach someone how to be an entrepreneur, they just are one or they're not. However, the skills of the trade of business need to be learned to be successful. Specifically for me, I would have failed in three months if I tried doing this business without my experience from previous jobs. The accounting, finance, and HR skills I didn't learn in engineering school, I quickly learned myself or outsourced to professionals.

You have talked about how your wife keeps you and your work ethic inline in that same blog bio description. Is there a piece of advice she likes to give you that would, in general, help local entrepreneurs improve their businesses?

Work to live, don't live to work.



Beringea, Michigan's largest venture capital firm, just made an investment in your company. Conventional wisdom dictates that the venture capital scene in the Midwest is much more conservative (both with cash and control of a company) than on the coasts. Has this been your experience? As an entrepreneur, is there anything you would like to see changed to the VC investment process?

No, not at all. Michigan is on par with the rest of the country, no better and no worse. I think it's absolutely ridiculous to see government funding that has certain types of industry requirements. So many firms that manage state funding have told me that we didn't qualify because we weren't making cars, windmills, or whatever else the "state" deemed as good business.

State funding should be searching for good businesses and great entrepreneurs, not familiar industries that are heavily saturated. I would change state funding so they could just hand over cash to VCs and provide tax incentives and matching funds to angle investors providing crucially needed seed capital for start-ups that create jobs.

As both a DJ and an inventor you've created a way for DJs to digitize their vinyl records with the USB Turntable. Do you ever have any second thoughts or even regrets about developing technology that allows DJs to do away with one of their



signature props? Can you really call yourself a “disc jockey” if there are no discs anymore?

I’ve been part of the coolest industry for many years, the pro-audio industry. Numark, Alesis, Akai, and Station have been leading the way for DJs for decades by replacing their “props” with newer gear that does more and allows more musical freedom.

Check out any of our resident Livio DJs at Gracie’s Underground in Ferndale and you’ll be amazed what technology lets these professionals do with sound and recordings. At Station, I was part of the team that worked on FinalScratch2, which was what eventually led Rane to Serato. At Numark, I worked on software updates for the CDX, a giant turntable that played CDs, as well as the HDX, a hard drive version of the product. I was also a co-inventor of the first iDJ, a great ‘prosumer’ DJ mixer for anyone with an iPod. Back when we worked on that project, I was working directly with product developers at Apple right as the podcasting scene was coming out. This was way ahead of its time. Next time you see your favorite DJ with a laptop, look at the screen. Odds are the software they are running has features that were developed by the teams I worked with.

It’s the content and quality of the audio that makes it great, not the gear. But I do love the minimal 1200s plus a two-channel mixer setup. I still have my vinyl in the basement and escape into the music.



Metro Detroit has a rich musical heritage that still produces superstar acts across several genres of music. Do you think the region takes full advantage of its musical assets or even properly appreciates them? Could it do a better job of leveraging its past and present musical reputation?

I’m not the expert in that arena, but I do love electronic music and Detroit is as good as anywhere I’ve lived or been. Paxahau does an amazing job with the Movement festival. Jason Huvaere’s hard work shows because his show is getting bigger and better every year. Livio sponsored this year’s festival to help create more awareness of our national Livio community.

Your start-up could set up shop anywhere in the world, but you choose Ferndale. Why?

Ferndale’s a cool and hip scene. As a resident, I set up the office here so I could ride my bike to work.

Audio4cast

Livio Puts Internet Radio In Your Car

July 1, 2010



Jake Sigal doesn't spend much time sitting still. At 28 years old, he's launched a bunch of successful products, ranging from the first USB Turntable designed to convert those vinyl albums to mp3s (I bought one for my husband a few years ago), to tabletop Internet radios. He is the CEO of Livio Radio and the Founder/CEO of Myine Electronics. Livio designs Internet radios that work fast without complicated menus and sells the NPR Radio and the Livio Radio featuring Pandora. Myine manufactures high-quality electronic audio products.

Now Livio is introducing the Carmen, a portable Internet radio solution for use in the vehicle. Compatible with the Mac or PC, the Carmen connects to the computer with a USB cable and records and stores content from over 42,000 AM/FM and Internet-only radio stations streamed from around the world using Radio-Time's tuner. Users may then connect the portable Carmen to the vehicle's 12-volt socket and play back the stored audio library through the car stereo using an open FM channel or auxiliary (AUX) input.

It's an interim solution for bringing Internet radio into cars without needing a smartphone or constant wifi connection.

Carmen's user-friendly interface includes fast-forward, rewind, and skip functions. "The Carmen is all about further expanding Internet radio consumption to the car," Sigal said. "We designed Carmen with DVR in mind. It gives users access to local stations from across America and around the world – their music, news and talk radio – plus genres that you can't find anywhere on AM/FM for plug-and-play listening and enjoyment in any vehicle."

At \$59.99, the price is right...



Sound of success: Ferndale company is revolutionizing the way people enjoy radio

By Joe Szczesny

July 4, 2010

Jake Sigal created Livio Radio out of his office in the back bedroom of his Ferndale home in January 2008 and, by many measures, it is already a success.

His product has earned respectful reviews from audiophiles, it is distributed by a national company, Sears, and it has developed a loyal fan base. He now has 10 employees and annual sales of \$5 million and partners in Great Britain and China.

"We're building a brand that's known nationally and we hope to grow internationally and we're doing it from right here in Michigan," said Sigal, who says he now rides his bike "as often as I can" from his house to Livio's Ferndale offices.

Last month, Beringea, Michigan's largest private equity firm, furnished additional financial support and Livio rolled out its latest product — a device for bringing Internet radio into the automobile.

"The funding we have received will help us quickly grow our business, hire more staff and develop new products," Sigal said in a recent e-mail to followers of the company. "After two and a half years of hard work, with your support, we couldn't be happier seeing such strong growth. Teaming up with Beringea means more products and more places to buy our radios."

Sigal said the patent is now pending on the in-vehicle device for accessing Internet radio — The Carmen — and it will be available later this summer.

Livio's objective is to make Internet audio streams accessible to more people, in more places, according to the 28-year-old Sigal.

A lot of firms are dedicated to bringing on the latest technology. "They're like car tuners. They really don't care if it's complicated. They just want the best," he said.

Sigal, however, said Livio is dedicated to designing products that work fast without complicated menus. Livio developed the Livio Radio to let users listen to Pandora and NPR in the home with the same kind of controls found on an ordinary transistor radio.

"We're all about making things easy," Sigal said.

A Livio Radio costs about \$200 but it gives the owners unlimited access to music and sports from 16,000 different radio stations around the world, he said.

"A lot of people don't want to carry their laptop around with them when they want to listen to music," he said. "But you can put the Livio Radio anywhere like the kitchen." It also comes with a jack for headphones.

"You can listen to every kind of music. I like to listen to electronic music," said Sigal, who helped finance his engineering education by working as a DJ at various clubs around Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Sigal said he also loves music and led

the percussion section of Ohio University's marching band, while he was still in school.

"If you're interested in Afro-pop, you can find that," he said. "If you're interested in listening to the news from Japan just as if you're right in Japan, you can do that, too. It's great for niche music."

Besides its simplified controls, Livio Radio also has "all digital sound quality," he said.

"So if you want to listen to jazz or classical music, it's perfect because you don't get any static at all, which is a real advantage over AM or FM stations," said Sigal, adding the Livio Radio also can be hooked into a high-end sound system. "We use it our backyard when we have barbecues," he said.

The feedback also from customers is terrific, Sigal said. "Our experience has been very good. People like what we make."

Although Sigal once considered pursuing a career as a musician he also was drawn to the technical or behind the scenes side of the music business. After graduating from Ohio University, he went to work for Ion Audio, which makes electronic gear for musicians and DJs and for the home.

While at Ion, Sigal developed what is today one of the company's best known products — a turntable that can download vinyl records through a computer onto an MP3 player, thumb drive or CD.

The patent, however, belongs to Ion.

"That's about all I can say," he said.

The Audio Beat

On-the-Go Internet Radio with the Livio Radio Carmen

By The Audio Beat

July 6, 2010

Livio Radio's Carmen (\$59.95) is a unique device that gives travelers access to Internet radio in their cars. Compatible with the Mac or PC, Carmen connects to the computer via USB and, using its client software, records and stores content from over 42,000 AM/FM and Internet-only radio stations streamed from around the world. Carmen gets its power from the vehicle's 12-volt socket, and it plays back the stored content through their car's stereo via an open FM channel or an auxiliary input.

Carmen uses the same technology as the DVR, which changed TV watching, to record and store radio content. The unit's client software allows users to browse stations by genre, language, location or keyword, in addition to other common audio files, including music and podcasts. In the vehicle, Carmen's user-friendly interface includes fast-forward, rewind, and skip functions.

"Carmen is all about further expanding Internet radio consumption to the car," Livio Radio's founder and chief operating officer Jake Sigal said. "We designed Carmen with DVR in mind. It gives users access to local stations from across America and around the world -- their music, news and talk radio -- plus genres that they can't find anywhere on AM/FM for plug-and-play listening and enjoyment in any vehicle."



CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

Detroit and Southeast Michigan's premier business news and information website

BRIEFLY: Myine Electronics develops Internet radio for cars

By Nancy Kaffer

July 11, 2010

Ferndale-based Myine Electronics LLC has launched a new product: the Carmen portable Internet radio, designed for cars, according to a statement.

The Carmen is a portable device and accompanying client software that records up to 45 hours of AM/FM and Internet-only radio streams for playback. The device connects to a computer via a USB port, and to a vehicle through a 12-volt socket, broadcasting over an FM channel or through the audio system's auxiliary input. The Carmen stores up to 45 hours of music and shows.

Stored media can also be loaded onto the Carmen via a Macintosh or PC.

Myine is the maker of Livio Radio, a standalone Internet radio device, and the Livio iPhone app.

The company reported \$1.1 million in revenue in 2009, and CEO Jake Sigal has said he expects roughly \$6 million in sales this year.

The company recently received its first round of venture capital funding from Farmington Hills-based Beringea LLC.

Earlier this year, Sigal was named one of Crain's 2010 class of 20 in their 20s.

An Interview With Jake Sigal, CEO of Livio Radio

By Grace Ellis

July 19, 2010

As the popularity of AM/FM radio slowly wanes, listeners crave the music and broadcasts they want without the hassle of commercial interruptions. Internet radio is a solution to the consumer dilemma of instant streaming, however, even Internet audio streams have issues of accessibility by tying the listener to a computer. In response to these problems, Jake Sigal, CEO of Livio Radio, simply has made Internet radio more available to consumers.

By founding Livio Radio in 2008, Jake Sigal has already established himself as an innovator and a visionary at the age of 28. He has launched over 20 successful products in to the market and is a member of CEA's Small Business Council. Prior to starting Livio, Sigal invented the original USB turntable, the first product designed to facilitate the conversion of vinyl records to CD or MP3 format. He is also listed as a co-inventor of the iDJ, an iPod-based mixing console.



Livio Radio lets users listen to NPR® and Pandora® in the home and they also have launched an iPhone application to make it easy to listen to Internet radio stations in the vehicle.

Why did you choose to focus your business around Internet streaming radios?



My focus has been for music and engineering/technology – it's in my blood. I worked through college as a nightclub DJ using vinyl and was the section leader of the OU 110 drumline. My first job after school was working to help bring vinyl into the computer for DJs. Then I took vinyl to CDs and iPods for my boomer parents through the USB Turntable I invented. Then I worked on satellite radio for the car. Internet radio is the latest "hot thing." Today we make Internet radios for the home and a Livio iPhone application for the car. Who knows what we'll be using in 10 years for audio but I know I'll be involved.

Your company has landed impressive partnerships with Pandora and NPR. How has working with other well established brands helped your business?

Pandora is the greatest music service in the world. Period. It's an honor to work with them. The NPR content and the staff at NPR are the real reason for the success of The NPR Radio by Livio. For both radios we developed the features and menus with Pandora and NPR employees. It has also been awesome to have both companies include us in their photo shoots, websites, blogs, and press interviews. For an (at the time) 26-year-old starting a new company, that's huge!

The Livio Car Internet Radio app for the iPhone was just launched last week. How do you see this changing the way people interact with music?

Pandora has changed everything with 2-way personal communication with a music service. Our app complements Pandora with live and local radio stations from around the world. Think of our app as the world's largest FM/AM antenna for your car. We're not the first company to create an Internet radio station with RadioTime for the iPhone. However the fact that our app is designed for use in the car and we are working with automakers and the aftermarket is a game changer for adding

42,000 live and local streams to your in-car radio.

What is the one piece of advice for starting a business that you would like to share with entrepreneurs?

Find a solution for a problem, not a problem for a solution.



One to Watch: Jake Sigal and Detroit Radio

By Karen Dybis

July 21, 2010

You know the question I'm actually getting tired of asking people? It goes something like this: "Why are you in (metro) Detroit?"

At first, when this blog started, I made that question a staple. I asked everyone I talked to why they were here or wanted to be here. Now, I'm thinking that is a moot point.

Now, I'm putting words in his mouth, but I'm guessing Livio CEO Jake Sigal is tired of it as well. He did not say that when I once again asked him that question...he is a gentleman, after all. But then I started watching interviews with him with every other news organization that has chatted him up, they ALL ask why the hell he's here.

Really, the rest of this blog post is about Sigal, Livio and entrepreneurship. But I'm telling you and the world now...I'm not asking "Why Detroit?" any more. (I might even start asking "Why NOT Detroit?" It's time, and you readers seem to be saying that as well.)

More on this bright young man and his cool Internet radio company.

But if you really want to know...he's here because he has a house in Ferndale. He doesn't want to sell it (and he might not be able to even if he wanted to...let's be real). But he also likes the talent pool in Metro Detroit, and Ferndale is an easy sell for getting new employees – it's relatively cool and has a good small-business vibe, he said. For a guy under the age of 30, that's important. The cost of living is great compared to Boston, North Carolina or California. And he can bike to work. And his wife likes to see him now and again, so the five-minute commute works for them.

And if you want to work with car companies, you have to be in and around Detroit. But that doesn't mean Sigal has had it easy; he's worked hard. He just happened to have a great idea and the right people to back him up.

"I think that Metro Detroit has all the right parts to help people make successful businesses but it requires the right entrepreneur to make it in a way that's going to be profitable," Sigal said.

To Sigal, Michigan is amazing with its business incubators, venture capitalists and overall desire to help the small business get a boost. He loves Ann Arbor SPARK, Oakland County's Automation alley and Detroit's TechTown. He loves the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center, which helped him develop his business plan. Or the small-business mentors at SCORE, which gave him tons of great advice.

Everybody around here wants more business start-ups. More original thinking and brain power. More job creation. The next Henry Ford-esque idea. Sigal is the kind of guy that personifies the next wave of entrepreneurship in Michigan – the stuff that will get us noticed in the right way (and not for eating raccoons, general public).

Some about Livio: Sigal's company (he's founder and COO) developed the Livio Radio to let users listen to Internet radio at home without being chained to a computer. The Livio machine also can hook up with Pandora and NPR through some special partnerships Sigal and staff have coordinated. Think of it as a Wi-Fi radio.

"I'm so passionate about music. The music I love isn't available on AM or FM radio. I like this specific electronic music, and I can't find that through mainstream sources. But on Internet radio there are something like 20 choices on this specific type

of music.... Having that accessibility to that music is what makes Internet radio so great,” Sigal said.

Livio and its pals also can do “live and local.” So if I upped and moved to Germany, I can still listen to my beloved Roberta Jasina on WWJ-AM every morning, he promised. I just might have to get a little more tech savvy, methinks.

Background: He’s from Columbus and graduated from Ohio University. Sigal got was a DJ in college – he loves the music – and got his first gig there. To borrow from his bio: Then he joined Stanton DJ as a product guy and engineer. After Stanton DJ, there was Numark. After Numark, there was XM at Delphi. After XM there was Myine Electronics. After Myine, he started Livio.

Oh, and he’s also an inventor. “Prior to founding Myine in 2007, Jake established himself in the world of consumer electronics by launching more than 16 successful products into the market. The innovator of the original USB turntable, Jake is also listed as the co-inventor of the iDJ, an iPod-based mixing console. He worked extensively on XM-brand satellite radio products, including the Delphi SKYFi3® XM® Satellite Radio.” Nice, huh?

“I didn’t lead the way – I’m one of many of dozens if not hundreds that focus on automotive based entertainment,” Sigal said. “The lesson learned here is: Don’t copy Livio radio. Copy the process. Find a problem and solve it.”

He identified the problem back when he was working for the car supplies and satellite radio dudes. More than 70 million people a week listen to online radio. He saw that as a huge opportunity – but there needed to be a way to make that accessible for people.

“The process that we took is what people can follow. Don’t create a technology or solution. Look at what does the world need to make something a little better. Don’t look at it as technology products, but something that makes rush hour on I-75 a little better,” he added. (Really, why does the I-75 slow down so much, especially around Oakland Mall? But I digress.)

So what does the future hold for this guy and this nifty product? “We’ve already been growing. And if we stay at this rate of growth, I’m going to be ecstatic,” Sigal said. He’s got Pandora, he’s got NPR and now he’s got Carmen (it’s a portable Internet radio “solution” where with Livo’s help you can load up its device with all your favorite stations and plug it into your car for traveling). And he’s working on getting all of it to you or the general public through major retailers like Sears and such. Look for it. It will be there soon.



Detroit's Livio Radio Tunes in to NPR, Pandora, and a Passion for Pleasing Customers

Howard Lovy

July 22, 2010

At the close of 2007, Jake Sigal had a choice to make. He was a product manager at automotive supplier Delphi's consumer electronics group, which manufactured XM Satellite Radio portable players. Then XM and Sirius Satellite Radio announced a merger and Sigal "saw the writing on the wall."

"I always wanted to start a business," says Sigal. "My background is in consumer electronics and there's not a lot of consumer products that are made here in Detroit, and I figured, hey, it's time to start my own company."

So, he took a buyout at Delphi and in January 2008, in the guest bedroom of his home in suburban Ferndale, MI, Sigal launched what would become Livio Radio, a developer of standalone Internet radios. His flagship products are two specially branded radios—one plays National Public Radio programs and the other plays Pandora, the personalized online radio service that announced yesterday it has hit the 60-million-user mark.

Just a little more than two years later, Sigal has 10 employees, has moved the business out of his home and into an office down the street, and is the recipient of an investment from Beringea, one of Michigan's largest venture capital firms.

The secret, Sigal says, is really no secret at all. It's just to focus on what customers tell you they want, rather than trying to create a need where none existed. People want to listen to Internet radio without being tethered to their computers. Livio provides that service.

"We don't invent technologies here," Sigal says. "We only make the current technologies that people love more accessible."

Sigal is 28 years old, but looks even younger, with an athletic frame—he bikes to work every day—and a faux hawk hairstyle. We sat down a few weeks ago in his office, along with a newly hired marketing person who comes to Livio straight from the Detroit Red Wings. Up until now, though, Livio has not really needed any marketing help. Even before the Beringea investment, word of the products has spread through customers and early media coverage that occurred kind of organically.

NPR approached Sigal at the Consumer Electronics Show in 2009 and asked if it was possible to create a specially branded, standalone radio that can access all of the thousands of NPR shows and member-station programs like Morning Edition, Car Talk, and Science Friday. NPR is undergoing a big digital-strategy push now, and it sees easy access to all its programming as an integral part of it. Sigal was amazed that, after only a year in business, he was "being approached by the gold standard in news."

With all the NPR programming out there, it might have been tempting to create something pretty complicated. But Sigal's emphasis has always been on listening to what the customers want. And what NPR wanted was something simple that a user of any age—or level of technical savvy—could use.

So, what Sigal came up with the NPR Radio, a \$199 device that sets up in minutes and has an exclusive NPR menu that allows users to easily find, search, and bookmark NPR stations, podcasts, and content by topic or by program. And like all Livio products, it also connects users to more than 16,000 Internet radio stations.

He applied the same philosophy to Livio's Pandora Radio. The device, also \$199, provides easy access to Pandora's system

for creating radio stations customized to a user's likes and dislikes, and is the only one with Pandora's logo on the front and dedicated thumbs-up, thumbs-down rating system buttons right on the front panel.

The question he asks himself as he designs the radios: Can his mom use it?

"What does that mean to my mom? It means that if she's listening to her Mick Jagger station and a Frank Zappa song comes on that she's not really crazy about, she can give it the thumbs-down and it learns from that without her having to go into a menu system," he says.

This being Detroit, of course, the next phase is transferring Internet radio into the car. A couple of months ago, Livio released Carmen—a \$59.99 DVR-style product that plugs into your computer and downloads Internet radio programming real-time, then plugs into your car's cigarette lighter and plays it back. Carmen only records from live Internet radio stations, so no Pandora. However, individual NPR stations do have live Internet streaming that can be recorded. Yes, there's also a \$5 Livio iPhone app that works in your car, but Sigal argues that the Carmen is better for those who might be driving, say, up to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan through some areas of questionable AT&T coverage.

Sigal keeps in touch with customers on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, and through e-mail lists, and they help dictate future products and features. "It's a very, very important part of our business," he says. Livio is developing an iPad application now. One customer wrote in and asked for a sleep timer. "That's a great idea," Sigal told him. "Let's do that."

When Sigal started out, it was the worst time in Michigan to be trying to raise money. But, he says, after he met Beringea through a mutual friend—Josh Linkner, founder of the Michigan Internet marketing success story ePrize—the VC firm got to know Livio over the course of eight months and saw the young company's drive.

"I think the secret is passion," Sigal says. "I think that my business partners, and more importantly our customers, our end users, they understand that we love radio, we love music, you know, everyone that works here loves music and it's part of our lives. And we're taking that passion and putting it into products."



Jonathan Takiff: Internet radio goes portable

By Jonathan Takiff

August 11, 2010

THE GIZMO: Internet Radios To-Go from Grace, Pure, Logitech and Livio.

YOU CAN TAKE IT WITH YOU: There's a world of audio entertainment pleasures awaiting you on the Internet. And this summer, you can take it with you - into the back yard, out onto the front stoop, even in the car.

Today, we're surveying three Internet radios from Grace, Pure and Logitech that run on batteries as well as AC power.

Small and sweet-sounding, each begs "pick me up and I'll pick you up, too," with the best music, news and podcasts to be had from here to Zanzibar.

First things first. You'll need to register/activate the device online. Then you'll need to keep this Internet communicator within range of that wireless (Wi-fi) home modem/router that you initially installed for use with your computers.

Also on our reviewing table today is a just-out product from Livio Radio that lets you enjoy Internet audio content in the car. It's quite the liberator, too.

A STATE OF GRACE: The small, cube-shaped Grace Allegro (about \$150) looks nicest on a nightstand and (like the others in our survey) offers alarm clock functions. There's no handle on this portable, drat, but it's easily carried around in one hand.

The Allegro is the only model surveyed that works with conventional batteries - either six AA alkalines or Nickel Metal Hydride rechargables (about \$15) good for eight hours of listening or three days of timekeeping between charges.

Grace claims access to "17,000 free radio stations worldwide" working with channel aggregator Reciva. The Allegro also supports the 120-channel Internet version of Sirius/XM (if you're a subscriber), the popular freebie Pandora, and (like the other Internet portables) will stream music stored on your computer, with a bit of doing.

Top-mounted controls including five channel preset buttons, a large snooze button and a grooved metal dial that's way too slippery. The Allegro comes with a decent remote control, or you can control the radio (like the Logitech Squeezebox) from a dedicated iPhone or iPod Touch application.

Grace Allegro's monaural speaker cranked to 96 decibels, but going to the limit makes the battery door rattle. There's a headphone jack (as on the other radios) for listening louder.

PURE PLEASURE: At once retro and freshly styled, the Pure Evoke Flow is the quirky little British-designed Internet radio charmer I've learned to love and tote around the most, to tune in radio faves like free-form KCRW in Santa Monica, Calif., TSF Jazz Paris and Zouk Radio from the West Indies.

The glossy black "piano finish" wooden cabinet, large round speaker and user-friendly metal handle (it doubles as a snooze bar) ooze "classic portable radio."

Meanwhile, the bright OLED display screen, combination of touch and knob controls and branching menus feel quite modern.

While all content is accessible on screen, the free, online Pure Lounge service (www.thelounge.com) expedites setting up the portable with favorite music channels (including ALL THINGS British), podcasts (I like *N.Y. Times Tech Talk*) and on-demand environmental sounds - from an Arctic blizzard to wind chimes - meant to lull you to sleep.

This radio doesn't offer Pandora or Sirius/XM, but stands alone in having a very good FM radio tuner, making the music maker useful almost everywhere, not just in Wi-fi zones.

The Pure Evoke Flow played warmly and sweetly to a room-filling 92 decibels. Jacks accommodate a second (stereo) speaker and external music source.

British charm has its price - the radio goes for a hefty \$229 plus \$59.95 for the custom rechargeable battery pack, good for about 15 hours of use after a fresh charge.

MOST LOGICAL: While my heart says keep it "Pure," my head says the Logitech Squeezebox Radio is the best portable Internet radio out there today.

For sure, it offers the *most* Internet music options - with extras like Rhapsody and Napster on-demand subscription services, Pandora, Slacker, Sirius/XM and the Live Music Archive.

A bright, full color screen, polished menu system and six preset buttons make station and artist access a snap.

And the Squeezebox Radio plays best and loudest of the bunch, hitting 108 decibels without a hint of distortion.

My only complaint - the thing just doesn't feel much like a portable, despite its small size and scoop-out hand grip in the back of the cabinet.

While introduced as a \$199 table radio last November, the Squeezebox Radio can now be had for as little as \$150. And the new \$50 accessory bundle adds a small remote control and a custom battery pack good for six hours of use per charge.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN?: While some pundits talk about Internet radio coming to the car environment "soon," Livio Radio makes it possible today, with a clever device called the Carmen.

First connect this palm-sized gizmo to your home computer, using the supplied USB cable. Open the automatically-loaded app, clicking on PC or Mac version. Carmen now leads you to Livio's home page menu with a claimed 42,000 Internet radio stations (though I couldn't locate some of my faves, like BBC 6 and Brazil's Radio Nacional FM 96.1). Pick one and 10 seconds later the channel will start recording onto the device.

You can listen along on the computer or "mute." Change the Internet channel and that one now records as a separate file. Up to 45 hours of content can be recorded in this fashion - or by moving over MP3 music from your computer.

Now plug the Carmen directly into your car's 12-volt socket and start listening. Carmen's onboard FM transmitter beams the music wirelessly to an open channel slot (where available) on your FM radio. Or, for guaranteed static-free results, connect an included cable from Carmen to the Aux input on your car stereo system.

A listener can jump ahead on a channel in 15-minute increments, using buttons on the device and the more elaborate, credit card-sized remote control. Music fades in and out smoothly during transitions.

Not too shabby for \$59.99, I'm thinking. And what a wicked competitive move from a CEO (Jake Sigal) who used to manage XM satellite radio development for Delphi. More info at www.livioradio.com.

TECH TIME: Carmen audio player allows transfer of Internet broadcasts into your car

By Matt Myftiu
August 26, 2010

The Internet is everywhere you go these days ... on our phones, our televisions and more.

Now the Internet, specifically its radio content, can be captured on a device and listened to, at your leisure, in the car – eliminating the need to be listening when content is broadcast live on the Web.

That is courtesy of the Carmen car audio player, the newest product from Ferndale-based Livio Radio.

The Carmen is, in layman's terms, a storage device which allows the transfer of Internet broadcasts – whether it be music, talk shows or anything else online – to a vehicle. It's not the first time the Internet has made its way to the automobile, but it's an idea that might gain more steam than previous efforts, due to its simplicity and affordability.

The Carmen bridges the gap for people who don't have a smartphone with access to Internet content, but want to hear content from Internet sources on the go.

Physically, the Carmen is small and can be stored in your console or glove box, if you choose to do so. The device can hold up to 2GB of content (about 45 hours), which is loaded via USB cable from your computer to the Carmen, where it is then stored. In addition to radio content, songs can be loaded to the Carmen via MP3 files.

The Carmen is very easy to use, from the process of placing content onto the device, to the initiation of playback in the car.

As far as finding the music online, you can simply tune to your favorite radio stations, as I did, or you can browse the Web for stations ... by categories such as language, location or genre. It's also helpful if you have a favorite radio show that you are not awake to hear. Just record overnight and you can listen to it on the way to work the next morning.

Helping the simplicity of the device – which shouldn't cause too much confusion, even among technologically ungifted people – is the fact that the user does not have to install any software on their computer. The software is attached to the Carmen and launches upon the USB connection, so you just close out and eject it every time you load new content. It is compatible with both Macs and PCs.

Once content is loaded, you just plug the Carmen into the car's 12-volt adaptor slot, aka the lighter slot, and via the auxiliary cord if your car has one. If your vehicle does not have the auxiliary cord, you will simply tune to the station that is displayed on the device.

After this basic setup, you can then listen to the music you recorded, and have to ability to switch between tracks and stations you've recorded, fast forward by 15 minutes at a time.

The Carmen comes with a small remote control, though you can also maneuver through your recordings by using the



buttons directly on the device.

As always, users should be careful if they using the Carmen while on the road. Make sure you're safe, and not endangering traffic, as you would with any device in the car. I would advise against fiddling with the Carmen, or its remote, while driving. In fact, I never really used the remote, instead learning the controls on the unit itself.

There are some minimal requirements for use of the Carmen, but most computers will comply. The computer loading content to the Carmen must have RAM of 256MB or higher, and the operating system must be Windows XP or higher for PCs, and at least OSX 1.5 for Macs.

The sound quality of the music heard through the Carmen was very impressive when played back in the car, with no hint of being inferior due to the Internet sources.

One downside to the Carmen is the constant need to bring it in the house and back to the car as content is added, but that's a minor inconvenience if you really want to hear what you've recorded. Also, the LCD screen is small and somewhat hard to read from a distance, but you don't really need to read it much anyway, and you shouldn't be doing it when you're on the road anyway.

Another reason the Carmen may sell is its agreeable price. The official price is \$59.99, but a quick twirl around the Internet (Amazon, etc.) will reveal it for closer to \$40.

The bottom line: If you listen to music or talk radio on the Internet, and have ever wanted to be able to take it with you, the Carmen is an innovative device that is worth your attention. It's very easy to use and fulfills a need in the market no other product specifically addresses. With a price that's hard to beat, it should see some success, and is another way that Internet radio is migrating to the car.

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Gadgetsteria

Review: LivioRadio's "Carmen"

By Mike

August 29, 2010

In the year 2010, with all of the new fangled means of listening to music, radio is dead. Right? Mp3 players, iPods, smartphones, and web equipped cars are quickly eating into the realm that terrestrial radio once played. With so many more efficient means of consuming music, we have to ask: Why even bother with radio?

Some people simply like the more "social" or "personal" aspect a human DJ brings. For others, it's a matter of still not possessing a device to play their own music. And then there's people whom feel radio (and music in general) isn't that important in their lives, and as such, how they get music doesn't really matter.

But I think I've found one little gadget that could make the radio relevant and fun again — The Carmen, by LivioRadio. Hop inside to see just how one seemingly extinct technology can be made so relevant again...



Software and General Impressions

Now, right off the bat you're probably already wondering how on earth someone could make a gadget that would make old as dirt, "terrestrial radio" useful once again. At least where I live, the radio is full of crap. Plain and simple. There's a good station here or there; don't get me wrong. But one thing bothers me as I'm sure many of you — they (the stations) play the same basic songs over and over and over again long after it's become tiring. That's why more and more people are moving towards mp3 players and streaming web radio/services. It's easier, faster, and much more customizable from an end user standpoint.

I'll admit, when I was contacted about the Carmen, I was skeptical that I would find any reason to recommend it. I mean, I'm a huge music buff. New, emerging music rarely makes it onto the airwaves these days it seems. Again, it's just something that the internet excels at. Not to mention, I'm fairly proficient when it comes to technology (just a little bit), so I don't have any problems finding online radio and recording the music played for later consumption. So why waste my time on a device that is focused on "radio"? But the Carmen impressed me.

To be truthful, the Carmen isn't so much a terrestrial radio tool as it is more a web radio tool. Though, plenty of terrestrial radio stations have websites that allow for online streaming. With that said, the Carmen and other similar services/devices can tap into that stream and essentially breathe new life into your typical terrestrial radio station.

Upon firing up the software for the first time (Mac and Windows compatible), you're met with a simple, single click action to launch the software. From there, you are instantly thrust into the meat of the product, able to browse through countless genres as well as search by radio station too! Discovering a new band that you haven't heard of before is quite easy. The biggest plus for me was that within 10 seconds of opening up the Carmen software, I had already saved 4-5 German rock



radio stations added to my favorites list.

Granted, listening to foreign stations is nothing new, and honestly, it's pretty easy to find online. On that same note, recording online radio isn't too entirely difficult either. All it takes is some cheap software (I'm sure you can find free options too). But what the Carmen excels at is being extremely intuitive. No, it might not have as many options as some would like or those whom are use to the wide range that the encumbered internet offers. Nevertheless, the Carmen has more than enough genres and stations to keep even more hardcore music connoisseurs busy.

Hardware

Now toss in the fact that actually recording your new favorite stations is another single-click movement. Speaking of recording, the Carmen device holds a solid 2GB of audio. At first, I thought it sounded a tad low. But when you do the number crunching, it ends up equalling roughly 45 hours of recorded radio. As easy as it is to record and re-record radio stations to the Carmen, I doubt many users would go more than a day or two without recording some new content anyway.

Another piece to the puzzle that makes the Carmen pretty impressive is the unit and accompanying remote themselves. The actual USB/Car adapter piece houses the 2GB or storage, display, and navigation buttons, and isn't any larger than your standard car adapter. The remote is equally tiny, roughly the size of a few long sticks of gum wedged together. Being that you're listening to pre-recorded radio, the remote comes in handy for skipping ahead of those pesky ads that plague terrestrial radio.



Sound Quality

The final and perhaps most important aspect of the Carmen is audio quality. If you're going to build a fantastic little device that makes recording and replaying radio so much fun and easy to use, you had better not skimp on audio quality. In my week+ of testing to and from my 9 to 5 job, I have to say that the Carmen doesn't disappoint. Yeah, it's broadcasted over relatively weaker FM frequencies, and as such, will suffer from minor interference from time to time in more populated cities (with lots of radio stations fighting for airwaves). But the Carmen is far from the worst FM-based audio device I've heard.

LivioRadio Account and iPhone app

One other aspect of the Carmen is that of LivioRadio accounts. Creating a LivioRadio account isn't mandatory, but it adds to the overall experience and can make it more enjoyable. Much like other popular web radio/streaming services, a LivioRadio account allows you to store your radio listening history and favorites and sync those into the desktop application. If you have a multiple computer household, easily syncing music histories is a huge plus. Further expanding the fun, LivioRadio's iPhone app provides all of the web radio discovery/streaming features in a smaller even more portable package.

Conclusion and Closing Thoughts

Coming away from my time with the Carmen, I'll have to admit that I'm pretty impressed by the overall package. It's small, extremely easy to set up and use, and sounds pretty decent to boot. The entire package will set you back \$59.99, which is a tad high for what I'd call simple repackaging of free web radio services. But at the same time, doing it a-la-carte by yourself can end up costing you too — usually in the name of some software to record online audio. Then you have to add in the cost of a stand alone mp3 player to hold the audio as well as a car adapter to charge your device and you've already quickly reached or sailed past the asking price of the Carmen.

It all comes down to what your needs are. If you're really into radio and more "social" sources of music as apposed to simply dumping 30GB of music on an iPod, the Carmen will help you enjoy all of that web radio for a pretty affordable price. If not, then move along. Simple as that. From what I've seen, however, I can honestly say the Carmen made discovering new *radio* stations a rather surprising adventure.

Website: LivioRadio

Facebook: [Facebook.com/livioradio](https://www.facebook.com/livioradio)

Twitter: [Twitter.com/livioradio](https://twitter.com/livioradio)

The New York Times

Expect the World®

The NPR Radio by Livio

September 10, 2010



THE GOOD:

Wi-Fi radio optimized for listening to NPR content; provides access to thousands of Internet radio stations; stylish design; supports 802.11g Wi-Fi with WEP, WPA, and WPA2 security; hiccup-free wireless connectivity; headphone jack on front panel; auxiliary input for connecting an iPod.

THE BAD:

Average sound quality (mono speaker); doesn't support non-NPR podcasts or stream music from a PC.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

The sleek and beautifully designed NPR Radio by Livio is a talk-radio junkie's dream despite some missing extracurricular features and having average sound quality. © 2010 CBS Interactive Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



Cool Mobile Application – Livio Car Internet Radio

By Daisy

October 9, 2010



Listening music in your car while stuck in a rush hour traffic lightens the mood. Long hours of driving can be painfully boring without music as company and sometimes, music simply just makes our day.

But isn't music more enjoyable if it's for free?

Livio Car Internet Radio makes this possible! It is a free mobile application with 42,000 radio streams using 3G or edge data connection.

Livio Car Internet Radio is user-friendly and let's you share the station you love to your followers on twitter. It is really awesome!

The application is available for download now in the itunes store.

Grab it and say goodbye to your Satellite Radio Fees!



Livio Radio with Pandora Review

By Jeff Dorgay

October 13, 2010

Internet Killed the Radio Star

A creation of 28 year old former DJ (and the creator of the ion USB turntable), the Livio Radio is a cool desktop gadget that I'm not quite sure anyone needs at first glance, but hey, 5 million people have bought iPads in the last few months, so let's continue.

For \$200, you get a tabletop radio about the size of a Tivoli with a 3 inch ported speaker. Sound quality is about what you'd expect from a 3-inch speaker, but that's not the point. Thoroughly anticipating the demise of terrestrial radio, there is no FM tuner built into the Livio. Yep, this little jewel only receives internet radio stations and is optimized to work with the Pandora music service. It even takes advantage of Pandora's "thumbs up and thumbs down" service with two buttons so you can rate the selections that magically arrive at your Livio. As Pandora is completely free of charge and pays no royalties to the music industry, it could be questionable as to how long it will stay afloat as a business model, at least as a "music for free" source.



The Livio Radio with Pandora Sells at an SRP of \$199.99

Fortunately, the Livio has more capability than this. It can also access other Internet radio stations using the Recieva network, giving you access to about 20 thousand Internet radio stations. It will also share music on a PnP filesharing network, which just happens to be where I have a few thousand albums stored on my Naim HDX SD music server. This proved to be the format I found most useful, though if you have a large iTunes library on your Mac or PC, you can also get a PnP client for your computer, so that you can access your digital files that way as well. There's a happy meal remote in the box and the instruction manual is well written, so most people should be able to get the Livio rocking within about five minutes or less.

How to Connect

The Livio includes an internal wireless Ethernet antenna, or if need be you can hardwire it into your network with the supplied Ethernet jack which I thought was a nice touch. iPod users can also jack their iPods into the Livio, using the proper iPod cable and feeding into a 1/8-inch stereo jack. The big bonus is the stereo output jack on the rear panel that allows you to connect the Livio to a pair of powered speakers.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the review, the sound quality is really no big deal and is pale in comparison to the Tivoli's, but



they don't access internet radio, so one pays a price for access. If I were buying the Livio for this reason alone, I'd pass. The sound quality just doesn't warrant spending \$200 for this thing, as you can get a decent pair of powered computer speakers and run Pandora on your computer.

But the real power in this device is the connectivity. As a mini music server combined with the ability to connect your iPod and then use powered speakers, the Livio is a bargain as an internet tuner/preamp. Combined with a \$350 pair of Audio Engine A5 speakers, this makes for a rocking compact stereo system. I was thoroughly impressed with the sound quality at the high level output and could easily see something like this to fit well in a dorm room, apartment or garage system.

Headphone sound is also quite good and was able to drive my Sennheiser 650's without issue. Again, this could be a great bedside hi-fi system that also includes an alarm clock with five different functions.

The Definitive Word

So in the end, the real strength of the Livio is its connectivity. The sound quality may or may not justify the purchase to you, however the folks at Livio offer a money back guarantee if you don't find it satisfactory, so you can't lose. In Pandora terms, as a stand-alone radio, thumbs down, as part of a system, thumbs up. If you've already got a music server in your house or really enjoy Pandora, the Livio could just end up being the coolest thing under your Christmas tree (or Hanukkah bush) this holiday season.



Internet radio, no computer

Dial up your favorite station using your Wi-Fi

By Kevin Hunt

November 18, 2010

In a holiday rush, where do you go for an instant “Jingle Bells” variety-pack playlist with Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Brad Paisley and, for that special moment, Alvin and the Chipmunks?

Or seasonal favorites streamed from Barbuda, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein and Vanuatu?

Straight to the Internet, of course. This holiday season, though, many people will leave their computers and laptops for stand-alone Internet devices that look like traditional radios but tap into the thousands of streaming-music stations around the world.

Among the candidates are two from Grace Digital Audio, a just-out table radio (GDI-IR2550P, \$170) and a component tuner (GDI-IRDT200, \$220). Each offers access to more than 50,000 Internet stations and podcasts, roll-your-own Pandora stations, for-hire services like Sirius and, over your home network, the entire music library stored on your computer.

The only requirement is Internet access, preferably Wi-Fi, so the radio can be placed anywhere, just like old-style radios. The table radio, with its built-in speaker and multiple alarms, will likely reside in a kitchen, den or on a bedroom nightstand. The component tuner, which has no speaker, belongs in a stereo or home-theater system.

Grace’s radios use the Reciva Internet Radio chipset and its vast library of Internet stations, but the tiny, antiquated four-line, monochromatic display is difficult to read.

That’s one of the reasons I still prefer Logitech’s Squeezebox Radio, even though it might be the buggiest of the buggy Internet radios, because of its bigger, iPod-like full-color display. Grace calls the table radio the only tabletop with one-button control of Pandora’s thumbs-up, thumbs-down and play-pause features.

The Livio Radio (livioradio.com), a more attractive, retro-style table radio with the Reciva chipset, lacks only Pandora’s play/pause, a feature whose usefulness merits no special exclamation points from this user.

The Grace’s tiny screen, empty-box feel (it weighs only 3 pounds), block-icon controls, flimsy scroll/select dial and average sound from the 4-inch speaker do not make a good first impression.

It’s a distinct step back from the previous Grace Internet radio I auditioned, the portable Wi-Fi-only Allegro.

A remote control helps — the Squeezebox Radio’s remote is part of an extra-cost accessory package — but this otherwise mundane package is revitalized by a new iPhone/iPod Touch remote control application. This is a full remote-control app, from on/off to scrolling through station presets, a “my history” of recent station visits, volume adjustments, scheduling up to five alarms and skipping from Internet radio to Pandora to home-network media sharing.

The virtual remote — a polished app, even if it is susceptible to freezes and crashes — resolves the biggest weakness of the component tuner. With Touch in hand, I could bypass the tuner’s sluggish user interface and no longer strain to see the tiny screen.

The component tuner aims much higher than the table model. The serious listener will like digital-audio options (Toslink

and digital coaxial) for one-cable connection to a home-theater's audio-video receiver or to an external digital-to-analog converter to further upgrade the tuner's sound quality.

For standard, low-bit-rate Internet streaming, the digital connection probably won't help sound quality much. But music stored on USB drives or SD cards is welcome.

Grace also built in a standard, over-the-air FM tuner that, even with a simple wire antenna, immediately stands out as an upgrade from an audio-video receiver's tuner.

One feature worth noting: From a cold start to locking in a John Coltrane station in My Pandora took 32 seconds, which included connecting to the home network. Activating a "wireless standby" feature, which leaves the Internet connection in always-on mode, reduced the startup time to 7 seconds.

I'd still take the Logitech Squeezebox Radio and the Livio models over the Grace table radio, but the component radio will make a nice gift-wrapped addition to any home theater looking for a bigger share of the networked world.

khunt@tribune.com

What: Grace Digital Audio GDI-IR2550P table radio, GDI-IRDT200 component tuner, gracedigitalaudio.com

Price: \$170, \$220

Hot: Internet-connected radios, no computer required. Free iPhone/iPod Touch remote-control app. Media sharing on home network for both Windows and Mac systems. Component tuner includes over-the-air FM tuner.

Not: Tiny, one-color displays. Table radio looks, feels cheap.

Kurt The CyberGuy

Free TV stream, at least for now

The picture looks bright if you are on the receiving end of a new broadcast television streaming service. Streams of live television networks originating from Los Angeles and a variety of international channels remain on filmon.com during a lawsuit filed by TV networks, including ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox, that called the rebroadcast of their signals illegal and in violation of copyrights.

The product: Filmon.com, which claims to be the first live broadcast TV high-def stream for free across your phone, laptop and just about any device with an Internet connection.

The pitch: An effort to entice customers into a \$9.95 package for TV streams on the month-and-a-half-old Web startup. We tested filmon.com as instructed on an iPad, BlackBerry and an iPhone to see how it works.

The trial: There is no app involved. Instead, filmon.com directs you to log on to its Web site via your portable device's browser. In a matter of seconds, you should be able to watch every major television network in great clarity. There is no special software to download unless you want to watch TV on a PC and laptop.

The verdict: Wow. Filmon.com performed extremely well. There were moments when either the service or my wireless connection caused the video to freeze, but other video streaming services could take cues from the design, which made it easy to tune into a number of programs for free. I wish the service was not enmeshed in a legal fight, because this is how you would wish to watch TV on the go.

The rating: 4 out of 5, very good

Follow The CyberGuy, Kurt Knutsson, at twitter.com/cyberguy

THE OAKLAND PRESS

'Tis the season for holiday tech gifts; and here's your guide

By Matt Myftiu

November 24, 2010

Livio Radio

Through Christmas, Oakland Press readers can take 40 percent off Livio Radio products. Log onto livioradio.com and use the discount code `oak40` when ordering.

Products from the Ferndale-based Livio Radio, which focuses on providing access to Internet radio, include:

- The Carmen, which allows you to record music and any other Internet content to a small device, then plug it into your car and listen to it when you have the time. It lists at \$59.99.
- The Livio Radio featuring Pandora, which lets you broadcast music from Pandora Radio and thousands of other Internet radio stations into your entire home, wirelessly, even without having a computer at home. The list price is \$199.99.
- Another Livio Radio machine is focused more on National Public Radio stations, and also has a list price of \$199.99.



Audio4cast

Santa's Shopping List

November 30, 2010

If you're trying to think of a creative gift for someone this Christmas, streaming devices could be the way to go. Everyone's buzzing about Pandora, and I find that when the topic comes up most people are interested in hearing about other ways to listen as well. Here's a rundown of some options that are getting nice reviews.

Livio Radio. These radios are essentially plug and play Internet radio devices. You turn them on, they find the Internet and in a few minutes you're streaming your favorite station. Pick a model that's branded for Pandora or NPR, or one that isn't (either way you can tune in thousands of stations). CNET and others give it high marks.

Chumby. This cute cube is really an Internet radio and more – it's actually a tabletop internet ready device, designed to be a digital photo frame and alarm clock that also allows you to listen online, check news and weather, watch videos, play games. Sony liked it so much they licensed its dashboard for their own Sony Dash.

Motorola T505. How about a bluetooth device that enables streaming from your iPhone to your fm car radio? There are several, my husband uses this one and cancelled his Sirius XM subscription over a year ago with no regrets. Now he streams Pandora and other stations to his car stereo with this device. It clips to your visor, tells you where to tune in, and is very easy to use.

Apple TV. In case you haven't read about Apple's new AirPlay technology, it's all about sending streams from handheld devices to home stereo equipment and it's getting a lot of praise. The Apple TV costs just 99 bucks and it's getting great reviews for easily connecting your iPhone, iTouch, iPad to your television or home stereo.

Give streaming music to everyone this year – it's a hot gift that will make them happy and grow the user base at the same time...

In the interest of full disclosure I'd like to point out that I work with Livio Radio as a consultant. And I listen to one too!

ESPN Holiday Gift Guide



Livio Radio

By Mike Philbrick
ESPN.com

There's nothing greater than watching your favorite team beat its biggest rival. Actually, there is one thing, and that's reveling in the loser's misery via local sports call-in shows. That's where the radios from Livio come in. See, it's a subscription-free radio that connects to the Internet and filters more than 20,000 stations that also broadcast on their websites. Search by country, state, genre -- whatever you want. For example, if you're an Ohio State fan, go ahead and click on Michigan, then sports, and enjoy the Rich Rod-fueled despair.

\$199.99

www.livioradio.com

The Province

Carmen's the cutest of conduits

By Lowell Conn

December 3, 2010

The Carmen Car Audio Player from Livio Radio is innovative and paradigm busting, and it may just become a footnote in five years. An FM transmitter that plugs into the cigarette lighter adapter, Carmen has an auxiliary port to accommodate an iPod or MP3 player to transmit tunes to the car stereo.

But the selling point is built-in software that connects to the Internet via a PC and can record content from the 40,000-plus FM/AM and Internet radio stations that can be heard over the Web. Users record a stream onto the Carmen for playback exclusively in the car.

One day, radio transmission to the vehicle will likely be derived from the Internet in light of its limitless capacity (where AM and FM bands have a finite ceiling). Carmen does not provide users with real-time access to Internet radio, only allowing Internet recording for car playback. But it is an intermediary device that will serve us well until true revolution arrives. \$60; visit livioradio.com.

Slow trickle option: One would think a brand-new car battery would not get drained by a dome light left on for a few days -- or at least I did.

And so there's a device such as Ctek's MULTI US 3300, which holds a full charge for months and will power up a bled-dry car or motorcycle battery.

Depending upon the battery size, this device takes anywhere from two hours to an entire day to provide a full charge, and there are different settings to suit the various targets.

While I'm not entirely sure why somebody would use a battery charger that takes hours instead of calling CAA and getting a fix in one, my role is simply to present the device to readers who might then pass judgment on their own. \$75; visit www.ctek.com.



Internet Radios Are Stocking Stuffers

By Leslie Stimson

December 12, 2010

Three Internet radios from U.K. designer Pure were to be available in the United States for pre-order at Pure.com in November.

U.K. radio designer Pure describes Evoke Flow as a kitchen radio. The wireless portable unit features FM with RBDS. The company says the unit, which lists for \$199, gives consumers access to digital content from almost anywhere.

Pure is introducing three Internet radios in the United States this year.

The bedside Internet and FM radio Siesta Flow features touch-sensitive controls, up to 365 alarm settings and a USB PowerPort, which provides power for USB accessories. A Wi-Fi connection lets you listen to Internet radio, podcasts and Pure sounds or stream music from a computer. The Siesta Flow lists for \$99.

For those who want to take their radio camping or to a picnic, the aluminum surround and rubberized seal of the Oasis Flow combines Internet connectivity with portability. The rechargeable Internet and FM radio lists for \$249.

The Sangean RCR-8WF Wi-Fi Internet radio has an LCD display large enough to show the time and other icons while having station and song information displayed below. The “no-tip, no-slip” design is designed for bedside use. Two programmable alarms can wake a user to a “kind” buzzer or a favorite Internet or FM station. The user can set a nap timer from 10 to 90 minutes; and the unit’s sleep timer goes up to 3.25 hours. The Sangean can play MP3 files that are stored on a PC or file server. Features include Internet time, external Wi-Fi antenna for best reception, FM RDS, five presets, stereo headphone jack and line-input jack. It uses Reciva Internet radio technology. The model costs \$199.95 at C. Crane’s website.

Grace Digital Audio is shipping a Wi-Fi Internet tabletop radio featuring Pandora. The GDI-IR2550p features one-button access to the thumbs up/down song selection and play/pause functions. Listeners can skip, play, pause and bookmark songs from the remote and front-control panel. The unit is available at www.gracedigitalaudio.com and www.amazon.com for around \$170.

The Livio Radio featuring Pandora offers that service’s “thumbs up, thumbs down” controls on the front and via remote, helping users customize the music and programming. If you have a power source and a Web connection, the unit connects quickly and plays some 11,000 Internet radio stations through its own speaker, without needing access to a computer interface to operate, according to the maker. The Livio Radio lists for \$199.99 at the company’s Web site.

The new NPR Radio by Livio, which the manufacturer and pubcaster say is the first branded NPR consumer electronics device, is an Internet radio that features NPR stations, programs and content in a special NPR menu. The menu allows users to search, find and bookmark their NPR stations, podcasts and content, by topic or by program. In addition to approximately 800 NPR stations, the unit features the Reciva database of Internet stations and receives an additional 16,000 Internet streams.

While you don’t need to have a computer to use the NPR Radio by Livio, you must have an Internet connection with a wireless router (or an available Ethernet port for a wired connection). The radio lists for \$199 from livioradio.com, \$159.95 at C.Crane.com or \$180 at NPR.org and just over \$130 at Amazon.com.



Top Holiday Gifts for Music Lovers

By Shibani Joshi

December 15, 2010



What are this year's hottest and most cutting-edge new electronic items and tech toys? FOX Business Network's Shibani Joshi will be spotlighting them for you all week long in a special series called "2010 Holiday Gadget Guide."

While there are thousands of gadgets on the market, we are going to give you a first-hand look at some of the year's best products made by the industry heavyweights.

(Check out FOXBusiness.com's full holiday-shopping guide coverage.)

2010 Holiday Gadget Guide: Wednesday's Featured Tech - Sound Effects:

No. 3. Livio Radio -- \$149-\$199.99

Available at: <https://shop.livioradio.com/>

In a nutshell: This is called a great gift for traditional radio lovers who are "non geeks." Livio looks like a normal radio device, but taps into limitless streaming content without any need to access computers or attach music players. Users also get unlimited access to Pandora Internet radio and over 20,000 Internet-only AM/FM global radio stations, all in a retro-looking package.

Big Selling Points:

- Unlimited Access to Pandora Internet radio
- Access to over 20K radio stations including AM, FM, Internet stations
- No access to computer necessary because of built in Wi-Fi connections
- Also works with an Ethernet connection
- Unique design
- Ease of use
- High quality audio
- Portable and mobile

What's missing:

- Single speaker has its drawbacks
- Must be plugged in, no batteries
- Doesn't support podcasts or streaming music from a PC
- An expensive hardware piece just for internet radio

THE HUFFINGTON POST

On the Culture Front: Last Minute Holiday Gift Guide

By Chris Kompanek

December 20, 2010

If you're like me, you usually procrastinate about your holiday shopping to the last possible moment in hopes of avoiding the insane crowds that overtake just about every area of the city and the equally oppressive holiday music that seems to be pumped in from the "heavens" above. Or, maybe you embrace the yuletide cheer and are in the homestretch of this "most wonderful time of year." Due to my own procrastination, this guide is woefully late for Chanukah (I apologize), but just in time for all those celebrating (tolerating) Christmas, Kwanzaa, and my personal favorite, Festivus. Below you'll find a collection of gifts (sent to me by kind publicists) to make any culture vulture on your list happy, many of which you can pick up around the city. Enjoy!

NPR Digital Radio \$199.99



This convenient gadget places over 800 NPR stations from around the country at your fingertips without having to worry about buying any kind of subscription. It's a perfect gift for the person on your list who would rather listen to the radio than watch TV but has been reluctant to get locked into a Sirius subscription. As an added bonus, it's small enough to fit just about anywhere.

Carmen Internet Radio Player Passes the 'Easy' Test

By Corey Deitz

The Bottom Line

Carmen provides an easy solution for downloading Internet streams into its 2 gigabyte memory by using a built-in software radio guide on your Mac or PC. Then, just detach from computer, plug into a 12-volt source in your car, and tune to an empty FM frequency. At \$59.99, Carmen is a frugal person's solution to getting Internet Radio into their vehicle.

Pros

- Easy way to get Internet streams into your vehicle
- Nothing to install, built-in software
- Included radio station guide is extensive
- Requires no installation on vehicle side
- Lightweight and small: fits in your pocket

Cons

- Carmen's built-in FM transmitter must be fairly close to vehicle's radio for best results
- Remote control must be fairly close to Carmen for best results

Description

- Carmen Internet radio player is a portable device you attach to your computer to download Internet radio for playback in car.
- Carmen is easy to use.
- Attach to computer to download Internet streams. Built-in radio guide allows for thousands of choices.
- Transfer to car, plug into 12-volt source (lighter), tune to unused local FM frequency, and playback recordings.
- Use Carmen's built-in FM transmitter or optional cable and coupler to plug into AUX input of your car's radio.
- Solves problem of getting Internet-based content into car, must be willing to spend time transporting back-and-forth
- MSRP will be \$59.99



Guide Review - Carmen Internet Radio Player Passes the 'Easy' Test

An 'Easy Button' for Internet Radio

Livio's Carmen Internet radio player for cars is a portable device which you attach to your computer to download Internet radio streams then playback in your vehicle. It comes with built-in software for Mac and PC which provides a radio guide giving the user access to thousands of AM/FM and Internet-only radio station programming.

Carmen is easy to use. I had a preview version with no manual and was quickly able to figure out how to download audio and play it back in my truck. It's kind of like a really pimped out thumb drive with a radio guide, teeny FM transmitter, and remote control.

From Computer to Car

I used the enclosed USB cable to attach Carmen to my computer and started the application. A guide popped which allowed me to browse stations by genre, language, location or keyword. After exploring for a couple of minutes, I chose an Internet-only station and clicked the record option. When I came back to my computer later, I had 3 hours of programming on Carmen and I was ready to go. Livio says it will "hold up to 45 hours of content". The product comes with a 2 gigabyte memory. Carmen will also store MP3 files.

Once in your car, put Carmen into any 12-volt adapter (like your lighter) and the LCD screen will light up. From there, use the remote control to fast-forward, rewind, and skip.

No Installation Necessary

Carmen has a tiny FM transmitter in it which will transmit your recorded content to your vehicle's radio. The included remote control allows you to pick which locally unused frequency you'd like to piggyback onto. For more quality-conscious users, there is a cable and coupler to plug into the AUX input of your radio.

Carmen solves the problem of getting Internet-based content into your vehicle but you have to be willing to spend just a little time transporting it back-and-forth from auto to computer. It's not the perfect solution for Internet radio that I eventually want but it is a solution.

When Carmen does actually go on sale (probably later this summer) the MSRP will be \$59.99.