



NEXO TURNING 40

This year, NEXO is marking its 40th anniversary. For the last 10 years, a strategic business unit of the globally dominant Yamaha Corporation of Japan, NEXO has consolidated its place as one of the world's leading elite manufacturers of sound reinforcement equipment of the highest specification. The company's pioneering technology, innovative designs and sonic excellence have enhanced live events across the globe for decades, gaining the respect and trust of sound professionals everywhere.

Founded in 1979 by Frenchman Eric Vincenot and Englishman Michael Johnson, NEXO designs all its ground-breaking sound reinforcement solutions in Paris, from which headquarters it has built an international network of more than 80 distributors as well as working with Yamaha sales subsidiaries and maintaining its own national sales operations in four countries. Always taking a distinctively independent approach to audio technology design, NEXO's engineering achievements can be recognised in a portfolio of patents. One of the first companies to promote line and tangent array designs, its compact GEO S8 Series became the world's best-selling line array system upon its launch in 2001, building on the market success of the classic point-source Alpha Series - launched in 1996 -

which, 23 years later, remains a much loved FOH choice. But, perhaps the most instantly recognisable NEXO product remains the PS Series, now 25 years old, and used at one time or another by virtually every sound engineer in the world.

The application of convergence-inspired design has resulted in such innovations as the NXAMP Series and 4x4 Powered TDControllers which provide full integration of loudspeaker and amplifier control, and console management of PA systems over the latest and most popular digital networking protocols.

Commercial achievements, such as a five-year run for the GEO T Series line array on Glastonbury's famous Pyramid Stage, installations of GEO Series loudspeakers in the Stade de France, Stade Roland Garros, Wimbledon and many other international sports venues, and the record-breaking sales of the PS Series over two decades, have ensured that the NEXO badge identifies some of the most consistent loudspeaker products on the market.

NEXO seeks not only to enhance the audience experience through the development of increasingly more transparent and consistently controllable sound systems, but also to serve the wider public through the improved directivity of its systems. The company is wholly focussed on

serving the environment, through the adoption of more sustainable and less polluting manufacturing processes, and through the development of systems that are ever more compact, easier to transport and less demanding to set up.





NEXO LAUNCHES P12 HIGH-OUTPUT POINT SOURCE CABINET WITH MATCHED SUBBASS

With its curvy modern aesthetic and best-in-class performance specifications, NEXO's new P12 is an ultra-versatile multi-purpose loudspeaker, bringing ingenious technical innovation to a wide range of sound reinforcement applications. Surprisingly, given NEXO's long-standing global reputation for point-source loudspeakers, this is the first time the company has designed a 12-inch enclosure. The much-anticipated P12 promises to establish a new benchmark for the all-purpose point-source cabinet that can deliver at front-of-house, on stage, and as part of a distributed system.

"NEXO has also become well-known for going its own way in terms of acoustic design," said Joseph Carcopino, Head of R&D at NEXO. "Beginning the process with the P12, we looked at the leading products in the marketplace - everybody has a two-way point-source cabinet in their portfolio - and we brought in the boxes, not the spec sheets. "Taking the sum of all the characteristics gave us the threshold of modern expectations. We wanted to do better with our new cabinet than our own high standards: the PS Series are still among the loudest compact enclosures on the market. Our challenge was to make something even more powerful."

Inside the curvilinear enclosure of custom birch and poplar plywood, the P12 employs a purpose-designed 12-inch LF Neodymium driver

and three-inch diaphragm high frequency driver in a coaxial configuration. The cabinet footprint is very compact, measuring 531mm x 432mm x 317mm. Frequency response is 60Hz-20kHz, and the SPL is an impressive 138dB peak (passive)/140dB peak (active mode), making it the most powerful point-source design in its class in today's market.

In an innovative design twist which allows the user to customise his or her P12 cabinet, the horn flanges can be interchanged to deliver a variety of directivities - from the 60° x 60° that is provided as standard, to a 90° x 40° or an asymmetrical 50°- 100° x 40°. (The interchangeable flanges are marketed as accessories). Switching between different directivities can be accomplished in just 15 seconds, easily removing the steel grille and replacing the flare, which uses a magnetic fixing. Less than 20kg in weight, the ergonomic design of the P12 includes carry handles on each side, pole-mount fitting with an ingeniously-positioned Speakon connector behind it to allow tidy cable management, and threaded inserts for connection of mounting accessories. P12 can be used on a pole-mount with the L15 subbass cabinet, wall-mounted or flown in landscape mode beneath a L15 enclosure, using a specially-designed yoke bracket.

NEXO expects that one of the principal applications of the new P12 enclosure will be on stage as the most versatile wedge monitor speaker on the market. The variable directivity feature will effectively treble the deployment of any inventory of P12 floor monitors, and the cabinet is designed

for the rigours of touring use, with an extra-robust grille and scratch-resistant paint finish.

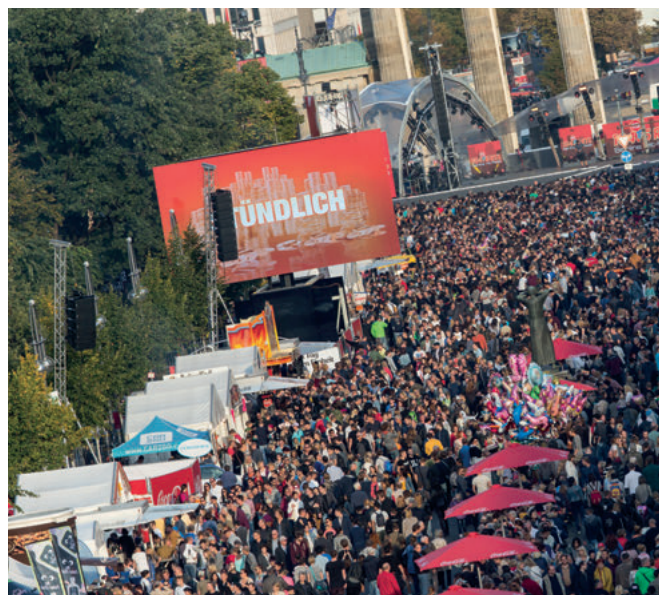
With a switch on the back of the cabinet, the P12 is easy to reconfigure from passive to active mode, where it achieves 140dB peak SPL.

This is the first NEXO loudspeaker to be purpose-designed to use the processing capacity of the new NXAMP4x2mk2 amplifier, although it is fully compatible with the larger NXAMP4x4. The processing in the NXAMP4x2mk2 is very precise, with separate set-ups for each directivity providing perfect coverage.

To partner the P12, NEXO has launched the L15 subbass cabinet, specially designed in a matching footprint which makes it ideal for flown applications, and for use as a drumfill. With a new acoustic loading technique using a 15-inch bass horn, the L15 operates with maximum efficiency: nearly all the front face of the cabinet is used as a radiating surface to provide really impressive output. With a frequency range of 40Hz-120Hz, and 139dB peak SPL, this sub measures up as the most powerful in its category in the market.

Touring and installation versions of the P12 and its partner L15 subwoofer will be produced in black and white scratch-resistant paint finishes, the first use of a new paint process which prepares the P12 for use in all climate conditions, and enables it to deal robustly with the demands of stage monitoring use. TUV and IP54 certification is provided for the installation version of the P12.





INTERVIEW - JEAN MULLOR, CEO, NEXO

NEXO is 40 years old this year, what makes the company's history unique?

Its fierce independence! NEXO has been distinct in its philosophy, technological development and manufacturing approach from the very beginning, when Eric Vincenot and Michael Johnson founded the company in 1979.

It is definitely not a me-too brand! Its engineering achievements can be recognised in a long list of patents. The R&D team here in Paris has always followed its own star, bringing genuinely innovative ideas into the market, for example tangent array technology in the form of GEO T (and GEO D) systems, the world's first line monitor for stage sound, and the concept of modular line array in the successful STM Series. NEXO became part of the Yamaha Corporation in 2008, but, although there is a huge degree of co-development and collaboration, Yamaha continues to give NEXO the freedom to think laterally and creatively.

How do you feel NEXO has helped to shape the audio industry in the early years and more recently?

Our history is punctuated by many landmark moments and breakthroughs in sound reinforcement technology, which have earned the respect of our competitors and sound engineers all over the world. The most influential of these was probably the GEO S8, the smallest line array design to reach the market in 2001, which set the precedent for compact systems.

NEXO's roots began in concert sound but then developed into install sound. How did the company make that transition?

As you know, the touring industry has changed dramatically over the past 20 years, causing major changes across the global landscape of the service sector. Nowadays, audio rental providers seek safety and security in just two

or three brands, so there has been a knock-on effect for manufacturers that supply the industry. NEXO has not transitioned out of concert sound: we are still very much present at the elite level of entertainment events (with our flagship STM Series modular line array), but we have evolved our product design focus in the direction of the much larger mid-market, producing systems like our highly successful GEO M Series of compact and mid-size line arrays.

At the high end, the new business for the rock and roll community is the installed sound market. All around the world, you see NEXO, d&b audiotechnik, HARMAN and L-Acoustics all going after the fixed installs, because it's the most active area of growth for entertainment loudspeakers - as opposed to rental. Music touring has been reduced to the point where it is not commercially viable to carry audio systems with the tour. In fact, for a significant number of artists, the "tour" may consist of a series of appearances at festivals. This market is also changing. Outside the UK, our distributors report that the majority of festivals are purely EDM.

All our concert sound products are re-engineered for the installation market. A good example of this is the compact two-way GEO S1210-ST, a high-output, long-throw version of the standard GEO S1210 cabinet, which has been optimised for stadium installations. It offers exceptional SPL for long-throw applications, with enhanced speech intelligibility, ideal for the large sporting venue.

The popularity of our brand in the installation sector is less dependent on NEXO's reputation in concert sound than it is a product of the hallmarks behind our badge - high SPL, compact low-profile enclosures, integrated networking, signal processing and amplification in the powerful NXAMPs, and extensive simulation and modelling software tools for system design.

Are there any particular install projects you would like to highlight?

We've had an amazing year in the UK and Ireland, thanks to some superb



work by our system integrators. NEXO systems are up and running, entertaining crowds at Ireland's national stadium, which is Croke Park in Dublin; at the All-England Lawn Tennis Club, on Wimbledon's famous Court No. 1; at Manchester City FC's home ground, the Etihad Stadium in Manchester; and at the Emerald Headingley Stadium in Leeds. We continue to be the go-to solutions provider in French sport, with new installations in Arena Pays d'Aix and Stade Pierre Brisson in Beauvais.

This rising profile of successful NEXO installations in sporting entertainment venues is closely linked to our investment in our Engineering Support Division, where we have very talented system engineers, armed with an array of modelling and prediction software tools, to help our integrators realise affordable designs. Our ES engineers not only have training and great ears, but they have unique experience - since our flagship installation of the Stade de France in 1997, we've been able to build on years of expertise in this field, and we get feedback on the experience gained from more than 100 stadiums worldwide. NEXO is not just a solution provider - we can be advisors as well, sharing this great depth of experience.

All NEXO products are still manufactured in the company's home country of France. In today's market, how important is that and what does it mean to NEXO?

All our loudspeakers are manufactured in France in our two factories. Manufacturing processes are outsourced to Yamaha for our amplifiers. With inhouse manufacturing, we can enjoy huge time-saving opportunities and great flexibility in the development process. We retain total control over the quality processes and the final outcomes of the product. Manufacturing our own goods eliminates several logistics issues and it takes less administrative work to complete a manufacturing cycle inhouse when compared to outsourcing arrangements. Of course, French labour costs are very high but the good news is that our long history in this city, in this country, has created a fantastic company spirit, from R&D engineers to factory workers, and our customers love it, too.

Can you tell us more about the Yamaha connection, what advantages and disadvantages having such a parent company brings?

Not one day goes past when I don't rejoice that we've have Yamaha as a parent company since 2015. Fundamentally, no hedge fund, conglomerate, or mainstream business investor would support our activities like Yamaha does. From strategic planning to operations, we have developed an unparalleled partnership between our teams. Yamaha is manufacturing NEXO's amplifiers while NEXO is fine tuning some of the new Yamaha loudspeakers, together we collaborate on software solutions such as ProVisionaire, NEXO's distribution is handled by the Yamaha subsidiaries in some important areas such as USA, Canada, Japan, Singapore, India, MEAF, Indonesia, Brazil, or Taiwan. NEXO also learns a lot from Yamaha headquarters, for example, the robustness of processes such as the quality management system, and the incredible level of attention paid to the customer's experience. As for the disadvantages, I am sorry but I can't see any!

www.nexo-sa.com

