

NTi
AUDIO



OPERATING MANUAL
NTi Audio TalkBox

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1. Introduction

Congratulations and thank you for buying NTi Audio's TalkBox, a product specially suited as test signal source for speech intelligibility measurements. This new product provides, in combination with the Acoustilyzer AL1, the all-in-one solution for fast and comprehensive STI-PA testing of a complete public announcement system. Additionally, various other test signals are supported for further test applications. We are convinced you will enjoy using it!

This manual describes the NTi Audio TalkBox operation and functions in detail. Further application information can be found on our web site "www.nti-audio.com".

The NTi Audio TalkBox product package includes the following items:

- 1x NTi Audio TalkBox
- 1x Protection Cover mounted with NTi Audio lanyard
- 1x CF-Card with test signals & individual calibration data
- 1x Mains Power Supply & Power Cord
- 1x CD "NTi Audio TalkBox", backup copy of Memory Card
- 1x Carrying Pouch
- 1x User Manual

CE Declaration of Conformity

We, the manufacturer

NTi Audio AG
Im alten Riet 102
9494 Schaan
Liechtenstein, Europe

hereby declare that the product "NTi Audio TalkBox", released in 2005, conforms to the following standards:

EMC-Directives: 89/336, 92/31, 93/68

Harmonized Standards: EN 61326-1

This declaration becomes void in case of any changes on the product without written authorization by NTi Audio.

Date: 15. September 2005

Signature: 

Position of signatory: Technical Director



International Warranty and Repair

International Warranty

NTi Audio guarantees the functionality of the NTi Audio TalkBox against defects in material or workmanship for a period of one year from the date of original purchase, and agrees to repair or to replace at its discretion any defective unit at no cost for either parts or labor during this period.

Restrictions

This warranty does not cover damages caused through accidents, misuse, lack of care, the attachment or installation of any components that were not provided with the product, loss of parts, connecting the instrument to a power supply, input signal voltage or connector type other than specified or wrongly polarized batteries. In particular, no responsibility is granted for special, incidental or consequential damages. This warranty becomes void if servicing or repairs of the product are performed by any party other than an authorized NTi Audio service center or if the instrument has been opened in a manner other than specified in this manual.

No other warranty, written or verbal, is authorized by NTi Audio. Except as otherwise stated in this warranty, NTi Audio makes no representation or warranty of any kind, expressed or implied in law or in fact, including, without limitation, merchandising or fitting for any particular purpose and assumes no liability, either in tort, strict liability, contract or warranty for products.

Repair

In the case of faulty functioning or damage please contact your local NTi Audio partner for assistance. If your instrument needs to be returned for service, kindly follow the service guidelines at www.nti-audio.com/service.

Warnings

In order to avoid any problems during the operation of the instrument, follow the notes listed below:

- Remove the transport protection cover prior using the TalkBox.
- The NTi Audio TalkBox includes a high precision electro mechanic transducer with open air gap. Dust could degrade the function of this transducer. Please take care to use and store the NTi Audio TalkBox only in clean environments.
- Read this manual thoroughly prior using this product.
- Use the product for the intended purpose only.
- Do not disassemble the product.
- Never use the product in a damp environment.

Calibration Certificate

The NTi Audio TalkBox has been carefully tested during production and corresponds to the specifications listed in “Technical Data”.

NTi Audio recommends yearly calibrations of the instrument. For the calibration of your instrument kindly follow the service guidelines at www.nti-audio.com/service.

2. Overview

NTi Audio TalkBox greatly simplifies the acoustical feed of the STI-PA intelligibility test source signal into closed sound reinforcement systems. It presents the standardized voice-like acoustical signal emission simulating a human talker according to IEC 60268-16, combined with a TNO certified speech intelligibility signal at standardized levels.



NTi Audio TalkBox

General

NTi Audio TalkBox features human head-like dimensions. A build-in combination of solid state generator and DSP ensures highest playback accuracy and lowest sample frequency deviations with minimized jitter effects. The internal precision loudspeaker is individually calibrated to achieve a very flat frequency response in the typical frequency range of the human voice. Each TalkBox is individually equalized and calibrated and has an excellent frequency response accuracy of +/- 1 dB over the relevant frequency range. The radiation characteristic complies with the ITU-T P.51 in wide ranges.

The perfect frequency response and the precisely correct playback sampling rate are specifically important to minimize systematic errors when performing STI-PA measurements.

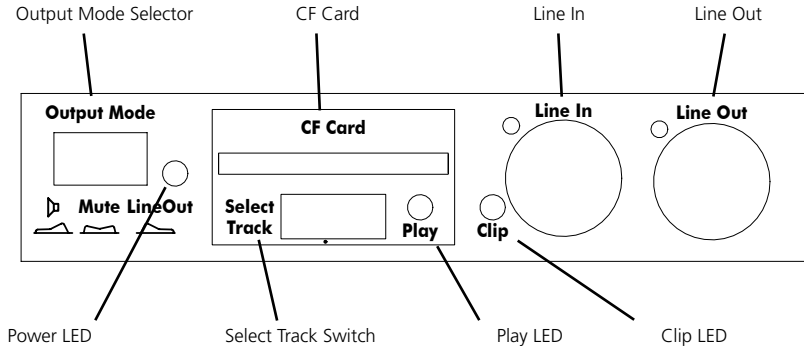
Speaker

The IEC60268-16 standard specifies a sound pressure level for a speaker simulator of 60 dBA in 1 meter distance. The NTi Audio TalkBox levels are calibrated to comply with this standard. To avoid operating failures the TalkBox has no volume control.

Mic Stand Mount

The exact positioning the NTi Audio TalkBox in front of a microphone (at the place where a real human speaker would be) is easy using a conventional mic stand. A universal mic stand mount is available at the bottom of the box.

NTi Audio TalkBox Controls



NTi TalkBox Controls

Output Mode Selector

The output selector switch offers the following three modes:

	<p>The audio signal is available at the speaker and the Line Out.</p>
<p>Mute</p>	<p>The audio signal is muted (no signal at Line Out and speaker).</p>
<p>LineOut</p>	<p>The audio signal is available at the Line Out. The speaker amplifier is muted.</p>

Power LED

The red Power LED indicates the following:

fast flashing	The power up sequence is in process (about 10 seconds)
continuously on	The TalkBox is powered on and ready for operation.
slow flashing	The outputs are muted by <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Output Mode Selector or• the External Mute Input

CF-Card

The supplied CF-Card needs to be pushed into the provided slot. Up to 15 test signals can be stored on the CF-Card. The size of the test signals is as big as required for the looped operation. The selected signal is further processed and seamlessly looped by the built in DSP. The CF-Card is FAT32 formatted and can be read/written by any PC/MAC with CF-Card reader. The TalkBox repeats the selected audio track as long as mains power is connected. Besides the STI-PA test signal the CF-Card contains the following additional wave forms:

CF-Card Track List:

1	STI-PA (Standard)	60dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
2	Pink Noise	60dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
3	White Noise	60dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
4	Sine 1 kHz	60dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
5	Male Speaker (German)	60dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
6	Male Speaker (English)	60dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
7	Delay Test Chirp	
8	-	
9	-	
A	STI-PA (Lombard)	70dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
B	Pink Noise	70dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
C	White Noise	70dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
D	Sine 1 kHz	70dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
E	Male Speaker (German)	70dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m
F	Male Speaker (English)	70dB _A _{SPL} @ 1m

Note: Any hot swap of the CF-Card is not supported. In case the CF-Card has been removed during operation it shall be returned and the mains power shortly disconnected to initiate the operation again.

File format of audio signals

- *.wav file
- Sample rate: 44100 Hz
- Mono
- 16 Bit
- PCM linear quantization

File name format

The first character of WAV-filename matches the output selector switch position. So the audio files names are e.g. "1anyName.wav" or "8anyName.wav", whereby "anyName" may describe the content of the WAV file for example "1_STIPA.wav". The maximum length of the filename is 8 digits, e.g. "xxxxxxx.wav".

Calibration data

The CF-Card keeps additionally the individual calibration data of the NTi Audio TalkBox. The file is named "xxx.cal". The CF-Card is labeled with the serial number of the corresponding TalkBox, so the CF-Card and the NTi Audio TalkBox do have the same serial number, guaranteeing accurate and calibrated operation.

Note: The serial number on the CF-Card must match with the serial number of the NTi Audio TalkBox, otherwise the acoustical parameters of the TalkBox are out of specifications.

Play LED

The green Play LED indicates the following:

continuously on	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The audio signal is replayed• At Line In mode (= Select Track switch set to "0") and input signal > -30 dBu
flashing	Error indication, which might be caused by <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The CF-Card is not plugged in or damaged• The file "serialnumber_xxx.cal" is not found on the card• The selected audio file is not available, damaged or of wrong format

Select Track Switch

This switch allows the following selections:

"0"	This position selects the input signal from the input connector "Line In" to the speaker.
"1" - "F"	These positions select the individually stored audio tracks from the CF-Card in hex-order form (1, ... , 9, A, B, C, D, E, F).

Clip LED

The red Clip LED is activated when the Line In mode is selected (= Select Track switch set to "0"). Reduce the input level when the Clip LED flashes.

Line In

XLR input connector for external audio signals.

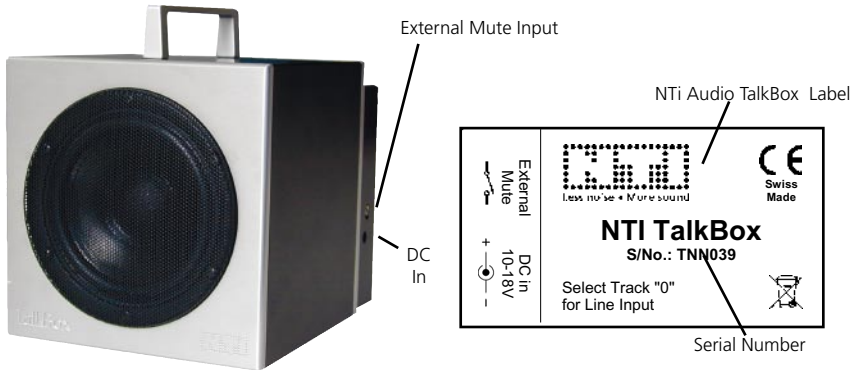
The Line In mode (Select Track switch = "0") enables to play an external audio signal with the NTi Audio TalkBox. In the Line In mode the Play LED indicates an input signal > -30 dBu and the Clip LED is activated at input signals > +15 dBu.

The DSP based equalization introduces a signal propagation delay of 59 ms between the Line-In and the acoustical output. Consequently and in order to guarantee synchronicity between the acoustical output and the line-output for delay time measurements the latter is also delayed by 59 ms.

Line Out

Using the balanced line out, the TalkBox operates as a signal generator. The stored signal of the CF-Card or any connected signal from the Line In connector is directly send to the Line Out connector (not equalized).

Side & Rear Panel



NTi Audio TalkBox Side & Rear Panel

External Mute Input

The External Mute Input provides the possibility to mute the NTi Audio TalkBox from a remote position, such as by using a mobile phone or radio control devices. Closing an external switch connected with this 3.5mm jack connector (connecting dip & ring) will mute the audio signal equally to the output selector switch in mute position. This feature is of great help e.g. at STI-PA measurements in large buildings.

Power Supply

The TalkBox handles an input voltage range of 10-18 VDC. An external power supply (for worldwide operation) is supplied as standard. The wide input voltage range allows the operation even from a battery pack.

3. How to use the NTi Audio TalkBox

Using the NTi Audio TalkBox as acoustical test source for STI-PA measurements provides two major advantages:

- Extended test coverage
- Easy to handle test signal injection

The human head sized NTi Audio TalkBox replaces and simulates a real speaker when measuring speech intelligibility. Such a setup considers the entire signal path including the used microphone, the acoustical characteristics of the speaker's cabin and existing background noise.

Procedure

1. Position the NTi Audio TalkBox at the typical speaker position in front of the speaker's microphone.
2. Connect the external power supply. After approx 10 seconds the start up process is completed and the NTi Audio TalkBox is ready for operation.
3. Selected the required track number with the Track Selection Switch.
4. Output Mode: Set the selector switch to
 - Speaker for acoustical output
 - LineOut for electrical output signal or
 - Stop the signal using the Mute position.

Output Level

The output level of the provided standard STI-PA test signals is 60 dBA @ 1 m distance to the speaker. Additionally further test signals at other levels are provided, please see the CF-Card Track List for details.

Lombard Effect

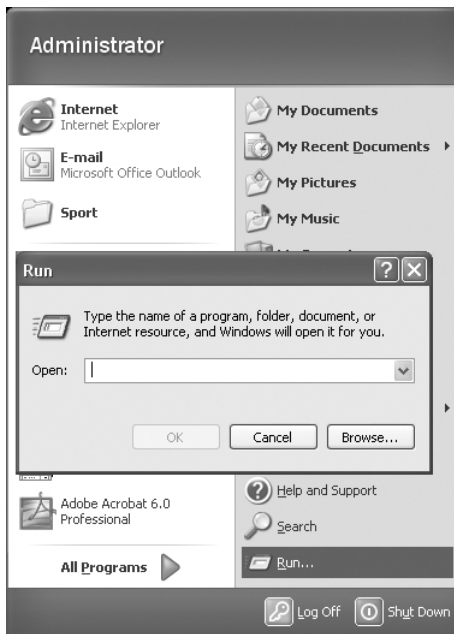
At increasing environmental noise the human persons speaking into the microphone at PA systems gradually increase the sound pressure level of their speech. The standardized speaking level is 60 dBA. Our ears recognize a speaking level increase of 10 dBA as subjective double sound pressure level. To verify the PA system operating in good order at this physical effect, the following shall be carried out:

1. Follow the prior described measurement procedure, using the STI-PA test signal with 60 dBA @ 1m.
2. Select the STI-PA test signal with 70 dBA @ 1m and verify the operation of the PA system; no clipping shall occur.

CF-Card

We recommend to use original CF-Cards, NTi Audio Art.nr. 600 000 087, only. Other CF-Cards may not be compatible with the NTi Audio TalkBox, thus e.g. wave files are not replayed. For operation the calibration file xxx.cal has to be copied on a new CF-Card. You may format the CF-Card as follows:

1. Connect the CF-Card to the PC, the card is recognized e.g. as letter "z"
2. Select "Run..." from the Windows Start menu, see picture below
3. Insert the term: format z: /fs:FAT32 /a:512 /x
4. The CF-Card is formatted to FAT32 with 512 byte cluster size and can now be used with the NTi Audio TalkBox



Format CF-Card

My Own Files

You can load your own audio files onto the CF-Card and replay with the NTi Audio TalkBox. Kindly observe the following details:

Do not delete the calibration data file labeled “xxx.cal”!

The NTi Audio TalkBox requires the calibration data to meet the product specifications. A back up copy of the calibration data is on the NTi Audio TalkBox CD enclosed, containing the original data of the CF-Card.

File format of audio signals

- *.wav file
- Sample rate: 44100 Hz
- Mono
- 16 Bit
- PCM linear quantization

File name format

The first character of WAV–filename matches the output selector switch position. So the audio files names are e.g. “nr_anyName.wav”, whereby “nr” is the TalkBox selection switch position and “anyName” describes the content of the WAV file for example “9_myfile1.wav” or “A_myfile2.wav” - “F_myfile3.wav”. The maximum length of the filename (=anyName) are 8 digits.

Level

The test signal level shall be physically tested by using e.g. the NTi Audio Acoustilyzer AL1 and the source data adjusted to requirements.

Length

The minimum length of your wave file is 100ms.

4. Battery Option

(NTi Audio order code: 600 000 086)

Description

For enabling mains power independent operation, a rechargeable Li-Ion Battery pack is available for the TalkBox. Its size has been optimized to perfectly fit to the side of the TalkBox. The battery comes complete with all the connectors, adaptors and works perfectly with the TalkBox power supply for charging. An integrated charge indicator shows the remaining energy in the battery. Supplied Welcroe strips simplify the mounting of the battery to the TalkBox. A fully charged battery drives the TalkBox for more than 7 hours under worst case conditions.



Warnings

- * The battery pack contains Li-Ion batteries. Please recycle the battery pack in accordance with local regulations.
- * Only charge the battery with the TalkBox power supply. Store the battery on a dry place.
- * Never attempt to connect the output of the battery to the output of an external device

Charge the battery

As the battery comes only partially charged, please charge the battery for min. 5 hours prior its first use. Connect the TalkBox power supply to the IN connector of the Battery pack. The connectors are compatible. The red charge

LED will light up during the charge process. Once the battery is full the red LED will go off and the rightmost green (Full) LED will go on. The DC output of the battery pack is disabled during the charge process and thus not usable.

Use of the battery

Connect the DC output of the battery pack with the DC input of the TalkBox using the provided connection cable and the G/G4 adaptor. As soon as the connection is established, the NTi Audio TalkBox starts running. For storage or when not used for a longer period of time, please disconnect the battery cable preventing the complete discharging of the battery.

To check the charge indication, press the black charge test button and the three green LED will indicate the charge level.



Technical data

Battery type:	Li-Ion Battery
Input voltage:	12V - 24V DC, 1A max.
Output voltage:	9V, 2A max.
Capacity:	39 Watt hours nominal
Dimensions:	153 mm x 93 mm x 23mm (6" x 3.72" x 0.9")
Weight:	400g (0.8lbs)

Running time with battery pack (typical)

Idle mode:	Standby, Electrical output:	15 hours
STI-PA:	Output on (60dB _{SPL})	12 hours
STI-PA Lombard:	Output on (70dB _{SPL})	7 hours

5. Related Products

Acoustilyzer AL1

The Acoustilyzer AL1 is a sophisticated tool used to analyze acoustical signals. It is designed for easy, quick and detailed analysis of the acoustic environment and basic line measurements.

The optimized combination of electrical and acoustical features creates the perfect all in one tool for sound/systems contractors, installers and multi-media specialists. The Acoustilyzer AL1 is available as a palm-sized portable acoustical analyzer or as firmware for Minilyzer owners.



MiniSPL

The MiniSPL is the perfect accessory for acoustical measurements. Together with the Acoustilyzer AL1 a comprehensive audio meter for a wide range of acoustical measurements is formed.

The MiniSPL is a self contained omni-directional 1/2" measurement microphone with built in impedance converter, pre-amplifier and power supply. It is battery powered and the XLR-output is balanced. The MiniSPL is classified as class 2 in accordance with IEC 61672 and is factory adjusted to a sensitivity of 20 mV/Pa.



STI-PA Measurement Option

The STI-PA analyzer option allows the reliable measurement of the speech transmission index according to the latest IEC standards within 15 sec. Besides the single value STI or CIS test result, a detailed view of the modulation indices and individual band level results is provided.



6. Technical Specifications

Waveforms

- Up to 15 different signals
- Waveforms can be added / changed by the user
- Factory signal set
NTi Audio STI-PA Test Signal, Reference Speech Signal, White Noise, Pink Noise, Delay Test Signal, Sine 1 kHz

Line Out

- XLR, balanced 100 Ohm, unbalanced 50 Ohm
- Maximum output level: +18 dBu,
1 kHz file with 60 dB @ 1 meter: typically -11 dBu

Line Input

- XLR, balanced 38 kOhm
- Max. input level: +18 dBu (acc. to EBU R68, ITU-R rec. 645)
- Internal delay from XLR input to speaker: 59 ms

CF-Card

- 256 MB included, FAT32 formatted, NTi Audio Art.nr. 600 000 087
- Wave File format: 16 Bit, 44.1 kHz mono

Acoustical Flatness

- STI-PA band levels (in axis):
- typ < +/- 0.5 dB @ 24°C
 - typ < +/- 1.0 dB @ 10°C - 30°C

Acoustical Output Level

- STI-PA: 60 dB_{A SPL} @ 1 m +/- 0.5 dB, according to IEC60268-16
- STI-PA band sensitivity gradient: - 0.07dB / °C (average)
- Others see track list in user manual

Power Supply

- 10 - 18 VDC, 10 Watt
- External switching power supply included (110 V .. 240 V)

External Mute

- Jack 3.5 mm (1/8"), floating switch required

Mounting

- Mic Stand 5/8" with Adapter to 3/8"

Dimensions (LxWxH)

- 150 x 150 x 175 mm (5.9 x 5.9 x 6.9 inch)

Weight

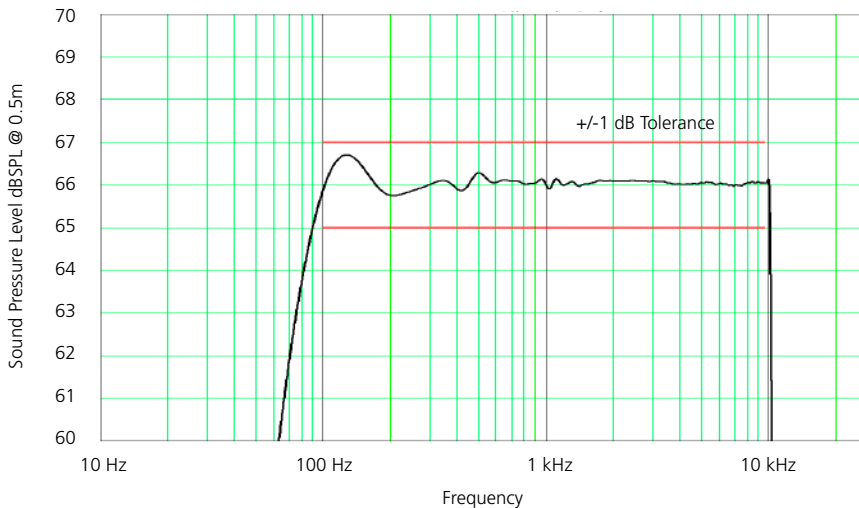
- 3.5 kg

Operating Temperature

- 0° to +45° C (32° to 113° F)

Typical Frequency Response Chart NTi Audio TalkBox:

- 60 dB SPL @ 1 m = 66 dB SPL @ 0.5 m



You may stick this table onto your NTi Audio TalkBox:

1	STI-PA (Standard)	60dBASPL @ 1m
2	Pink Noise	60dBASPL @ 1m
3	White Noise	60dBASPL @ 1m
4	Sine 1 kHz	60dBASPL @ 1m
5	Male Speaker (German)	60dBASPL @ 1m
6	Male Speaker (English)	60dBASPL @ 1m
7	Delay Test Chirp	
8		
9		
A	STI-PA (Lombard)	70dBASPL @ 1m
B	Pink Noise	70dBASPL @ 1m
C	White Noise	70dBASPL @ 1m
D	Sine 1 kHz	70dBASPL @ 1m
E	Male Speaker (German)	70dBASPL @ 1m
F	Male Speaker (English)	70dBASPL @ 1m

Overview Minstruments Products:



Minalyzer ML1
Analog Audio Analyzer



Acoustlyzer AL1
Acoustical Analyzer



MiniSPL
Measurement Mic



Minirator MR-PRO
Analog Audio Generator



Digilyzer DL1
Digital Audio Analyzer



MiniLINK
PC Interface & Software

www.minstruments.com