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New Bluetooth system creates opportunities for hearing aid users

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Loop systems and telecoils have for decades been the system of choice for public access to sound for hearing aid users. Although simple, the loop systems are subject to many challenges and the need for a new technology to supplement it is obvious.

The hearing aid industry has been embracing newer wireless technologies and today many hearing aids are available with wireless systems in the 2.4 GHz frequency range. Since 2014, the hearing industry (EHIMA) has been working with the Bluetooth organisation to create a new platform that can enable broadcasting of audio signals independent of brands. Today, we have brand-specific TV streamers. Soon we will have streamers that can work with any brand, and thus create a new public access system that will be great for hearing aid users as well as users of headsets and earbuds. The new Bluetooth system is named BT LE Audio, and has many improvements apart from broadcasting specifically aimed at hearing aids.

Proprietary standards for iPhone and Android based phones will be replaced by a new unified standard for transmission of sound signals that will be used by all.