Embedded sound from a bunker

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Founded in 2007, Periscope Studio Hamburg specializes in the videogame market. The team is based in what used to be a WW2 submarine engine factory, and creates immersive audio for a wide range of interactive products. Winning plaudits at the recent 2011 German Computer Game Awards, the studio has announced the formation of a 'Core Soundtrack' team headed by Finn Seliger, creative director…

I guess the new team reflects some ambitious expansion plans?

"That's right. We've had a lot of success in a short time, and while we've worked with freelancers before we wanted to consolidate their availability. Projects are getting bigger and schedules are getting shorter! Also I didn't want to be a lone composer churning out the same soundtracks from nine till five. I always had a vision to maintain a team of talents that could communicate very intensively and produce results that were more varied and creative than the work of just one composer."

So are they full time inside Periscope?

"No, they're still freelance, with their own studios, but all based in Hamburg. As composers it's important that they have their own workflow, but they're integrated into our studio workflow via a commercial online communication platform called Project Place. We set up a new, dedicated platform using this software for each job. It's great for large projects because the communicatuion is very open, and file exchange is very fast and easy. It's a kind of multi-channel, professional Skype. Everyone can listen to audio in progress and get a real feeling for the project, leading to a distinctive goal."

How did you get started in this, er, game?
"We started as a small project studio with one vocal booth, and our first jobs came from the games industry – which we hadn't known before, but word of mouth spread and these are the people we clicked with. But we quickly realized it's a very interesting field in which to work, and it just keeps going from strength to strength."

What services do they require?
"Soundtracks, sound design and voice recordings. The field of interactive music is so 'undiscovered', yet it's very exciting and so much fun to think up technological solutions and to experiment with music and games."

What's your background?
"I studied Media Technology, specializing in composition and instruments – real instruments, that is, not virtual ones! Our work here is divided into music production, voice recordings and developing new technical answers to fuse the music with the content of the games. For example, we've developed an engine for games that plays back music, called psaiCORE, which any developer can use. 'psai' stands for Periscope Studio Audio Intelligence, and it's 'middleware' because it can be applied to any console or PC. There are no virtual instruments for X-box or Playstation, so you need a format for these platforms. Our solution provides an audio editor that integrates easily, fitting Logic or Cubase files in the way the developer really wants."

Wow. Up Periscope!
"We are full steam ahead…"

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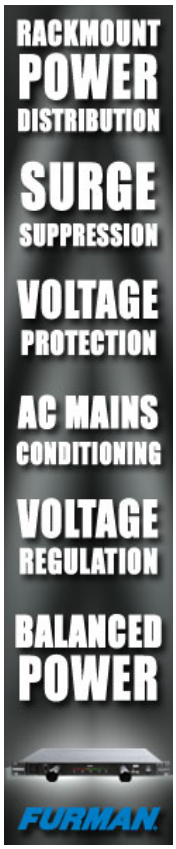

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