

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An audio device worn in a piercing in a user's ear, the audio device comprising:

a body having a first end and an opposite second end and providing a hollow interior space, the body being disposed to extend through a piercing in an ear of a user;

a communication component coupled to the first end of the body;

a sound-production unit disposed proximate the second end of the body and communicatively coupled with the communication component, at least a portion of a signal path of communications between the sound-production unit and the communication component tracking the body, the sound-production unit having a stowed orientation in which the sound-production unit is removeably disposed at least partially within the hollow interior space of the body proximate to the second end thereof and a use orientation in which the sound-production unit is extended from the body and disposed at least partially within a space in the pinna of the ear defined by the antihelix, concha, and tragus of the ear of the user and the sound-production unit is directed toward the ear canal.

2. The audio device of claim 1, further comprising:

a cover coupled to the second end of the body and enclosing the sound-production unit in the stowed orientation within the body.

3. The audio device of claim 2, wherein the cover is pivotably coupled to the body or is removeably coupled to the body.

4. The audio device of claim 1, wherein the sound-production unit is coupled to the communication component by an extensible conductor that is retracted completely within the body in the stowed orientation.

5. The audio device of claim 1, wherein the sound-production unit is coupled to the communication component by a conductor that is at least partially disposed on an exterior surface of the body.

6. The audio device of claim 1, wherein the body is configured as a taper-style or gauge-style earring.

7. The audio device of claim 1, wherein the communication component is removeably coupled to the first end of the body.

8. The audio device of claim 7, wherein a second conductor is coupled to the first end of the body to communicatively couple the audio device with a master device.

9. The audio device of claim 1, wherein the sound-production unit is removeably retained in the body via one or more of a snap-fit, friction fit, magnetic coupling, or mechanical coupling.

10. An audio device worn in a piercing in a user's ear, the audio device comprising:

an elongate body having a first end and an opposite second end,
the body being disposed to extend through a piercing in an ear of a user;

a communication component coupled to the first end of the body;

a sound-production unit flexibly coupled to the second end of the
body by a conductor and communicatively coupled with the
communication component, at least a portion of a signal path of
communications between the sound-production unit and the
communication component tracking the body, the sound-production unit
having a non-use orientation in which the sound-production unit is
suspended from the second end of the body and a use orientation in which
the sound-production unit is disposed at least partially within a space in
the pinna of the ear defined by the antihelix, concha, and tragus of the ear,
and the sound-production unit is directed toward the ear canal.

11. The audio device of claim 10, further comprising:

a non-extensible member disposed between the second end of the
body and the sound-production unit.

12. The audio device of claim 10, further comprising:

a connector disposed on a free end of the conductor and
removeably coupled to the second end of the body, the connector enabling
detachment of the sound-production unit and the conductor from the body.

13. The audio device of claim 10, further comprising:

a housing having a distal end through which sound emissions are directed, the sound-production unit being disposed within the housing; and
a cover coupled to the housing that substantially encloses the distal end.

14. The audio device of claim 13, wherein the cover comprises a pair of leaves, the leaves being pivotably coupled on opposing sides of the housing and being pivotable between a first position extending from the distal end of the housing and a second position disposed alongside the housing and directed toward a proximate end thereof, the leaves substantially enclosing the distal end of the housing in the first position.

15. The audio device of claim 13, wherein the housing and the cover have an ornamental appearance and disguise the sound-production unit as a piece of jewelry.

16. The audio device of claim 10, wherein the communication component is removeably coupled to the first end of the body.

17. The audio device of claim 10, wherein the body has a shape that is one or more of cylindrical, linear, spiral, or helical.

18. The audio device of claim 10, wherein the body is disposed to extend through more than one piercing in the ear of the user.

19. The audio device of claim 10, further comprising:

a hub disposed at the first or second end of the body and connecting the body to the communication component or the conductor, respectively.

20. The audio device of claim 19, wherein the hub is removable from the body to aid installation of the audio device in the piercing in the user's ear.