



Occasionally a warm foehn wind is blowing through Freiburg im Breisgau, but even then Christof Poschadel keeps a cool head. Almost three years ago the founder of Xodos set out to establish himself on the competitive market of music servers and network players. While some competitors try to achieve the same goal with an ample list of features, the determined young entrepreneur pursues an alternative approach. Like the Xodos debut, the xo-one server, his new xo-stream network player follows a puristic concept and offers merely a coaxial S/PDIF output. Thus at first glance it seems to be limited to a maximum resolution of 24 bits / 192 kilohertz, especially since there isn't a single clue about higher resolved PCM data streams. But on its back, right beside the coax output, we find no less than three USB Audio 2.0 interface ports which accept and send PCM up to 32 bits / 768 kilohertz. Moreover, these USB ports allow to supply connected converters with DSD data streams and DoP (DSD over PCM).

However, Christof Poschadel juggles neither with big figures nor popular catch phrases. He's only interested in sound quality and as we all know, this is not guaranteed by a format. Therefore he paid very much attention in particular to the design of the electrical S/PDIF output, which is internally controlled via

## The X-Factor

The xo-stream network player from Xodos makes its mark with distinctive features and technology.

USB and carefully processes the data for the output. The relevant circuit benefits from a separate feed by the power supply with multiple filtering and smoothing before the oscillators which, due to working conditions optimised in such a manner, are supposed to produce very low jitter values. Between the computer board and the electrically isolated USB output sections, which work in asynchronous mode, we have another multi-stage voltage smoothing.

This streamer is characterised to the core by the love for detail: its excellently crafted aluminium housing rests on device feet made by SSC, the internal wiring comes from a prestigious cable specialist. The stillness needed for soft listening is ensured by an entirely passive cooling, on the hardware side an Industrial motherboard with an Intel quad-core chipset is responsible for the

high-performance music control function. For the operating system a Linux clone with a custom-designed kernel was chosen, and also with the app developed for iOS Xodos relies on their own competence, so they can act out independently from hardly calculable variables of the software market and provide a better customer support.

In view of maximum stability the xo-stream accesses stored music via network sharing; up to five sources can be merged in one library, thereby including connected USB harddisks as well. Furthermore, in addition to the internet radio stock from vTuner, the Virtual Vault and Tidal highres-audio streaming

### Xodos xo-stream

WxHxD	45 x 10 x 28 cm
Warranty	3 years
Price	2.980 euros
Distribution	Xodos GmbH Schwaighofstraße 2 79100 Freiburg i. Br.
Web	www.x-odos.com

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services are also available, whose offers were integrated into an attractively styled app that particularly pleases with short links to all functions and settings.

On the Mytek Brooklyn the xo-stream may now prove if it can fully convince soundwise. Sound engineer, producer and DJane Maya Jane Coles from New York is busy on three different music paths and devotes her creativity to House under her real name. For the EP »From The Dark« published in 2014 she hired her British colleague Moggli as guest vocalist to the set, whose characteristic, piercing timbre is purposefully exaggerated here. When played back over the xo-stream with appropriate pithiness, the contour of the vocal samples seems to form an autarchic mosaic piece, which

literally cuts through the air that surrounds it. Lest this mixing dodge, which is only seemingly harmless for a reproductive component, becomes stressful or fails to have the desired effect, one has to find the precisely right amount of high-frequency energy and bring on enough imaging clarity.

Accompanied by the Trondheim Solistene, Marianne Thorsen is performing Mozart's Violin Concerto in G Major (K 216), an audiophile gem in the catalog of the 2L label from Norway and ideally suited to completely fathom the candidate's skills.

At the beginning of the second movement the lead violin still sounds very hesitant in the foreground of a spacious stage with wide and above all deep dimensions. In this soft passage the xo-stream reveals an excellent resolving capacity and proves to have a liking for tonal shades. It paints a sharply defined instrument body and lets the violin shine in its smooth lustre. Thumbs up:



this utterly finely distinguished, absolutely homogeneous performance appears to be downright »analogue« while also having the right punch.

With the xo-stream Xodos offers an elaborate streamer. Its tonewise and dynamically very finely differentiated, homogeneous sound image makes it an unconditional recommendation for the demanding listener. *Marius Donadello* ■

