



Would you buy an iPod dock from this man?

By Jez Ford | Thursday, 10 February 2011 11:38



Sir Terence Conran founded the Conran Design Studio in 1956, and later the Habitat chain of home furnishings stores that revolutionised 1960s and 1970s Britain by bringing 'design' into the homes of ordinary people.

Now he's out to do the same with audio. his 'Studio Conran' has joined with the UK electronics group Armour Home to produce the first 'ConranAudio' product, the \$549 Conran Speaker Dock.

"We hope we have created a contemporary design classic,"

says Sir Terence. "It is a dedicated 100% pure music player that works with docked iPhones and iPods or wirelessly with Bluetooth-enabled devices such as the iPad, allowing you to select songs from the comfort of an armchair or, if it's your thing, while dancing around the room."

The dock's audio system was designed by Q Acoustics, part of the Armour Home group. Q Acoustics has gathered many awards for its speakers in the UK, though the brand is less well-known here, where it is distributed by Crestmore. The Conran Speaker Dock incorporates a 30W stereo amplifier driving stereo low-distortion long-throw 75mm bass/mid range units and 25mm wide dispersion soft-dome tweeters. The dock assembly rotates so that an iPhone can be viewed in landscape or portrait orientation, while six EQ settings are provided for different locations - such as 'Kitchen', 'Study', and 'OpenPlan'.

There are auxiliary inputs to the rear for additional sources, while the dock can also pair with any Bluetooth device to receive streamed tunes - hence the "unchain your iPhone" imagery used in the launch presentation by the Australian distributor Canohm. If you have multiple docks around the home, an iPhone can select which dock within range is to receive the music. It cannot, however, stream to several docks at once (a limitation of Apple's music software which we feel needs addressing!).

The Bluetooth connection on the ConranAudio dock includes apt-X, which replaces the normal sub-band coding (SBC) in the Bluetooth A2DP profile used for stereo streaming, and allows "CD-quality" streaming with less delay than with standard Bluetooth. To take advantage of this, however, you will need an apt-X-equipped device, and the technology is only gradually appearing on new smartphone models (Samsung announced it would adopt the technology at CES last month); it is also supported by the current MacBook Pro and Mac Mini models.

The dock is priced here at \$549, compared with a UK RRP of UK250.

[More information from Canohm.](#)



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