



## Company Overview

Starkey Laboratories, Inc. is a privately held, global hearing technology company headquartered in Eden Prairie, Minn. The company is recognized for its innovative design, development and distribution of comprehensive digital hearing systems. Dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by hearing impairments around the world, Starkey operates 22 facilities and conducts business in more than 100 markets worldwide.

## Quick Facts

- **Employees:** 3,250+
- **Web sites:** [www.starkey.com](http://www.starkey.com) and [www.starkeypro.com](http://www.starkeypro.com)
- **Starkey Corporate Headquarters:**  
6700 Washington Avenue South  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344  
Phone: 800.328.8602

## Executive Management

- **William F. Austin**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer
- **Jerry Ruzicka**, President
- **Tim Trine**, Chief Technical Officer
- **Keith Guggenberger**, Senior Vice President of Operations
- **Rob Duchscher**, Senior Vice President of Information Technology
- **Brent Edwards**, Vice President of Research
- **Jon Kindred**, Vice President of DSP, Systems & Wireless
- **Phil Lyons**, Vice President of International Operations
- **Larry Miller**, Vice President of Human Resources
- **Scott Nelson**, Chief Financial Officer
- **Brandon Sawalich**, Senior Vice President of Sales, Marketing & Customer Relations
- **Susan Mussell**, Corporate Counsel

## Company History

In 1967, William F. Austin founded Professional Hearing Aid Service, a hearing instrument repair service based in St. Louis Park, Minn. Austin's passion for auditory advancements grew, and in 1971, he acquired a small earmold company called Starkey Laboratories. Austin combined the two companies, retaining the Starkey name, and has blazed a trail of innovation ever since.

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**Company Milestones:**

- **1967:** Creates industry's first flat fee for all hearing aid repairs
- **1973:** Releases a custom in-the-ear hearing aid with the industry's first 90-day trial period and one-year "Worry Free" warranty and soon after becomes the world's leading manufacturer of custom hearing instruments
- **1973:** Establishes the Starkey Hearing Foundation, a charitable organization that each year provides 20,000 hearing instruments worldwide to people who could not otherwise afford them
- **1976:** Opens first subsidiary in Manchester, England, with four more opening in the U.S. and worldwide over the next five years
- **1977:** Develops the CARE program, an award-winning multimedia auditory educational program
- **1982:** Introduces industry's first canal hearing aids
- **1983:** Fits President Ronald Reagan with hearing aids, resulting in increased sales throughout the industry
- **1986:** Designs the first custom telecommunications headset
- **1993:** Introduces the Tympanette, an entirely in-the-canal hearing instrument, which is today the industry's smallest and most popular completely-in-the-canal device
- **1999:** Enters digital age with the Cetera and Aries digital hearing systems, which took a research-based approach to amplification
- **2001:** Introduces Genesis digital product family, becoming the industry's most comprehensive product line
- **2004:** Opens Starkey Hearing Research Center in Berkeley, Calif.
- **2006:** Redefines the industry with the introduction of nFusion™ Technology in the Destiny™ series of hearing aids paired with Inspire OS fitting software
- **2008:** Launches BluWave™ Signal Processing (SP), which is similar to the operating system on a computer. In addition, Starkey launches the industry's most award-winning hearing aid – Zōn™ – powered by BluWave SP and encompassing the most advanced features available.
- **2009:** Launches S Series™ with Drive Architecture™, a complete line of advanced hearing solutions giving patients the best performance, comfort and personalization available. The S Series line includes the innovative behind-the-ear (BTE) featuring Sweep™ Technology, which offers a completely new way to control hearing aids using the simple sweep or touch of a finger.
- **2010:** Launches S Series iQ, featuring Voice iQ, a new noise reduction and speech preservation system. Additionally, Starkey introduced OtoLens™, the world's first invisible-in-the-canal hearing aid and the mini featuring Sweep Technology. Finally, the company launched Starkey Pediatrics, exclusively featuring Nickelodeon™ characters on earmolds and support materials.

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## **Technology Focus**

Starkey is renowned for its technological innovations, leading to developments that have resulted in best-in-class hearing solutions for patients. The company develops products with a commitment to evidence-based design and scientific method, rigorously collecting data to support any and all changes that are needed to make the devices better for patients. From the introduction of the world's smallest hearing aid – completely-in-canal (CIC) – to the industry's first on-the-ear (OTE) device, Starkey has consistently been at the cutting edge of hearing technology.

**In 2006**, Starkey created nFusion, a breakthrough technology that employs an open architecture platform, the power of nanoscience and highly refined research-based algorithms to create new synergies between hearing instruments and Starkey's proprietary fitting software. Destiny was the first Starkey line to take advantage of that nanoscience. The hearing aid line offered feedback elimination that was measurably best-in-class at the time as well as state-of-the-art environmental adaptation and directional speech detection.

**In 2007**, Starkey introduced the Destiny 1600, a flagship product, which is the first instrument to incorporate Integrated Real Ear Measurement and had a host of other advanced automated features.

**In 2008**, Starkey introduced BluWave Signal Processing (SP). Similar to an operating system that runs on a computer, BluWave SP coordinated multiple complex systems, processed system data and managed inputs. The company also introduced the award-winning Zōn receiver-in-canal (RIC) line of hearing aids that gave patients excellent performance in a discreet, stylish package.

**In 2009**, Starkey launched S Series with Drive Architecture, combining art and science to create unparalleled levels of performance, comfort and personalization. Developed using Starkey's evidence-based design approach, S Series features a full line of custom and standard hearing aids. Powered by multi-core technology, Drive Architecture utilizes independent and fully programmable open architecture processors to efficiently carry out tasks in parallel by using simultaneous multi-threading technology. Drive Architecture triples the processing

power of previous platforms, allowing for super efficient, high-speed multitasking of signal processing algorithms for better performance while significantly improving battery life over Starkey's previous platforms.

Starkey also launched its newest innovation – the S Series behind-the-ear (BTE) featuring Sweep Technology – in 2009. Sweep Technology replaces all of the traditional hearing aid buttons and dials with an innovative touch surface that allows users – even those with limited dexterity – to adjust volume up or down and change memories with the simple sweep or touch of a finger. Smarter technology that makes patients' lives simpler.

**This year**, Starkey introduced [S Series iQ](#) featuring Voice iQ, a new noise reduction and speech preservation system so fast and smart it reduces noise between syllables of speech – overcoming one of the most common complaints of hearing aid wearers. Developed over three years at the [Starkey Hearing Research Center](#) in Berkeley, Calif., Voice iQ uses a two-part algorithm – dynamic voice identification paired with a spectral noise control that calculates appropriate gain on a per channel basis.

S Series iQ instruments include a number of industry-leading features:

- **PureWave Feedback Eliminator**, the best feedback canceller available, features up to 25dB of added stable gain and a faster response to more complex feedback.
- Drawing on information captured from fitting millions of ears, Starkey's **Comfort Fit** process guarantees a perfect custom hearing aid fit. The process combined with open vent options and industry-leading feedback cancellation delivers custom products that provide superior performance and comfort.
- **T<sup>2</sup> Remote** allows patients to control their hearing aids using any cell or touch-tone phone, avoiding the need to carry additional hardware.
- **Live Real Ear Measurement** allows a hearing professional to see the hearing aid output in a patient's ear in real-ear SPL, allowing for the most precise fitting the first time.

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Starkey also introduced two new hearing aid styles in 2010: [OtoLens](#), the first invisible-in-the-canal hearing aid built using the latest multi-core digital signal processing; and the new mini, featuring Sweep Technology, the most powerful BTE with a 312 battery.

Finally, Starkey launched [Starkey Pediatrics](#), a new program designed to provide innovative hearing products and excellent support to hearing professionals as well as kids and their parents. Starkey S Series iQ hearing instruments offer a host of child-friendly features including two years of free earmold remakes for kids 17 and younger, pediatric-specific fitting options and universally compatible Dynamic DAI (direct audio input) on the BTEs. Starkey is the only hearing aid manufacturer authorized to offer Nickelodeon characters from some of kids' favorite TV shows.

### **Research Focus**

To ensure it remains at the forefront of advancements in the hearing industry, Starkey created the [Starkey Hearing Research Center](#). The SHRC is a team of interdisciplinary scientists and engineers who conduct long-term research on hearing impairment and hearing aid technology. They are strategically based in Berkeley, Calif., to capitalize on the Bay Area's leadership in research and rapid advances in Silicon Valley. The company also operates the William F. Austin Training Center at its headquarters in Eden Prairie, Minn., a state-of-the-art educational facility that enables the company to educate customers and, as a result, better serve consumers.

### **Philanthropic Focus**

The [Starkey Hearing Foundation](#) is a charitable organization that has given the gift of hearing to children around the world thanks to the help of many volunteers and donors. Since 2000, the Starkey Hearing Foundation has provided more than 440,000 hearing instruments worldwide to people who otherwise could not afford them and continues to provide more than 50,000 hearing aids annually through hearing missions in 86 countries.

### **Media Contact**

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